

UNISON

Internal Auditor – Finance Department

Job Brief

UNISON is UK's leading trade union, with over 1.3 million members working in the public services, energy services, private, voluntary and community sectors. UNISON employs around 1200 staff, approximately 370 at our national centre in Euston central London and the remainder in our 12 regions across the UK including Northern Ireland.

The Finance Office is located at the UNISON Centre in Central London. Its main functions include supporting the General Secretariat and the NEC via the Finance and Resource Management Committee. With annual subscription income of around £165 million, the key objective is the effective management of the union's finances, ensuring that UNISON considers the financial implications when meeting its objectives and the needs of its members.

There are 32 members of staff in the department with responsibilities over financial management and operations, regional and branch financial management, staff pensions and internal audit.

The Internal Audit team is a small but well established team undertaking routine branch audits on a cyclical basis as well as ad hoc special investigations when required including fraud investigations. The team is also involved in assisting branches in completing their annual accounts and providing general and technical support and guidance on various financial and accounting matters. The number of active branches has decreased over recent years as branches are merged or are closed for strategic reasons and are currently around 900 active branches. Branches themselves are coming under increasing pressures due to the changing environment in which they operate and some lack the resources or knowledge to manage branch finances.

The internal audit team is experiencing increasing demand for its services as the union seeks to strengthen and improve branch financial management and reduce financial risks. The demand comes not only from smaller branches seeking help, advice and support to maintain financial records and accounts but also as a result of changes in branch administration or from branch closures and mergers. The Internal Audit team aims to be independent and objective in its actual audits but also works closely with the cooperation of and in conjunction with branches, regions and various other stakeholders. The team undertakes regular cyclical audits but also acts in a technical advisory and support capacity in matters of branch accounting whilst also investigating and resolving both routine and specific enquiries problems at branch and regional level.

The role of the Internal Auditor can vary from day to day working alongside more senior colleagues as part of an effective team. Generally speaking this can be an office /desk based role however some degree of travel will be required.

A brief summary of the main areas of work is as follows:

- Performing branch audits and ad hoc special investigations and dealing with branch queries on all aspects of branch finances.
- Report comprehensively to Senior Auditor and relevant interested parties on above and provide management information as required in a timely manner.
- Putting forward and following up on recommendations to mitigate risks identified and maintaining the audit log, records and working papers to high standards.
- Liaise with relevant committees, legal parties (internal and external) and any relevant third party representatives on legal cases and proceedings.
- Develop and update internal audit procedures, relevant handbooks and guidance as required for publication including training materials.

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Internal Auditor **Finance Department**

Job Description

Grade: 4
Hours: 35 per week
Location: UNISON Centre, London
Reports to: Head of Audit

Overall Summary

The Internal Audit Section plays an important role in the monitoring of the finances of UNISON's network of branches and regional lay functions. The post is one in a team of four led by the Head of Audit. The Section reports to the Director of Finance. Its output is relied upon by UNISON's external auditors.

Key Tasks and Responsibilities

- Working closely with branches and regions to promote effectiveness of branch financial management and ensure completeness accuracy and validity of branch accounts and enhancing the integrity of branch accounts and record keeping.
- Undertaking regular and comprehensive audits, financial reviews, assessments and evaluation, testing of internal controls, data processing and analysis of branch transactions and records in order to minimise risk exposure and safeguard union's assets.
- Providing audit assurance, recommendations and reports as result of audit visits, preparing and maintaining a log of audit issues and following up on matters that arise from audit and special investigations.
- Review the implementation of relevant policy, schemes and the UNISON Rule Book to ensure compliance, good governance and practice and identify gaps.
- Understanding and resolving queries and advising on matters relating to branch operations and finances, budgeting and income forecasting; annual financial returns and consolidations and ensuring the integrity of branch financial data.

- Maintaining comprehensive and accurate records, files and issues log in relation to branch audits, branch enquiries and special investigations which support internal and external reporting.
- Providing updated and relevant management information as required to branches, regions, committees and National secretariat on branch finances, activities and operations.
- Review, testing and monitoring of branch activities to ensure compliance with internal and external financial regulations and legal requirements.
- Development and delivery of training and support to branches, regions and at national level on finance systems, effective financial management and reporting including interpretation of financial data, budgets and forecast information.
- Updating and maintaining policy and process documentation including handbooks, guidance and training materials ensuring they are fit for purpose and communicated effectively.
- Working alongside other teams within the organisation on a variety of branch finance, governance and compliance related matters in accordance with union policies and guidelines of branch accounting and the UNSION rule book.

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Person Specification

UNISON is an equal opportunities employer, committed to providing equal opportunities regardless of race or ethnic origin, gender identity, family situation, sexual orientation, disability, religion or age. This person specification is designed to help the members of the interviewing panel judge the qualities of interviewees in a systematic and consistent way and in accordance with UNISON equal opportunities policy. It is given to all job applicants for information.

Managerial:

- Ability to lead on audits and investigations to conclusion including directing staff and if required to deputise for the head of the section.
- Experience of working as part of a dedicated finance team and alongside other operational teams and senior managers to Secretariat level.
- Ability and experience of taking difficult decisions and seeing them through to final resolution or implementation.
- Ability and experience in developing and delivering technical training at all levels and to variety of audiences.
- Experience, ability and confidence to persuade, influence and aid in decision making processes.

Specialist / Technical Knowledge and expertise:

- Recognised CCAB qualification or part qualified with proven relevant experience in financial and/or management accounting.
- Technical and practical knowledge of financial analysis and internal and external auditing principles and practices.
- Ability and experience to understand and/or interpret complicated financial and operational issues, policies, practices and regulations.
- Significant and relevant experience of working in financial data processing, recording and reporting environment.
- High level of competency in using IT solutions including Excel, and Word applications.
- Practical Knowledge of systems or process development, testing and implementation.

- Ability and experience in drafting and updating processes and process driven documentations including training materials.
- Ability to understand and advise on financial and operational matters in relation to compliance with internal governance and external regulatory requirements.

Administrative and Organisational:

- Ability to manage enquires on range of finance and process related issues from branches in a timely manner.
- Experience in dealing with a variety of issues on a daily basis, meeting deadlines and working under pressure with minimum supervision and using own initiative.
- Ability to analyse and filter information to develop solutions and resolve problems in a clear and constructive manner.
- Self organised and methodical in planning ahead and managing workloads including audit visits, training and attendance at legal hearings if required.
- Being systematic in keeping and maintaining records and work files.

Interpersonal & Communications:

- Experience of drafting and delivering clear and concise actions, reports , instructions, guidelines, handbooks and training material.
- Understanding and complying with data protection requirements and use of absolute discretion when communicating sensitive, private and/or confidential information.
- Ability to communicate financial or non financial information clearly and effectively both verbally and in writing across all sections of the organisation and to variety of audiences.
- Experience and ability to interpret and disseminate often complicated regulations, policies or processes in simple concise terms suitable for end user.
- Ability to correspond and liaise confidently with internal and external parties on finance and other work related matters.
- Flexibility and tactful manner and behaviour in dealing with branch and regional officers lay members and committees and full time officers.
- Customer orientated and professional approach, attitude and behaviour at all times and in all matters.

Initiative & Independence:

- Able to work proactively to offer support and assistance across teams where required.
- Ability to assess a situation and develop, agree and implement reasonable solutions.
- Able to distinguish between confidential, sensitive and/or complicated matters for possible escalation to senior team member or line manager.
- Ability to prioritise between demanding or conflicting objectives and demands in order to maximise efficiency and effectiveness.
- Flexible approach using own initiative and /or work unsupervised or under guidance to achieve given objectives.

General:

- Empathy with the aims and objectives of a modern trade union organisation.
- Proven commitment to promoting Equal Opportunities in the work place.
- Willingness and flexibility to undertake a wide of variety of tasks as they arise.
- Ability and flexibility to travel to branch and regions as required as integral part of the role with possible overnight stays.