

Job Evaluation

Final Internal Audit Report

2024/25

Swansea Bay University Health Board



Contents

Executive Summary	1
Findings & Agreed Action Plan	4
Appendix A Assurance Opinion & Prioritisation of Findings	13

Review Reference

SBU-2425-29

Fieldwork

February - March 2024

Executive Sign Off

12 May 2025

Audit Committee

21/22 May 2025

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Executive Summary

Purpose

To ensure the requirements of the NHS Job Evaluation Handbook are being applied in a fair, consistent and equitable manner by the health board.

Overview

Job evaluation determines the value of a job in relation to other jobs in an organisation to establish a rational pay structure. Job evaluation is a key part of the pay system that covers NHS staff on the 'NHS Terms and Conditions of Service Handbook' (Agenda for Change). One of the aims of Agenda for Change is to allow NHS bodies to operate more flexibly by redefining and developing roles in partnership with the aim of further modernising the service for the benefit of patients.

The introduction of the NHS Job Evaluation Scheme enables all posts to be banded through the job matching and evaluation process to ensure fairness, consistency, and equality for all members of staff. Swansea Bay University Health Board (the health board) is required to comply with the NHS Job Evaluation Handbook (the Handbook).

Alongside the NHS Handbook, separate guidance has been published at the health board, designed to provide managers with a useful resource to understand job evaluation and how it can impact teams i.e. to develop existing posts, or enhance roles, as a result of departmental restructuring. When replacing vacant posts, managers need to consider whether the same post is still appropriate or whether the role can be redesigned in line with service improvement and service needs.

Although it is not expressly referenced, Job Evaluation is aligned to all aspects of the strategic aims of the People Strategy. Job evaluation plays a key role in supporting the seven strategic aims outlined including theme 1 (engaged, motivated and healthy), and theme 2 (attract and recruit).

We have concluded **reasonable** assurance on this area. The matters requiring management attention include:

1. Staff side representatives are currently required to use their Facilities Time to participate in panels, however this is not a requirement of the national Handbook.
2. Bilingual job descriptions have not been published consistently, contrary to the Welsh Language Standards.
3. Conflict of interests noted at job evaluation and job consistency panels for the same job description.
4. The annual report generated from Computer Aided Job Evaluation (CAJE) system has not been completed for 2024 due to resourcing issues.
5. The health board has not affirmed the key performance indicators that require reporting or the expected reporting framework for such.

Full details of matters arising are detailed within the Findings & Agreed Action Plan.

Scope & Assurance Summary

Objectives <small>The objectives and associated assurance ratings are not necessarily given equal weighting when formulating the overall audit opinion.</small>	Related Findings	Assurance
1 The health board has appropriate policies and procedures in place, which set out the job evaluation process, roles and responsibilities, and promote fairness, consistency and equality for all members of staff.	-	Substantial
2 Arrangements for managing the evaluation of new posts, re-evaluations of changed posts and outcome review requests are compliant with policy.	1, 2	Reasonable
3 Staff have received suitable training and support in relation to job matching, analysis, evaluation and outcome review requests.	-	Substantial

4	Appropriate local consistency checking requirements are in place and meet the recommendations set out in the NHS Job Evaluation Handbook.	1, 2, 3	Reasonable
5	Periodic analysis reporting to an appropriate committee is evident.	4, 5	Reasonable

Management Actions



High Priority



Medium Priority

Themes



- Approvals
- Resourcing
- Reporting
- Communication & Engagement
- Performance Monitoring

Risk Types

Legal & Regulatory Non-Compliance

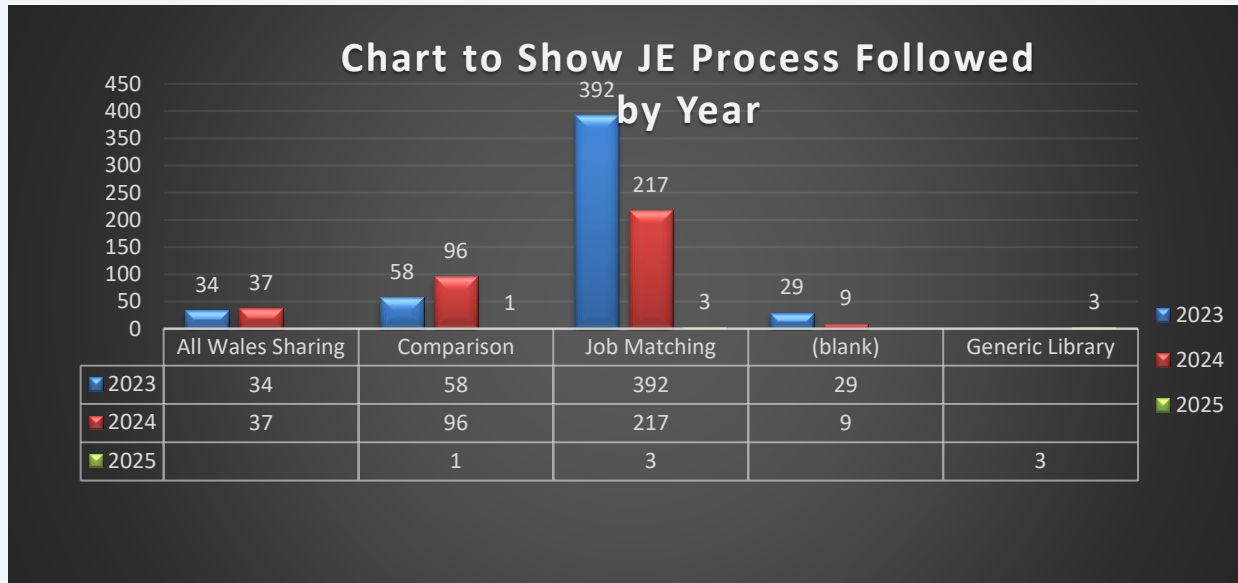
Public Perception & Reputational Risk

Choose an item.

Choose an item.

Job Evaluation - At a Glance

Table 1 - Job Evaluations Undertaken 2023-2025



*The numbers included in the 'blank' column refer to JD's that were withdrawn. They are subsequently included within the 53 showing as Record deleted / withdrawn for 2023 within Table 2 below.

Table 2 - Job Evaluation Status Workflow Report 2022-2025

JE Requests by Current Status	2022	2023	2024	2025	Grand Total
Approved/Confirmed	507	460	314	3	1,284
Consistency Approved Awaiting Release				3	3
Consistency Query Raised			2		2
Query Raised with Manager			7		7
Record Deleted/Withdrawn	94	53	26		173
Waiting VCF From Manager			9		9
On Hold			1		1
Grand Total	601	513	359	6	1,479

Findings & Agreed Action Plan

Objective 1: Policies and Procedures

Substantial

The NHS Wales Job Evaluation Handbook (the Handbook) is the comprehensive guide for all NHS organisations on job evaluation and should be read alongside the NHS Terms and Conditions Handbook. It is in its eighth edition and was last updated in January 2024.

There is a dedicated page on the health board's intranet SharePoint, accessible to all staff, which provides guidance and access to all Job Evaluation (JE) procedures and template documents, including all-Wales agreed job descriptions and a Job Evaluation Managers Handbook, which has been developed to provide specific guidance on the job evaluation process for the health board.

Twenty-three Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) covering the job evaluation processes, including Job Evaluation Panels, Consistency Panels and the completion of the national Computer Aided Job Evaluation (CAJE) system are also included and are aligned to the national Job Evaluation Handbook. These documents are not dated, but they are regularly updated. They are comprehensive but succinct.

Job Evaluation protocols are also available on this page and include further guidance specific to the health board in the form of Manager tool kits (including new role, re-evaluation, review, amendment, and Welsh translation manager toolkits).

Job evaluation (also known as job matching) is completed when a job description is matched against an existing national profile. If there is no suitable national profile available, a job analysis questionnaire would be completed, and a job evaluation panel would evaluate the job description on its own merits. Alongside job evaluation there is a job re-evaluation process. This occurs when the post holder believes they are working above their job description and are having to carry out additional duties and responsibilities. The post holder is required to complete a form and evidence the differences between their job description and their actual working practices. This requires line manager and budget holder approval to progress. All elements of the job evaluation process are completed using the national CAJE system, with documentation saved electronically.

Job evaluation panels are routinely scheduled, with four one-hour sessions per week. Previously, two-hour sessions were held twice a week but due to a 12–14 week backlog reported in 2022, it was suggested that shorter, more frequent sessions would allow for greater attendance to better manage the backlog. We note that there is currently no backlog of the job evaluation panels at the health board.

The Handbook states that *'The make-up of matching panels is a matter for local agreement but panels must operate in partnership. It is good practice for panels to have equal numbers of staff side and management practitioners with four panel members (two of each) being most selected. The panel can operate with three practitioners should circumstances occur that a practitioner cannot attend and the rest of the panel agree they are happy to continue. The panel can operate with five practitioners. This option is to support the development and confidence of new practitioners to the JE team'*. Currently there are 24 'active' management practitioners and five 'active' staff side representatives that are trained to undertake job evaluation duties.

Noting the limited numbers of staff side representatives, we are advised that there are instances where panels are cancelled. We were advised that 180 panels were scheduled during the calendar year 2024, and 85 were cancelled, with circa 68% (58) cancelled due to unavailability from staff side representatives. The challenges of recruiting members are recognised, particularly noting that staff side representatives at the health board are currently required to be Trade Union representatives and are to use their Facilities Time to attend panels, which can be considered to be a barrier to participation. We note that the Handbook states that *'staff can, but do not need to be accredited trade union representatives unless agreed otherwise locally, but they should be employed by their local organisation and be nominated by and accountable to their local trade union branch and/or staff side'*; accordingly we consider that the health board may wish to broaden their options for staff side representatives. See **Key Finding 1**.

We obtained the complete list of Job Evaluation (JE) submissions recorded by the JE Team from the 1 January 2024 to the date of audit fieldwork (11 February 2025) inclusive. Three hundred and sixty-five (365) submissions were recorded for New (new post), Re-band (re-banding of existing post), Re-evaluation or Review (review of the banding outcome where individual(s) is / are dissatisfied with the result of matching or evaluation). We noted only one occurrence of 'review' for the period sampled - this job description had been referred to the All-Wales group for checking and was ongoing at the time of audit.

We tested twenty job evaluations and ten re-evaluations throughout the different stages of the process for a range of higher and lower bands to determine if they were completed correctly. Overall, we found the process to be working well, apart from some minor instances where some information was not evidenced:

- No evidence of bi-lingual Job Descriptions for 3/20 of the jobs reviewed under job evaluation / job matching and for 3/10 applications considered under the re-evaluation process, contrary to the Folder Format SOP and the Welsh Language Standards. See **Key Finding 2**.

We note that Welsh translations may not be required immediately for re-evaluations noting that these are for existing members of staff and therefore the job description may not be immediately published for advertisement. However, good practice would dictate translating the approved and completed job description, to be held on file for future advertisements (see **Key Finding 2**).

In review of the job evaluation panels, we sought to evidence that they were not subject to conflicts of interest or that consistency checkers were not part of the matching panel to maintain independence in the process. All job evaluation panels and consistency panels sampled had been held in accordance with the national Handbook, however some individuals were present at both panels for the same job description (refer to objective 4).

Once the JE process is complete, the responsibility for the issue / communication is that of the managers / budget holders for the specific area.

Key Findings	Risk & Impact	Agreed Management Action
<p>1 Staff Side Panel Participants</p> <p>Current practice at the health board is for staff side representatives to utilise their Facilities Time to participate in job evaluation panels, which we are advised can be a barrier to participation. Accordingly, there is a small pool of trained and approved individuals from which the health board can select for panels.</p> <p>However, the latest NHS Job Evaluation Handbook does not expressly state that use of Facilities Time for attendance at panels is a requirement. Accordingly, we consider that the health board may wish to broaden their options for staff side representatives.</p>	<p>Limited numbers of individuals are available for participation in panels which increases the risk of a conflict of interests.</p>	<p>Agreed Action:</p> <p>We will share the audit findings at Health Board Partnership Forum to reinforce the request for additional staff side representatives to be consistency and job match trained. This will broaden the pool of staff side representatives available.</p> <p>Expected Evidence of Implementation:</p> <p>Health Board Partnership Forum Key Points/Action Log – 19th July 2025</p> <p>Consistency & Job Match Training schedule - attendees</p>
<p>Theme: Resourcing</p>	<p>Medium Priority</p> <p>Control Design</p>	<p>Officer: Assistant Director of Workforce</p> <p>Target Implementation Date: 19th July 2025</p>

Key Findings	Risk & Impact	Agreed Management Action
<p>2 Bilingual Job Descriptions</p> <p>We note that a compliance notice (as per Section 44 Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011) was issued to the health board in 2018 that stated that <i>'If you publish - (a) application forms for posts; (b) material that explains your procedure for applying for posts; (c) information about your interview process, or about other assessment methods when applying for posts; or (d) job descriptions; you must publish them in Welsh; and you must ensure that the Welsh language versions of the documents are treated no less favourably than any English language versions of those documents.'</i> The date for implementation was noted as 30/11/2019.</p> <p>Three of our sample for the job evaluation / job matching process did not have evidence of a bilingual job description post completion of the process; and further, three of the completed job re-evaluations reviewed did not have a bilingual job description available. This is contrary to Standard 107A of the Welsh Language Standards.</p> <p>We were advised that a communication was shared by the health board (<i>A4C Process for Welsh Language Implementation in Recruitment: June 2024</i>) which stated that from 1 November 2024, the health board is legally required to ensure that all job adverts and supporting documentation is bilingual.</p> <p>The exceptions noted in our sample were prior to this date. For the job re-evaluations, management advised that such were not applicable to the process as they for internal use. However, we would expect the same requirements to be applied in these instances to ensure completeness (at the date of approval) and mitigate the risk of the incorrect version being applied for translation at a later date.</p>	<p>Non-compliance with Welsh Language Standards.</p> <p>Marginalisation of applicants applying for roles within the health board.</p>	<p>Agreed Action:</p> <p>Compliance monitoring of the Welsh Language Implementation requirements will be undertaken utilising Power BI dashboard.</p> <p>Local SOPs and communications will reinforce the need for all job descriptions to be translated into Welsh.</p>
<p>Theme: Communication & Engagement</p>	<p>Control Operation</p>	<p>Expected Evidence of Implementation:</p> <p>Annual Report</p> <p>Officer: Assistant Director of Workforce</p> <p>Target Implementation Date: 19th July 2025</p>

Job Matching / Consistency Checking Training

Training for job matching, job analysis and consistency checking is delivered regularly via Teams and consists of annual scheduled dates.

A list of trained job matchers / consistency checkers is maintained. Should anyone withdraw, their profile is updated as 'inactive'. As noted in Objective 2, there are 24 'active' management practitioners that are trained in job evaluation / matching, six of which are also trained for consistency checking. Five 'active' staff side representatives are actively participating in job evaluation / matching with four of those trained in consistency checking. This often means the same evaluators and consistency checkers are used on a regular basis and has led to panels being cancelled and conflicts of interest where some individuals were present at both the job evaluation and consistency checking panels for the same job description (see **Key Finding 3**). The JE Team recognises that the health board requires more individuals, particularly from staff side, to sign up.

A record of training delivered, and feedback received is maintained by the Job Evaluation Lead and is provided to the All-Wales Job Evaluation Lead in December of each year. We noted that feedback had been markedly positive. Refresher training is offered to individuals that have not participated in job matching / consistency checking panels on a regular basis (typically following a 6–9-month hiatus).

To support those individuals involved in the job evaluation process, the following groups have been set up and managed by the JE Lead:

- A Teams channel has been in operation since 2022. This is where all new members to the Job Match Practitioner Group are welcomed and introduced. It is intended that the pages being set up on the Viva Engage platform will replace this channel.
- A Job Evaluation Community Page on Viva Engage, set up during 2024, which all health board staff can access, and a health board Job Match Practitioner Group for all Job Match Practitioners.

Managers Training

Several managers training sessions are held at the health board including a Managers Pathway session, a Manager Awareness Session and Manager Job Description Writing Workshops.

Welsh compliance sessions held from June to November 2024 were delivered by the JE lead and colleagues to ensure that all future job descriptions are bilingual in line with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards (see **Key Finding 2**).

The JE Lead also offers 1-2-1 sessions as required.

As stated within the health board’s Job Evaluation Managers Handbook, ‘to ensure the outcome of the job match is robust and consistent with similar roles within the organisation and across the NHS, the Job Evaluation Team will arrange a consistency check in partnership, which will consist of the chair of the consistency panel, one staff side matcher and one management matcher’.

Similarly to the Job Evaluation Panels, there is only a small pool of ‘active’ staff side representatives and management practitioners that are trained in consistency checking at the health board, and therefore often the same individuals are involved in both panels (see **Key Finding 3**).

Consistency panels are scheduled twice weekly as a recurring appointment for all trained staff. We note that urgent requests will be discussed via a Teams discussion / email outside of this schedule if required. The Job Evaluation Lead confirms that there have not been delays where this has occurred, with individuals undertaking the consistency check within one working day. There is currently no reported backlog for consistency checking panels.

Individuals may opt in or out depending on their availability, and whether they were involved in the job matching panels to ensure that there is no conflict of interest. If an individual that has been involved in the original job evaluation panel for the job description is also in attendance at the consistency checking panel (noting that numerous job descriptions may be discussed), we are advised that they would recuse themselves from the consistency checking practice for that specific job description to ensure a separation of duties. However, this recusal is not formally recorded noting the meetings are not formally minuted (see **Key Finding 3**). We note that from completion of the same review at other NHS Wales organisations, these instances would be reported to Local Partnership Forum and / or a declaration of interest would be completed.

From our sample of twenty job evaluations and ten re-evaluations, we tested the sampled folders against the consistency checking requirements outlined at the SOPs. We also checked the attendance of the staff side and management representatives to ensure that it was appropriate and that there were no conflicts of interest with the attendees of the job evaluation panels. We found nine instances (all job evaluations) where individuals were involved in both the job evaluation and consistency checking panels for the same job description. For two of those nine instances, the exact same individuals were involved in both panels and therefore there would be no opportunity for segregation of duties.

A spreadsheet is maintained and updated with the relevant information from the panel, and the approved outcomes are transferred to the monthly workflow for processing by the Job Evaluation administrative team. We note that individuals’ names are not recorded at the workflow to demonstrate impartiality.

Key Findings	Risk & Impact	Agreed Management Action
<p>3 Conflicts of Interest in Job Matching Panels</p> <p>We sought to evidence that matching panels were not subject to conflicts of interest or that consistency checkers were not part of the matching panel to ensure independence in the process.</p> <p>From our population sample of twenty job evaluations and ten re-evaluations, we noted nine instances of job evaluations where individuals were present at both the consistency panel and the evaluation panel. Two of those nine panels included the exact same individuals.</p>	<p>Reduced ability to demonstrate separation of duties which may result in a challenge to the process.</p>	<p>Agreed Action:</p> <p>Linked with Objective 1 and the action set out in key finding 1 we will broaden our pool of trained staff side representatives to avoid a conflict of interest.</p> <p>We will implement a Conflict-of-Interest pro-forma for completion in the unlikely event we are unable to identify a different staff side representative to support both consistency and job match panels.</p>

Key Findings	Risk & Impact	Agreed Management Action
<p>In completing the same audit at another NHS Wales organisation, we noted that an internal consistency form is utilised, which is completed after every panel and then saved with the respective job. Although we appreciate this is not a requirement of the Handbook, it is an element of good practice, as it forms a stronger audit trail if any issues arise.</p>		<p>Expected Evidence of Implementation: Consistency & Job Match attendance list</p>
<p>Theme: Approvals</p>	<p>Medium Priority</p> <p>Control Design</p>	<p>Officer: Assistant Director of Workforce Target Implementation Date: 19th July 2025</p>

Internal

The JE Lead regularly runs activity reports from CAJE to monitor results and highlight any anomalies. Verbal reports and updates are provided on a one-to-one basis to their line manager, the Head of HR Operations & Business Partner, on a weekly basis, along with quarterly written reports. However, the last written report provided was dated September 2023 and the JE Lead confirmed that due to the development of a new report along with resourcing constraints, the updates have been verbal. At the end of the year, the JE Lead downloads a complete list of jobs reviewed to reflect in an annual report. However, the annual report for 2024 has yet to be completed due to resourcing issues. See **Key Finding 4**.

We acknowledge that reporting requirements, and more specifically key performance indicators (KPIs), are not set out within the national Guidance. However, we consider that the reporting of key performance indicators (including how many job evaluations / job evaluation panels have been undertaken each month, their status, process times etc.) provides valuable information and analysis that could be reported more formally internally within the health board. At present, this is mitigated by the fact that there is currently no backlog for job descriptions to be evaluated. See **Key Finding 5**.

At the date of audit fieldwork, the JE Lead was developing a Power BI report which will contain KPIs relevant to the job evaluation process. The report will be available for line managers and the Head of Workforce Effectiveness and Analytics. However, we note there is currently no intention to include the detail in reports to Committee level.

External

An annual report on progress, developments and presenting a comparison against prior years is also presented to the Partnership Forum. The most recent was issued in September 2024.






Whilst not reporting per se, there is representation at a number of All Wales groups which can help facilitate the JE evaluation process being undertaken, including membership at the Wales Monitoring Group, Wales Training Group, Wales Profile Group, Wales JE Technical Group, National Training Group and the NHS Wales CAJE Review Meeting.

Key Findings	Risk & Impact	Agreed Management Action
<p>4 Annual Report</p> <p>Whilst we understand the close nature of the working arrangements between the JE Lead and line management, there is an expectation that an annual report from CAJE be generated and reported. However, we note that the report for 2024 has been delayed.</p>	<p>Limited opportunities to measure, communicate and benchmark performance for the year.</p>	<p>Agreed Action:</p> <p>Generate an Annual Report utilising Power BI – reportable April -April.</p> <p>The Annual Report will be presented at Health Board Partnership Forum and also WOD In-Committee on an annual basis.</p> <hr/> <p>Expected Evidence of Implementation:</p> <p>Annual Report</p>

		Medium Priority	Officer: Assistant Director of Workforce Target Implementation Date: 19 th July 2025
	Theme: Reporting	Control Design	
5	<p>Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)</p> <p>KPIs are not outlined by the Handbook. The development of the new dashboard (Power BI) report by the Job Evaluation Lead is being developed to include KPIs however we are cognisant that the health board is still defining what those KPIs should be.</p> <p>Accordingly, there is no performance data in relation to the job evaluation process currently reported at Committee level.</p>	<p>Limited opportunities to accurately measure performance and progress.</p> <p>Reduced opportunities for improvement.</p>	<p>Agreed Action:</p> <p>The Annual Report utilising Power BI, as per key finding 4, will include KPIs.</p> <p>Performance against KPIs included in the Annual Report to be reported to Health Board Partnership Forum and WOD In-Committee on an annual basis.</p> <p>Expected Evidence of Implementation:</p> <p>Annual Report</p>
		Medium Priority	Officer: Assistant Director of Workforce Target Implementation Date: 19 th July 2025
	Theme: Performance Monitoring	Control Operation	

Appendix A Assurance Opinion & Prioritisation of Findings

Assurance Opinion

	Substantial	Few matters require attention and are compliance or advisory in nature. Low impact on residual risk exposure.
	Reasonable	Some matters require management attention in control design or compliance. Low to moderate impact on residual risk exposure until resolved.
	Limited	More significant matters require management attention. Moderate impact on residual risk exposure until resolved.
	Unsatisfactory	Action is required to address the whole control framework in this area. High impact on residual risk exposure until resolved.
	Advisory	Given to reviews and support provided to management which form part of the internal audit plan, to which the assurance definitions are not appropriate. These reviews are still relevant to the evidence base upon which the overall opinion is formed.

Prioritisation of Findings

Priority	Explanation
High	Significant risk to achievement of a system objective OR evidence present of material loss, error, or misstatement. Poor system design OR widespread non-compliance.
Medium	Some risk to achievement of a system objective. Minor weakness in system design OR limited non-compliance.

Website: [Audit & Assurance Services - NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership](#)

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The report is based on the review work undertaken and is not necessarily a complete statement of all weaknesses that exist or potential improvements. Whilst every care has been taken to ensure that the information provided in this report is as accurate as possible, no complete guarantee or warranty can be given with regard to the advice and information contained.

Our work does not provide absolute assurance that material errors, loss or fraud do not exist. Responsibility for a sound system of internal controls and the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities rests with management of the Swansea Bay University Health Board. Work performed by internal audit should not be relied upon to identify all strengths and weaknesses in internal controls, or all circumstances of fraud or irregularity. Effective and timely implementation of recommendations is important for the development and maintenance of a reliable internal control system.

Public Sector Internal Audit Standards

Audit work undertaken by NHS Wales Audit and Assurance Services conforms with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing and associated Public Sector Internal Audit Standards as validated through the external quality assessment undertaken by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy in April 2023.

