

Information for Candidates:

Non-Executive Member

Wales Audit Office

January 2025



Introduction

Thank you for your interest in the role of Non-Executive Member of the Wales Audit Office.

By way of context, the Auditor General for Wales is the independent statutory external auditor of the devolved Welsh public sector.

The Wales Audit Office (WAO) is a corporate body consisting of a nine-member statutory Board which employs staff and provides other resources to the Auditor General, who is also the Board's Chief Executive and Accounting Officer. The Board monitors and advises the Auditor General, regarding the exercise of his functions.

Together, the Auditor General and the Wales Audit Office operate under the umbrella identity of Audit Wales.

The WAO was established as a corporate body under the **Public Audit (Wales) Act 2013** (the 2013 Act) and commenced its full range of functions on 1 April 2014.

The WAO Board (the Board) comprises nine members, five of whom are non-executives (including the Chair) plus the Auditor General for Wales (the Auditor General) and three employees of the WAO. The Non-Executive Members are appointed by the Welsh Parliament (commonly known as 'the Senedd'). One employee member is nominated by the Auditor General for appointment by the Non-Executive Members and the other two are appointed by the Non-Executive Members following a ballot of WAO staff.

The Senedd is seeking to appoint a Non-Executive Member to the Board, to commence on 1 July 2025.

If you have any queries relating to the role, the recruitment process or need advice on how best to present your background, skills and experience in your application please contact: Owain Roberts, Clerk to the Finance Committee: owain.roberts@senedd.wales.

Auditor General for Wales

The Auditor General is a statutory office holder responsible for a range of audit functions including the audit of the accounts of most public bodies in Wales. He also has the power to undertake value for money examinations. The Auditor General is independent of the Welsh Government and other audited bodies and has complete discretion as to how the functions of that office are exercised. The Auditor General is currently responsible for auditing around £24 billion of public expenditure in Wales.

The Wales Audit Office

On 1 April 2014, responsibility for employing staff, holding property and securing services transferred from the Auditor General to the WAO. The organisation employs around 280 staff and the Auditor General is its Chief Executive and Accounting Officer. The [Five Year Strategy](#) sets out Audit Wales's purpose, vision and focus for 2022-2027. Information about the culture and working for Audit Wales is available on [the Audit Wales website](#).

Responsibilities of the Board

Jointly with the Auditor General, the Board is responsible for:

- preparing an annual plan and reporting on progress in delivering it;
- preparing an annual estimate of income and expenses and a scheme for charging fees; and
- preparing and reviewing a code of practice to deal with the relationship between the WAO and the Auditor General.

In addition, the Board establishes the organisation's strategic direction, setting the vision and values that determine its culture.

The Board also has specific statutory functions set in legislation, including:

- monitoring and advising the Auditor General on the exercise of his functions. However, ultimate responsibility for the exercise of those functions, including the Auditor General's work programme and resource requirement, rests with the Auditor General alone;
- oversight and governance of the WAO;

- providing resources for the exercise of the Auditor General's functions, such as by employing staff and procuring contractors' services;
- preparing, reviewing and revising a scheme for charging fees, and laying it (and any revision) before the Senedd;
- considering whether to recommend to the Senedd a person/firm to audit the WAO's accounts;
- advising the Auditor General on the preparation or revision of a scheme for the delegation of the exercise of his functions;
- arranging for services or assistance to be provided by the Auditor General (following consultation with the Auditor General) and by the WAO.

The Board may delegate its functions to any of its members, committees, employees or service providers, except its functions of preparing the estimate, annual plan, annual and interim reports, making its procedural rules, recommending an auditor and designating a person to temporarily exercise the functions of the Auditor General.

The Board has a duty to carry out the functions of the WAO efficiently and cost-effectively.

The Board currently holds six meetings in each financial year, which are held in person over two days to cover both strategic and business matters. Meetings are scheduled, to coincide with key dates in the WAO's business cycle. In addition, it holds an annual in person Development Day which is held jointly with the Executive Leadership Team. From time to time further sessions for Board training or dealing with urgent business may be arranged.

The Board has established two committees: the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and the Remuneration and HR Committee, both of which meet four times a year. Committee meetings are currently held virtually but this may be reviewed. Non-executive Members are appointed across these committees.



Alison Gerrard, Board Member

During my long career in the NHS in both Finance and Governance, I had worked closely with colleagues from the Wales Audit Office (and its predecessor organisations) and had often asked for examples of best practice when audit reports suggested improvements. So, when I retired 10 years ago, and the role of Independent Member on the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee came up, this seemed like a perfect opportunity to use my skills.

A couple of years later, I was successful in applying for a Non-Executive Member role. While the organisation has unique governance and finance regimes, you certainly do not need to be an expert in either; just have a clear understanding of the different roles and responsibilities of the Auditor General for Wales and the Wales Audit Office (which combined are known as Audit Wales).

The Wales Audit Office (the Board) was relatively new when I was appointed and I have seen the Board, and the organisation more widely, grow and develop over my two terms. There has been a new AGW, new Board members and a reorganised and renewed senior leadership team.

While our core governance systems are now well embedded, as a Board we recognise the value of ongoing improvement, and we strive to set a good example in our values and in the work we do. This means you can be confident that you will be joining an organisation which has excellent and committed people at its heart and which embraces opportunities to further develop its ways of working.

Over the next couple of years, Audit Wales will see more change, with the appointment of a new Auditor General in 2026 and as the organisation adapts to changes in both audit and technological approaches and in personnel as staff and leaders move through their careers. The Board will have a pivotal role in steering Audit Wales through such changes and is developing its strategic

thinking on the future for Audit Wales, which makes it an exciting time for a new member to join and contribute to these matters.

I would also say that while there is sometimes a perception that audit and auditors are dull, nothing could be further from the truth at Audit Wales. Of course, we have a professional workforce which deals with serious matters, but I have encountered as much dynamism and vibrancy as any other organisation I've worked in. I've genuinely enjoyed every moment of my tenure and the people I've worked alongside and am going to miss being part of such a great organisation. I would wholly recommend applying for this role.

Person Specification

The successful candidate will be able to demonstrate that they meet the following competencies:

Essential

- the ability to analyse complex information and reach sound decisions;
- the ability to think strategically to challenge and influence decision making;
- an understanding of current audit practice;
- experience of ensuring effective governance at senior management or board level;
- excellent interpersonal skills to facilitate collaborative working,
- an awareness of the issues facing public bodies in Wales.

Desirable

- Chairing experience;
- Recent high level audit experience.

Terms of the Appointment

Remuneration

Non-Executive Member: £12,500 per annum, non-pensionable, approximately 2-3 days per month.

Travel and subsistence expenses properly and necessarily incurred, in compliance with the WAO policies and procedures.

Non-Executive Members' remuneration may be adjusted during the fixed term of the appointment should any future Members of the board be appointed on a higher salary.

Duration

Non-Executive Members are appointed for a fixed term of up to 4 years, with the exact duration to be determined by the appointment panel. Members may not be appointed more than twice (with each appointment being for a period of up to 4 years).

Location

Board meetings and development sessions are usually held in person, both in Cardiff and elsewhere in Wales. These may occasionally involve an overnight stay.

Status

Non-Executive Members are office-holders of the WAO rather than employees of the Senedd.

Eligibility: Political and Outside Activities

To minimise the risk of conflicts of interest, certain persons will not be considered for appointment: These are:

- Members of the Senedd or candidates to be Members of the Senedd;
- Members of other UK parliamentary bodies;
- the holders of any office or position to which a person may be appointed, or recommended or nominated for appointment, by or on behalf of the:
 - Crown;

- Senedd; or
- Senedd Commission;
- Members of staff of the Senedd Commission or the Welsh Government and persons employed by Members of the Senedd or a group of Members of the Senedd;
- Members of the Independent Remuneration Board of the Senedd;
- the Counsel General (where such person is not a Member of the Senedd);
- a person holding the appointment of Non-Executive Director of the Welsh Government or Independent Advisors to the Senedd Commission;
- employees or members of any body for which the Auditor General for Wales is the auditor.

In line with the ‘Nolan’ principles of public life, other significant sources of conflict of interest will also be taken into account in considering candidates for appointment.

Candidates are reminded of their responsibilities to be satisfied that they are not disqualified from serving as a Member of the Board by reference to paragraph 26 of Schedule 1 to the 2013 Act. Any disqualification or conflict issues disclosed as part of the recruitment process will be discussed with candidates at an appropriate stage.

Successful candidates may therefore be required to relinquish certain external positions as a condition of appointment.

Selection Process

A panel consisting of the Chair of the Senedd's Finance Committee, the Chair of the Wales Audit Office Board and a senior Senedd official will oversee and be responsible for the selection process for appointments. The panel will have due regard to the principle that there should be equality of opportunity for all people. The panel will be supported by the Senedd's HR professionals.

The Finance Committee will consider the panel's recommendations, agree the appointments, and lay a report before the Senedd confirming its decisions.

To ease the transition, and subject to their other commitments, successful candidates may be asked to attend Board meetings in an observer capacity and to participate in an induction programme in advance of their formal appointment.

Application Process

The recruitment will be undertaken in accordance with equal opportunities principles – this means that everybody should have the same opportunities based on their ability, qualifications and suitability for the role.

We therefore welcome applications from all sections of the community, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, faith or disability, from all backgrounds and with many different skills, experience and perspectives.

We are proud to operate under the Disability Confident Employer Scheme. The scheme guarantees an interview for disabled people if they meet the minimum essential requirements for the role.

This is a name-free recruitment with all applications anonymised to avoid bias. Appointments are made on merit, following a fair and transparent process.

- Please apply by submitting a CV, and a supporting statement which outlines your motivation for applying for the role and how you meet the person specification (no more than 2 sides of A4 in length). Please ensure that you address the key requirements set out in the person specification. The competencies will be used as part of the assessment process.
- If you believe you would add value to the board but don't meet all the competencies outlined in the person specification, we would still like to

hear from you. Please explain the value you would bring in your supporting statement.

- To ensure applicants meet the eligibility criteria for these roles, you will need to complete and submit an Eligibility: Political and Outside Activities form with your application to allow relevant checks to be undertaken.
- Please ensure any gaps in employment and education history are fully explained on your CV. We will verify this information during the recruitment process.
- Please provide details of two referees (one should ideally be your current employer) - we will only approach referees with your permission and if you are shortlisted.
- Candidates are also encouraged to complete and submit an Equal Opportunities monitoring form with your application. We are keen to ensure that these roles are accessible to all members of the community and use this data to monitor progress in achieving this.

How to Apply

- Submission of a CV and supporting statement, an Eligibility: Political and Outside Activities form and (optionally) an Equal Opportunities monitoring form to **Jobs@senedd.wales**
- Your name should be removed from your CV and personal statement when you submit your application.
- The closing date for applications is Midnight 7 March 2025. All applications received will be acknowledged.
- If you would like to speak to a current board member about this role, please contact the Wales Audit Office Board Secretary, Katherine Drysdale **Katherine.Drysdale@audit.wales**.
- If you have any inquiries about the recruitment process and your eligibility for the role, please contact Owain Roberts. Clerk to the Finance Committee **Owain.Roberts@senedd.wales**

- Please contact us for a conversation if you require any reasonable adjustments for any part of this recruitment process. We can also discuss what adjustments you would like to be put in place if you were to be appointed to enable you to fully participate. Please email jobs@senedd.wales as soon as possible and we will contact you to discuss requirements and any questions you may have.

After the closing date, the appointment panel shall compile a shortlist, assessing candidates' suitability for the role based on evidence provided in the CV and supporting statement.

You will be contacted directly by the Senedd Commission's HR Team to update you on the status of your application. If you are successful at the shortlist stage interviews will take place week commencing 28 April 2025.

Diversity and Inclusion

Applications are welcomed from a diverse range of people, from all backgrounds and with many different skills, experience and perspectives. We particularly encourage applications from disabled people and people from ethnic minority backgrounds.

All appointments will be made on merit.

Wales Audit Office **Joint Strategic Equality Plan**