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Is your annual submission deadline coming up?

Every year, every registered charity in Scotland must send OSCR a set of accounts, a trustees' annual report and an external scrutiny report.



OSCR requires this information within 9 months of a charity's 'year-end'. For example, when a charity has a financial year-end of 31 March its deadline date is 31 December. A significant number of charities have a deadline between December and January. It is clearly marked on a charity's entry in the [Scottish Charity Register](#) if they have missed their deadline.

Charities submit this information by completing an online annual return using [OSCR Online](#). OSCR Online was upgraded on 25 July 2022, and the principal contact for a charity received new log in information around this date. When the principal contact accesses the upgraded system, they can add an additional two users who also have the ability to submit a charity's online annual return.

If you are the principal contact of a charity and you have not logged into the system yet, please do so now. [More information is available here.](#)

What happens if my charity is late?

In addition to displaying this information on their entry in the [Scottish Charity Register](#), if a charity does not provide us with the required information the following could apply:

- under section 45 of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, we can appoint an accountant to prepare the accounts at the trustees' expense
- charities who submit their accounts after their deadline may experience difficulties in obtaining external funding, as many funders use the information on the register to inform their funding decisions
- charities may not be able to access other benefits of charitable status, such as exemption from water rates.

OSCR's website has a range of information to support you with providing annual information. This includes guidance on:

- [Submitting an online annual return](#)
- [Charity accounts](#)
- [Trustees' Annual Reports](#)

EVENT: How to use OSCR Online to submit your annual return



OSCR is hosting a free online event at 1pm on 07 December 2022.

This event will explain why we ask for annual information and how to use OSCR Online.

It will take place using Zoom and will consist of a short presentation by the OSCR Team, followed by an opportunity for attendees to ask questions about our new system and how to complete their annual return.

[Register for 'Using OSCR Online to submit your annual return' here.](#)

If you require any further support in completing your annual return, [our website](#) contains a range of information to support charities and their representatives.

Festive period opening hours

Our opening hours during the Christmas period are:

- Monday 26 December – closed
- Tuesday 27 December – closed
- Wednesday 28 December – 10am to 1pm
- Thursday 29 December – 10am to 1pm
- Friday 30 December – 10am to 1pm
- Monday 2 January – closed
- Tuesday 3 January – closed



The most common queries we receive in December relate to submitting an online annual return using OSCR Online. If you need support with this, please [read our guidance first](#). Don't forget, we're running an online event, [Using OSCR Online to submit your annual return](#), at 1pm on 7 December to help you understand how to use the system.

If your online annual return deadline is 31 December 2022, log in to your OSCR Online account now to make sure you have access.

Remember to submit your charity's annual return well ahead of the deadline if possible.

The [FAQs](#) section on our website also contains lots of helpful information and the answers to some of our most-asked questions.

On 28, 29 and 30 December we will have a limited number of staff available operating our phones, so will be running a restricted phone service dealing only with urgent enquiries. You can also contact us using our online [contact form](#).

VIDEO: Learning points for charity trustees webinar



It's both a challenging and rewarding job being a charity trustee, and working as part of a team to deliver on the purposes of the charity.

During Trustees' Week 2022 we held an online event

called 'Learning points for charity trustees' covering:

- The basics of charity trusteeship
- The trustee experience in practice
- Common problems – what, why and how
- How to avoid issues in running a charity

[You can view a recording here](#). Please visit our [YouTube channel](#) for more videos from OSCR covering a range of topics related to running a charity.

7 ways to speed up your application for charitable status

Each year, we add several hundred new charities to the Scottish Charity Register. But before your organisation can officially become a charity, you must submit an application for charitable status.



This process may seem daunting, especially if it's your first time registering a charity, but we're here to help. We've produced some top tips below to help you fill out your application correctly and ensure we can progress your application for charitable status quickly.

[View 7 ways to speed up your application for charitable status here](#).

VACANCY: Data and Improvement Assistant



We are currently seeking a Data and Improvement Assistant.

The individual will work closely with the Data and Improvement Officer to undertake analysis of charity and casework data gathered

across the organisation to help inform OSCR's regulatory activities and thematic research. They will interrogate databases to provide information for internal and external data requests and reports. The Data and Improvement Assistant will also provide cover and support to administration colleagues across OSCR, specifically the Communications and Digital Assistant. This is not an ICT post, but does include a number of technical elements which do not require technical qualifications.

Our office is based in Dundee, however we offer a hybrid work-style allowing staff to work remotely on the understanding that they are able to attend their contractual work location 2 days per week.

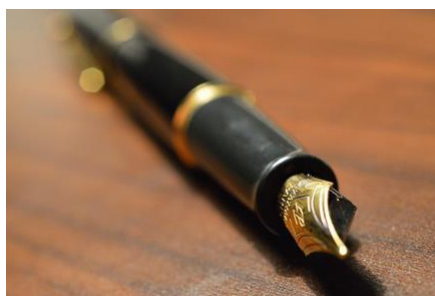
The post is full time and permanent, with a salary of £25,713.00 per annum.

[Find out more and apply here.](#)

The closing date for the vacancy is 12 December 2022.

Inquiries and the media

In our latest blog, OSCR Digital & Communications Manager Ian Grieve talks about how we respond to media requests about charity concerns and OSCR's inquiry work.



[Read 'Inquiries and the media' here.](#)

You can view other blogs from experts across the sector on our [blog page](#).

How much do you need in charity reserves?



Charity reserves are funds which can be freely spent on any of your charitable purposes. Reserves can be really useful to help you budget for unforeseen emergencies, unexpected bills or other short-term deficits. They can even help

you through difficult periods like the coronavirus pandemic.

But how much should you have in your charity reserves pot? The short answer is: it depends. There is no blanket rule and the amount you should have in reserves will vary depending on your charity's needs.

We published some tips to help you understand why your charity should have reserves and how much you may want to have in the bank.

[Read our charity reserves tips here.](#)

Scotland's charity regulator: OSCR is the independent registrar and regulator of Scotland's 23,000 charities

www.oscr.org.uk | info@oscr.org.uk | General enquiries: 01382 220446 | Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) 2nd Floor, Quadrant House, 9 Riverside Drive, Dundee, DD1 4NY |

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Find us on facebook [OSCR](https://www.facebook.com/OSCR)

OSCR Online makes it easier for charities to report to OSCR, and improves transparency for the public. For more information, or to register, visit www.oscr.org.uk

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