



JOB DESCRIPTION

Post title:	Finance Business Partner
Academy:	Laidlaw Schools Trust Central Team
Reporting to:	CFO
Salary/pay range:	NJC PO4 Scale point 35 – 38 (£46,142 - £49,282)
Hours of work:	Full-time, 37 hours per week

Job purpose

The Finance Business Partner supports the Chief Financial Officer in delivering an efficient, responsive, and professional financial service across Laidlaw Schools Trust. Working closely with academies and shared services, the role provides real-time financial insight, analysis and strategic advice to support effective budget setting, monitoring, forecasting, decision-making, and financial planning.

The postholder will develop strong relationships with Principals, senior leaders, and budget holders to ensure high-quality financial management, robust internal controls, and consistent application of Trust policies.

The role is based at the central head office in Newcastle and requires travel across the North East, to provide on-site support to academies.

Main duties and responsibilities

The Finance Business Partner will support all financial aspects of academies and shared services within Laidlaw Schools Trust. The duties outlined below are indicative of the responsibilities of the post and are not exhaustive. Additional duties of a similar level may be required from time to time.

Finance Business Partnering & Relationships

- Build strong, supportive relationships with Principals, Headteachers, Heads of Service, and Business/Operations Managers, representing the Central Finance Team and promoting the Trust's values.
- Provide bespoke strategic financial advice, supporting long-term and short-term planning.
- Support and challenge budget holders to ensure efficient, sustainable, and well-informed financial decisions.
- Support less experienced colleagues in prioritising workloads and managing conflicting demands.

Budgeting, Monitoring & Reporting

- Assist academies and shared services with budget planning, in-year financial monitoring, transaction processing, procurement etc. ensuring compliance with Trust policies and deadlines.
- Prepare accurate monthly management accounts, including variance analysis to budget and forecast, in line with DfE requirements and accounting standards.
- Manage prepayments, accruals, and other accounting adjustments to ensure accurate financial reporting.
- Complete month-end processes including prepayments, accruals, and balance sheet reconciliations.
- Maintain a high level of concentration for prolonged periods to ensure all compliance documents, policies and financial data are accurate and produced to a high standard.

Financial Compliance, Controls & Systems

- Assist with the production of annual statutory accounts and financial returns (e.g. VAT).
- Maintain and develop financial spreadsheets, models, and supporting systems.
- Work with academies and shared services to maintain the fixed asset register.
- Promote strong internal financial controls and ensure compliance with Trust procedures and public procurement regulations.

Payroll & Staffing Support

- Support oversight of payroll processes, ensuring accurate records, reconciliations and checks prior to CFO approval.
- Provide financial advice on staffing structures, resourcing and cost implications to academy leaders and budget holders.

Value for Money & Financial Insight

- Support benchmarking, efficiency initiatives and value-for-money analysis across the Trust, identifying areas for financial improvement.
- Provide financial insights, highlight risks and issues, and recommend appropriate remedial actions.

Operational Support & Continuous Improvement

- Provide regular on-site and remote support to academies and shared services throughout the financial year.
- Contribute to project work and Trust-wide improvement initiatives as required.
- Actively share best practice, improve processes and support a collaborative team culture.
- Manage multiple communication channels simultaneously to maintain smooth financial operations.

Workload Management & Ways of Working

- Work in a fast-paced environment with frequent conflicting priorities, ensuring strict deadlines are met.
- Respond effectively to short-notice changes in demand to deliver high-quality outcomes.
- Maintain effective workload organisation, particularly at month-end and other peak periods.
- Work flexibly to support individual and team objectives.

Professional Development & Compliance Awareness

- Keep up to date with relevant educational, funding and legislative changes and apply this knowledge to support academies.
- Take responsibility for ongoing professional development to meet the changing needs of the Trust.

Other duties

- Carry out any other duties in accordance with the expectations of this level at the reasonable request of your line manager.
- Ensure that the area of work complies with legislation relating to health and safety, and observe and implement specific responsibilities in relation to these matters as detailed within the Trust's policy.
- Be aware and familiar with policies and other guidance on the safeguarding and promotion of wellbeing of children and young people. Take appropriate action in accordance with policies and Keeping Children Safe in Education where required.