

Principal Auditor

- Grade: PO4-PO5
- Reports to: Audit Manager
- Direct reports: None
- Your team: Internal Audit
- Service area: Internal Audit, Investigations and Risk Management
- Directorate: Resources

Special requirements of the post

Workstyle: Desk-based worker (Lower presence, one day a week minimum)

- Colleagues who are not usually client or customer-facing and can mostly work anywhere with the right technology. Regular on-site activities are required such as team events and collaboration that are more productive face to face

This post requires a DBS check at the appropriate level (Enhanced)

This post is subject to the council's declaration of interest procedure

Our mission

Islington is a place rich with diversity and culture. As a council our sense of purpose couldn't be clearer: we serve. It's in the logo. We are committed to challenging inequality in the borough and as one of the largest employers we know that to look after the place and the planet, we have to look after our people. **Together we can change the future.**

To do this, everyone who works at Islington Council lives by a set of values which guide us in everything that we do: collaborative, ambitious, resourceful, and empowering. They spell out 'CARE', which is what we think public service is all about.

Overview of the role

As a Principal Auditor you will be required to undertake the following:

- To deliver an efficient and effective provision of a comprehensive internal audit service covering a full range of functions across the authority, including complex, cross-cutting pieces of work.
- To provide advice, counsel and recommendations on the effective management of the council's strategic and higher risk activities
- To ensure that the service is delivered in accordance with agreed professional audit standards, codes of conduct and core council values
- To contribute to providing the annual audit opinion on the robustness of Islington's internal control environment, risk management and governance arrangements.
- To provide professional advice to senior stakeholders as part of internal audit's advisory function.
- To provide these services across all of the council's activities including partners, contracted services and voluntary sector contributors.
- Where requested, present audit reports to senior level boards, such as DMTs, Corporate Governance Group and CMT and/or Members.

Key responsibilities

Responsibilities at Grade PO4:

1. To contribute to the development of risk-based audit plans in order to achieve an efficient and effective service and in line with recognised professional practice.
2. The Principal Auditor will lead on audits in any of the council's areas. The execution of projects will require that the auditor:
 - Focus on strategic and high risk elements of the council's operations. Accepted recommendations in audit reports will necessarily impact on people, property, finance, budgets, policies, objectives, targets, etc. both inside and outside the department and, if necessary, the authority;
 - Provide specialist input to the development stages of restructures, reorganisations and controls redesign. This is with a view to applying risk management and control design expertise to the change initiatives which have an impact on service provision, the public or other organisations;
 - The work will cover all of the council's activities. This may include complex, cross-cutting strategic reviews across all departments of the Council, reviews of the effectiveness of the council's partnerships and contracts with external organisations, and establishment audits;
 - Review, appraise and report on the adequacy of risk management arrangements and internal controls with the ability to assimilate complex and diverse material in order to reach professional and balanced conclusions;
 - Evaluate the risk management arrangements and control environment by appraising its effectiveness in achieving Islington's objectives. This assessment contributes to the annual internal audit opinion provided to the council on the overall robustness of these areas;

- Continually add value and improve Islington's operations as a contribution to the proper, economic, efficient and effective use of resources by providing an opinion of, and recommendations in relation to, controls optimisation;
- Ensure there are effective arrangements in place to comply with established policies, regulations and legislation;
- Assess the security, integrity, completeness and reliability of information and data in key systems and to support the corporate decision making processes;
- Have the ability to deal with any confidential, sensitive and contentious issues that arise during the course of an audit and apply agreed protocols, remain calm, controlled and professional in such situations. The auditor will be expected to resolve any matters without compromising professional standards whilst respecting the clients' views/needs;
- Prepare and issue reports to a wide range of officers and levels of management, including senior managers and Corporate Directors/Chief Executive and/or Members, that set out the findings from audits. Make practicable, cost effective and constructive recommendations for change and monitoring their implementation, adding value from each audit, which may require an innovative approach and sound negotiation skills;
- When implemented, recommendations will deliver improvements in service delivery, contribute to achieving efficiency savings, and have significant impact on council policies;
- In carrying out the above, maintain regular contact with Service Management and advise on a range of complex and contentious issues;
- Ensure that audit projects include a focus on contributing to Islington's achievement of its vision for a Fairer Islington, and its key priorities of Homes, Work, Money, Good Services and Quality of Life by reviewing the adequacy and optimal effectiveness of resource and asset management including budgetary and management accounting controls;
- Demonstrate the Council's Ways of Working: work together as one, put ourselves in their shoes, make every penny count, show that we care and keep things simple through audit approaches, outputs and communication;
- Use knowledge and experience to perform audits of the main or high risk systems to a professional and consistent standard; and
- Employ tact and discretion when dealing with complex and sensitive projects, including fraud investigations.

3. To have operational responsibility for audit projects and be able to:

- Work without direct supervision;
- Work effectively under pressure;
- Handle several pieces of work at the same time;
- Manage time successfully by setting priorities, working to plan and meeting deadlines;
- Supervise and train staff to complete projects in accordance with professional standards; and
- Use initiative and judgement in the management and execution of assignments.

4. The Principal Auditor will:

- Contribute to the development of the work of the Audit Service and furthering its professional objectives;
 - Manage resources assigned to projects to meet the priorities of the audit programme. This to include on the job training for partnership employees and trainees to ensure that they meet professional standards; and
 - Develop and maintain high standards of behaviour, performance quality, credibility and integrity in accordance with Global Internal Audit Standards and the Council's own Code of Conduct
5. The post-holder is expected to participate in activities within Islington's Internal Audit Service to:
 - Extend the post-holder's knowledge and understanding of audit methodology, and relevant client issues; and
 - Promote and work effectively as part of the Audit Service team and Cross Council Assurance Service.
 6. To develop and maintain effective working arrangements with senior officers in departments and external organisations assisting in the improvement of the internal control environment to help ensure that strategic and operational objectives are met efficiently, effectively and economically.
 7. To contribute to the review and update of audit documentation, policies and procedures and compliance with statutory requirements in line with Global Internal Audit Standards.
 8. To support the activities of the Council by providing professional advice and guidance both verbal and written, to all levels of staff, which is appropriate, accurate, timely and in accordance with the Council's policies and procedures and to promote awareness of good practice and control.
 9. To undertake all duties in line with codes of conduct and guidance for investigations, including assisting our business partners in obtaining evidence, witness statements, when required.
 10. To provide support to the Audit Manager (Investigations) and Investigations team where required, and highlight fraud risks and/or fraud identification through audit work.
 11. To provide support to the Risk Manager where required and promote the development and embedding of the Council's risk management framework and consider the Council's Principal Risks as a basis of audit work.
 12. To contribute to the Cross Council Audit Service and potentially non-Local Authority organisations e.g. London Waste, North London Waste Authority, London Grid for Learning, applying the same professional standards as in Islington.
 13. To be responsible for supporting the effective liaison with our business partners and external review organisations including providing support in relation to procedures and systems.
 14. The post-holder is expected to undertake continuing professional development and to maintain the currency of their knowledge and skills.
 15. To use and assist others in the use of information technology systems to carry out duties in the most efficient and effective manner.
 16. To achieve agreed service outcomes and outputs, and personal appraisal targets, as agreed by the line manager.
 17. To undertake training and constructively take part in meetings, supervision, seminars and other events designed to improve communication and assist with the effective development of the post and post holder.

18. To carry out duties and responsibilities in accordance with the council's commitment to customer service excellence and ensure compliance with the customer care standards.
19. To be committed to the Council's core values of public service, quality, equality and empowerment and to demonstrate this commitment in the way duties are carried out.
20. To ensure that duties are undertaken with due regard and compliance with the Data Protection Act and other legislation.
21. To carry out duties and responsibilities in accordance with the Council's Health and Safety Policy and relevant Health and Safety legislation.
22. At all times to carry out responsibilities/duties within the framework of the Council's Dignity for all Policy. (Equal Opportunities Policy).
23. To undertake other duties as directed by the Audit Manager and HIA.

Additional responsibilities at Grade PO5:

- Where requested, present audit reports to senior level boards, such as DMTs, Corporate Governance Group and CMT and/or Members;
- Deputise on behalf of the Audit Manager as and when directed by the Audit Manager and/or HIA;
- Consider strategic recommendations and their optimisation and its wider contribution to the Council's achievement of its aims and objectives and ways of working;
- Participate as a member of a project development team, as required by the Audit Manager, to ensure control design is optimal and effectively assessed and implemented and projects are managed in accordance with the Council's adopted best practice methods;
- Participate in an advisory role developing processes and risk maps to ensure an effective control framework is implemented and support services achieving their objectives "right first time"; and
- Participate in the complete process of staff recruitment, when required, including interviewing applicants.

Person specification

Knowledge, experience, and skills

Point	Criteria description	Essential/desirable
1	Professional CCAB, CMIIA or AAT qualification or part qualification, or a proven track record of relevant experience in a similar role.	Essential
2	A thorough understanding and extensive experience of undertaking risk-based auditing in a complex organisation, including the ability to apply them when auditing the Council's processes and systems.	Essential
3	Experience of leading and managing a wide range of audits within professional guidelines using discretion, tact and initiative, where necessary.	Essential
4	Thorough knowledge of a range of management activities and techniques including: performance management; risk management; programme management, strategic planning; budgetary control and financial management generally.	Essential
5	To be self-motivated with the ability to plan, prioritise conflicting demands and to work effectively under pressure to meet project deadlines. Ability to manage annual workload and deliver high quality audit products with minimal management input that are completed to a professional standard.	Essential
6	Ability to deal effectively with a range of queries and to provide appropriate professional advice as required promoting operational effectiveness of Council Services. This includes experience of and ability to provide technical audit advice to non-finance managers.	Essential
7	Ability to analyse and interpret complex information and policies in order to produce workable and cost effective solutions to risks and control weaknesses identified as part of the audit process, so as to positively contribute to delivery of council policy and objectives.	Essential

Point	Criteria description	Essential/desirable
8	Ability to communicate effectively with all levels of staff, management and service users in a clear and concise manner both orally and in writing.	Essential
9	Ability to produce high quality working papers and audit reports to the requisite standard.	Essential
10	Show high attention to detail and accuracy, checking output for accuracy and completeness.	Essential
11	Ability to establish, develop and maintain effective relationships within organisations and externally with audit contractors and partner organisations enhancing the profile of the audit service.	Essential
12	The ability to apply the principles of customer focus building a professional relationship with clients; and the experience and ability to represent internal audit to both internal and external organisations.	Essential
13	Knowledge and understanding of data security and information governance principles and legislation; and the ability to adhere to Data Protection regulations and local data security policies.	Essential
14	To be proficient in the use and assist other members of Internal Audit in the use of information technology systems e.g. word, excel, audit analytical software, electronic work paper software applications to carry out duties in the most efficient and effective manner.	Essential

Our accreditations



Our accreditations include: Disability Confident Leader, The Mayor's Good Work Standard, London Living Wage Employer, Stonewall Diversity Champion, and Employer with Heart.