

Roles and responsibilities of Internal Audit

“Internal Audit is an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve an organisation’s operations. It helps an organisation accomplish its objectives by introducing a systematic, disciplined approach in order to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control, and governance processes.”

The whole Governing Body is collectively accountable for maintaining a sound system of internal control and is responsible for putting in place arrangements for gaining assurance about the effectiveness of that overall system.

The Annual Governance Statement (AGS) is an annual statement by the Accounting Officer, on behalf of the Board, setting out:

- how the individual responsibilities of the Accounting Officer are discharged with regard to maintaining a sound system of internal control that supports the achievement of policies, aims and objectives;
- the purpose of the system of internal control as evidenced by a description of the risk management and review processes, including the Assurance Framework process;
- the conduct and results of the review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control including any disclosures of significant control failures together with assurances that actions are or will be taken where appropriate to address issues arising.

In accordance with NHS Internal Audit Standards, the Head of Internal Audit (HoIA) is required to provide an annual opinion, based upon and limited to the work performed, on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the organisation’s risk management, control and governance processes (i.e. the organisation’s system of internal control). This is achieved through a risk-based plan of work, agreed with management and approved by the Audit Committee, which should provide a reasonable level of assurance, subject to the inherent limitations described below.

The opinion does not imply that Internal Audit has reviewed all risks and assurances relating to the organisation. The opinion is substantially derived from the conduct of risk-based plans and as such, Internal Audit is only one component that the **Governing Body** takes into account in receiving its assurances and making its AGS.