



## THE ROAD AHEAD: VISIONARY INTERNAL AUDITOR

The internal audit profession is on the brink of profound transformation as it enters 2025 and beyond. Technological advancements such as artificial intelligence (AI) and data analytics are reshaping audits, providing deeper insights and unprecedented efficiency. Simultaneously, global challenges such as climate change, geopolitical shifts, and evolving business models require internal auditors to expand their expertise and adapt to emerging risks.

This transformation demands a shift, and internal auditors must evolve into visionary professionals akin to “James Bond” —strategic, tech-savvy, adaptable and always staying one step ahead of the game in their proactive and forward-thinking approach. Key attributes for future-ready auditors include:

- 1. Technology Proficiency:** Leveraging AI and data analytics to drive efficiency and insights.
- 2. Strategic Insight:** Transitioning from watchdogs to strategic advisors, connecting risks with opportunities pivotal in guiding organisational success.
- 3. Agility and Adaptability:** Ability to pivot to address rapidly changing risks and challenges proactively.
- 4. Ethical Leadership:** Upholding governance and accountability as trusted advisors and guardians of governance.

### A Historic Milestone: The New Global Internal Audit Standards in the Public Interest

The new Global Internal Audit Standards will take effect 9 January 2025 marking a historic milestone for the profession. This has been a topic that is the forefront for most of us and I trust that you have wisely used the one-year transition period to prepare for the new [Standards](#). A quick recap of the key highlights:

- **Comprehensive Framework:** Five domains, 15 principles, and 52 standards guide internal audit practices globally.
- **Topical Requirements:** Designed to address key global risks, the first of these, focusing on cybersecurity, is still in the feedback phase.
- **Collaborative Roles:** Emphasises the Chief Audit Executive’s role and collaboration with senior management and the board which is introduced as “essential conditions”.
- **Public Sector and Smaller Internal Audit Functions:** Recognising the unique needs of public sector and smaller internal audit functions, the application of the Standards may differ accordingly.

### Broader Developments and Evolving Risks

Closer to home, the evolving risk landscape is evident in Singapore’s new guidelines on digital scams effective 16 December 2024, which assign financial institutions and telecommunication companies' responsibilities under the [Shared Responsibility Framework](#). Enhanced [E-Payments User Protection Guidelines](#) also require financial institutions to implement anti-scam measures. These developments underscore the need for auditors to remain abreast of regulatory changes and serve as strategic advisors in navigating new risks.

### Embracing 2025: Innovation and Growth

Looking ahead, the internal audit profession must embrace innovation, collaboration, and continuous improvement. As part of efforts to support this, an Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) certificate course will be introduced in 2025, equipping auditors to provide assurance on ESG initiatives alongside our other thought leadership and courses.

As the profession embarks on this transformative journey, the words of J.P. Morgan resonate: “The first step towards getting somewhere is to decide you’re not going to stay where you are.” With commitment and vision, 2025 promises to be a year of opportunity and impact for internal auditors.

Yours sincerely

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