

Financial Audit Apprentice – Information Pack



Welcome from Ann-Marie Harkin, Director Audit Services



Ann Marie Harkin, Director

Croeso/Welcome

Are you interested in earning while learning? Then kick start your career with an alternative to university but with the same long-term prospects by joining our **Financial Audit Apprenticeship programme**. Our programme will help you to achieve a highly recognisable Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT) finance qualification while working for the public sector watchdog for Wales. Follow a three-year fixed-term apprenticeship programme working with our teams across Wales, to deliver a variety of audit services and help scrutinise and improve public services.

Your role

You will develop on the job skills working within different teams, to support the external audit of a number of different public sector bodies, such as councils, Local Health Boards, Police and Fire services etc. Whilst also learning through paid day release to study for the highly recognisable Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT) financial qualification.

In addition to this, you will have the opportunity to benefit from a secondment within another public sector body where you will be able to gain a greater breadth of direct knowledge and experience of public services in Wales: an excellent stepping stone for your career.

Public bodies are spread far and wide across Wales and therefore the ability to drive is essential for this role. While we try and ensure that you work close to where you live, we can't guarantee this. However, we can guarantee that no two days will be the same and you will join an organisation committed to supporting the development of finance leaders of the future.

Your future

At the end of the apprenticeship programme, subject to the successful completion of the AAT and good performance, apprentices may be offered the opportunity to join the Audit Wales graduate training programme, offering further training to become a qualified accountancy professional with the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW).

Who we are?

We're an organisation that has reach across Wales's entire public sector, auditing public spending of some £19 billion annually. On behalf of the people of Wales, we examine public spending and identify ways to improve public services. Our work supports the effective scrutiny of public money by the Senedd and locally elected representatives, and we are entirely independent of government. Our purpose is to:

- **Assure** the people of Wales that public money is well managed
- **Explain** how public money is being used to meet people's needs
- **Inspire** and **empower** the Welsh public sector to improve

You can read more about [our organisation and our work for the future in our video](#) and also [our Annual Plan](#).

Audit Wales is a fun and friendly place to work, with an incredibly supportive culture and one where we're working hard to truly embed our values and behaviours in all that we do and how we do it. You can read more about our [values and behaviours](#) and [our People Strategy](#) on our website.

We embrace diversity in all its forms so welcome applications from people from all backgrounds and with many different skills, experiences and perspectives. This is what helps us to create a GREAT place to work and make an even bigger difference through the work we do across Wales.

We want to strengthen our workforce diversity particularly in terms of people who are black, Asian, or from other ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, people who are carers and people who are LGBT+. Find out more about our approach to diversity and inclusion on our website.

If you can speak Welsh too then all the better, but don't worry if you can't, it's not essential for this role and there will be lots of opportunities for you to learn, if you are interested. All appointments will be made on merit against the person specification in this pack.

We're committed to working smarter, we've got great technology that supports us, we're building our coaching skills to empower and inspire each other, and we invest heavily in ongoing learning and development.

Your benefits

We pride ourselves on the pay and benefits we offer. We have a 35-hour working week, worked on a Monday to Friday basis. However, we have lots of flexibility to deliver our work as we operate within a smarter working environment where delivering business need is the priority.

A generous 33 days annual leave each year plus public holidays and access to the Civil Service pension.

We have a range of additional benefits such as cycle to work loans and buying and selling leave, that are there to support our staff in balancing their work and home lives. Take a look at our pay and other benefits to gain an understanding of our [reward package and pay scales](#).

If this opportunity excites you and you have the right skills, aptitude and motivation, we want to hear from you. Call my colleague Sian Grainger on 029 2032 0547, if you'd like to chat to us before you apply.

All the best.

Ann-Marie

Job Description

Job title	Apprentice
Reports to	Audit Manager
Location	Wales
Pay band	Apprentice
Mobile	Yes
Eligible for Travel Allowance	Yes

Job description

Job Purpose

- Working as part of a supportive team, you will be involved in the external audit of a range of Welsh public sector bodies, including local government, NHS bodies and the Welsh Government and its related organisations.
- You will also train to achieve a recognised apprenticeship qualification, working through the highly respected Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT) from level 2 to level 4 award.

Main Duties

- To attend and complete the AAT qualification.
- Conduct audit work across a range of account areas contained in the financial statements or grant returns of public sector bodies. This will include reviewing and testing accounting records and financial transactions.
- Receive support to identify findings and form judgements when concluding on your work, which are based on sufficient and appropriate evidence and comply with relevant standards.
- Prepare clear and well documented work, using a range of software applications, for review on a timely basis.

Main Duties

- Demonstrate good verbal and listening skills when making enquiries with client staff and working within your audit team.
- Ensure a planned and well organised approach to your work with support from the Audit Lead or other appropriate supervisor.
- Take responsibility for your own development and strive to improve your skills and knowledge – treat new assignments as an opportunity to apply what you have learned in a new environment or to gain new knowledge.
- Any other duties commensurate with the role, which may include value for money audit work.

Key Results Areas

- The supported delivery of audit activities to time, budget and quality.
- Successful completion of AAT qualification.
- To act as a role model for the values and behaviours of Audit Wales.

Person Specification

Requirement	Essential or Desirable
1. Qualifications	
1.1 Three A Levels at a min C grade or above or equivalent qualification	Essential
1.2 Minimum of 5 GCSEs (Grade A*-C), including Maths (B) and English language	Essential

Person Specification	
Requirement	Essential or Desirable
2. Skills and abilities	
2.1 Good analytical skills and problem-solving skills	Essential
2.2 Good digital, data and technology skills, with a willingness and ability to learn new skills and software, to communicate, collaborate, create, innovate, transact and handle data safely	Essential
2.3 Ability to see tasks through to a successful conclusion	Desirable
2.4 Good verbal and written skills – clear, concise with good attention to detail	Essential
2.5 Works effectively, enthusiastically and engaged as a member of a team	Essential
2.6 Sound questioning and listening skills	Essential
2.7 Ability to develop and maintain positive and professional working relationships	Desirable
2.8 Good interpersonal skills – able to develop and effectively work with others at all levels	Essential

Person Specification	
Requirement	Essential or Desirable
2. Skills and abilities	
2.9 Ability to drive or be able to drive within the probation period	Essential
3 Personal attributes	
3.1 An interest in pursuing a finance career in the public sector.	Essential
3.2 Enthusiastic and highly motivated	Essential
3.3 Pro-active approach to your work with a willingness to learn	Essential
3.4 Flexible and adaptable to changing priorities/challenges	Desirable
3.5 Able to act on own initiative but knowing when to seek supervision and guidance from colleagues	Desirable

Person Specification	
Requirement	Essential or Desirable
4 General	
4.1 Self-aware and a role model for the Audit Wales values and behaviours	Essential
4.2 Ability to work flexibly and, if necessary, outside of normal office hours	Desirable
4.3 An awareness and a commitment to equality and diversity	Essential
4.4 An awareness and commitment to the arrangements for health and safety	Essential

Welsh Language Skills

We value the importance of the Welsh language in our work and aim to provide a bilingual service to everyone who wants to use it. We would therefore like to especially encourage applications from individuals that have Welsh-language skills to help us meet this aim.

All job descriptions will detail whether the ability to speak Welsh is an essential or desirable requirement. If successful and you do not currently have Welsh-language skills, we can support you in learning Welsh if you wish.

The following Welsh-language skills are desirable for this role. Please refer to our language skills matrix for a description of the various skill levels. Please contact the Wales Audit Office if you would like to discuss the nature of the Welsh-language skills.

Skill area	Essential	Desirable
Speaking and Listening	Greet others over the phone or in person with a simple Welsh greeting and sensitively forward a call to a Welsh speaker when appropriate.	Listen to Welsh-medium meetings, discussions and phone calls on simple matters, but contribute in English for more technical and complex matters.
Reading	Use translation software to get the grasp of simple correspondence with understanding of its limited capability.	Read Welsh-medium news articles, short reports and social media to develop knowledge in a field.
Writing	Update documents and correspondence with Welsh dates and other generic terms.	Write simple correspondence and social media content in Welsh with the assistance of Welsh spelling and grammar check.

General

Confidentiality and Information Security

The post holder must, at all times, be aware of the importance of maintaining confidentiality and security of information gained during the course of their duties. This will, in many cases, include access to personal information relating to service users. The post holder must treat all information, whether corporate or client, in a discreet and confidential manner in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 and organisational policy. Any breach of such confidentiality is considered a serious disciplinary offence, which is liable to dismissal and/or prosecution under current statutory legislation (Data Protection Act) and Audit Wales Disciplinary Policy.

Equality

The Public Sector Equality Duty in Wales places a positive duty on public bodies to promote equality for people with protected characteristics, both as an employer and as a provider of public services. There are nine protected characteristics: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation. Audit Wales is committed to ensuring that no job applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment on any of the above grounds. To this end, the organisation has an Equality Policy and it is for each employee to contribute to its success.

Health and Safety

All employees of the organisation have a statutory duty of care for their own personal safety and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions. The post holder is required to co-operate with management to enable the organisation to meet its own legal duties and to report any hazardous situations or defective equipment. The post holder must adhere to the organisation's Risk Management, Health and Safety, and associated policies.

Security Checks

All employees are subject to baseline security checks as part of their pre-employment check. These checks include proof of identity and qualifications. In addition, all mobile staff are subject to security vetting arrangements to CTC (counter terrorist check) security level.

General

Dignity at Work

The organisation condemns all forms of bullying and harassment and is actively seeking to promote a workplace where employees are treated fairly and with dignity and respect without bias. All staff are requested to report any form of bullying and harassment to their Line Manager or to any Director of the organisation. Any inappropriate behaviour inside the workplace will not be tolerated and will be treated as a serious matter under the Audit Wales Dignity at Work policy.

About the Apprenticeship

This Apprenticeship Programme has been developed as an alternative option for those interested in a career in finance to train through the Association of Accounting Technicians to become a qualified finance professional.

This Apprenticeship Programme will receive funding support through the Welsh Government Apprenticeship Framework. The Welsh Government does not support apprenticeship qualifications where an individual already holds a qualification of the same type, content and level (or of a higher level). Accordingly, an individual already holding a level 4 (or above) finance or accounting qualification is not eligible to apply to this Programme. Examples of such qualifications include level 4 AAT; an accountancy degree, HNC or HND; or a higher-level accounting qualification awarded by one of the accounting institutes. Similarly, as this apprenticeship is aimed at those without any previous finance qualifications, potential applicants who hold either AAT level 2 or 3 are not eligible to apply.

However, if the apprenticeship would allow the individual to acquire substantive new skills, and it was evident that the content of the qualification was materially different from any prior qualification, then such an apprenticeship may be eligible for funding.

Where a prior qualification contained some finance or accountancy elements at level 4 or above, but was not exclusively a finance or accounting qualification, such qualifications would need to be considered for eligibility on a case-by-case basis.

Qualifications in broad numerical subjects, e.g. mathematics, statistics, would be expected to meet the eligibility requirements.

If you are uncertain as to whether you are eligible to apply for this Programme please contact sian.grainger@audit.wales setting out clearly the qualifications you already hold.

Please note that the guidance given above does not consider every circumstance and Audit Wales reserves the right to reject an application where it considers that any eligibility criteria have not been met.

How to apply

We only accept applications through our online portal, we do not accept CVs, but if you need us to consider a reasonable adjustment, do please let us know in good time.

When completing your application

Familiarise yourself with the Job Description and the Person Specification, so you understand the role and what the essential qualifications, skills and attributes for the apprentice role are.

We are looking for how your studies and/or previous experience in work or outside interests makes you suitable to start a career as an AAT apprentice.

Include evidence of:

- Your current qualifications meeting the minimum educational standard
- In your Personal Statement we want to find out about you, why are you interested in pursuing a finance apprenticeship and what skills, experiences or behaviours you have that you think would make you suitable for the role

Please note – the application form will be used to assess all applicants. Failure to complete the application in detail may result in your application not progressing to the assessment stage.

Assessment Centre

At the assessment centre you will have an interview and a critical thinking test. Further information about this stage will be provided nearer the time.

Feedback will only be provided if you attend an assessment centre.

Further information

If you have any questions regarding, our Apprenticeship Programme, selection process or have any specific requirements, please contact Sian Grainger, Graduate Trainee and Apprenticeship Co-ordinator on 07814 604515 or email sian.grainger@audit.wales

The recruitment timeline

Deadline for applications:	16 July 2020
Invites to interview issued or notification of your application not being sifted for interview:	31 July 2020
Assessment/interview date:	5-12 August 2020

Please contact HR.Recruitment@audit.wales if anything in this pack is unclear or if you need us to make reasonable adjustments for you.