

Job Description for the Post of Internal Audit & Financial Accounting Officer

Reporting to: Head of Financial Accounting

Also Working with: Business Partners, Finance Officers & College Finance team

Job Purpose:

To support the Head of Financial accounting in the production of all statutory financial reports and information required by external agencies, the statutory audit process and collation of high-quality information for use by the Finance Director, Chief Financial Officer, Executive Leadership Team, and other internal/external stakeholders. To lead on coordination of Internal audit activities for the College & Trust.

Key Responsibilities:

Financial Accounts

- Assist in preparation of year-end financial statements and assist with the audit process by gathering information and working with external auditors
- Keep informed about changes in financial reporting rules and help apply them in the organisation, especially those relevant to the education sector.
- Support the preparation of financial returns as required
- Provide day-to-day support to the finance team, including helping with purchase ledger, staff expenses, and general finance queries.
- Assist with maintaining accurate records, including reconciliations for VAT, intercompany balances, and other control accounts.
- Assist in preparation of VAT returns and support compliance with tax rules such as gift aid and IR35, with guidance from senior staff
- Prepare and review reconciliations for key balance sheet accounts including VAT, intercompany, and purchase ledger. Escalate any discrepancies to senior finance staff.
- Prepare files in preparation for audits as directed by the Head of Financial Accounting

Internal Audit

- Coordinate the visits identified in the Internal Audit plan each term and ensure the Internal Audit team have access to their required information.
- Establish processes to monitor the KPIs in the Internal Audit contract preparing termly reports to ARC on service delivery, performance and results of audits
- Maintain the audit tracker log
- Review operational school level, College and CT risk registers to identify emerging themes or escalating risks and advising on the rolling audit programme
- Prepare an OHC&AT internal audit plan of routine checks (to ensure finance policies and procedures are followed) with the Head of Financial Accounting and other senior finance colleagues. Organise the visits to perform tests and prepare a termly report on activities, highlighting risks to follow up and suggested improvements.
- Visit schools and Centres too and provide training, guidance and support with compliance and internal control
- Perform asset checks at schools and centres eg IT, livestock as required Coordinate information to prepare the reports for Audit committees regarding Connected persons, liaising with HR, Safeguarding team and governance.
- Be aware of fraud prevention policy and identify training to be delivered across OHC&AT to maintain vigilance.

General Duties

- Carry out tasks as requested by senior finance staff.
- Maintain confidentiality and follow data protection rules.
- Take part in training and development activities.

- Follow all organisational policies, including those on equality, safeguarding, and health and safety.

Additional notes

- Job Descriptions are to be reviewed annually
- The responsibilities listed above are the essentials of the post; it is always open to the postholder to propose ways of extending these responsibilities

Person Specification for the Post of Internal Audit and Financial Accounting Officer

The Person Specification shows the abilities and skills you will need to carry out the duties in the Job Description. Shortlisting is carried out based on how well you meet the requirements of the Person Specification. You should mention any experience you have had which shows how you could meet these requirements when you fill in your Application Form. If you are selected for interview, you may be asked also to undertake practical tests to cover the skills and abilities shown below.

| Area | Requirements | Essential/Desirable |
|--------------------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| Qualifications | AAT qualified, or part-qualified CCAB/CIMA/ACCA or working towards a recognised accounting qualification. | Essential |
| | Strong general education including GCSEs (or equivalent) in Maths and English. | Essential |
| | Commitment to Continuing Professional Development (CPD). | Essential |
| | Degree in accounting, finance, business, or related discipline. | Desirable |
| | Training or certification in internal audit, risk management, or compliance. | Desirable |
| | Knowledge of financial reporting standards applicable to academies or public sector organisations. | Desirable |
| Experience | Experience in financial accounting, including preparation of balance sheet reconciliations, VAT returns, intercompany balances, and purchase ledger management. | Essential |
| | Experience supporting statutory audits, including preparation of audit files and responding to audit queries. | Essential |
| | Experience in coordinating internal audits, maintaining audit trackers, and preparing reports for management or audit committees. | Essential |
| | Experience producing accurate and timely financial information for senior management. | Essential |
| | Experience in reconciling control accounts and supporting general finance operations, including staff expenses and purchase ledger queries. | Essential |
| | Experience in the education sector or working within a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT). | Desirable |
| | Experience with risk registers, compliance monitoring, and fraud prevention processes. | Desirable |
| | Experience conducting operational or asset audits at multiple sites. | Desirable |
| | Familiarity with financial software and accounting systems used in the MAT/education sector. | Desirable |
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| Knowledge & Understanding | Solid understanding of accounting principles, statutory reporting, and audit processes. | Essential |
| | Awareness of VAT rules, tax compliance, and financial control requirements. | Essential |
| | Understanding of internal audit frameworks, risk registers, and control monitoring. | Essential |
| | Knowledge of confidentiality and data protection requirements, particularly regarding financial and HR information. | Essential |

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| | Knowledge of policies and processes related to safeguarding, equality, and health & safety. | Essential |
| | Knowledge of academy trust finance regulations, ESFA guidance, and public sector accounting standards. | Desirable |
| | Awareness of fraud prevention and internal control best practices. | Desirable |
| | Understanding of connected party/related party transaction requirements. | Desirable |
| Skills & Abilities | Excellent organisational and time-management skills, with the ability to manage multiple tasks and meet deadlines. | Essential |
| | Strong analytical skills with attention to detail and accuracy. | Essential |
| | Ability to maintain high-quality documentation and audit trails | Essential |
| | Effective communication skills, both written and verbal, with the ability to liaise with internal and external stakeholders. | Essential |
| | Ability to work independently and collaboratively within a finance team. | Essential |
| | Competent in Microsoft Office, particularly Excel, and confident in using financial systems | Essential |
| | Ability to identify risks, escalate appropriately, and suggest improvements. | Essential |
| | Ability to conduct training or guidance sessions for staff on compliance or internal control processes. | Desirable |
| | Experience reporting on KPIs and producing termly reports for audit committees. | Desirable |
| Personal Attributes | Professionalism, integrity, and discretion when handling sensitive financial or personnel information. | Essential |
| | Proactive and solution-focused, with the ability to identify issues early and contribute to process improvements | Essential |
| | Commitment to OHC&AT values, including inclusion, equality, safeguarding, and high standards of service. | Essential |
| | Flexible, adaptable, and able to work across multiple sites when required. | Essential |
| | Collaborative approach and willingness to support colleagues and the wider finance function. | Essential |
| | Willingness to travel to multiple academy sites as required. | Essential |
| | Commitment to continuous professional development | Essential |

Orchard Hill College & Academy Trust is proud to be a Disability Confident Employer, committed to creating an inclusive and supportive workplace for all.

Orchard Hill College & Academy Trust endeavour to make any necessary reasonable adjustments to the job and the working environment to enable access to employment opportunities for disabled job applicants or continued employment for any employee who develops a disabling condition.

This **Job Description** and **Person Specification** is current but will be reviewed on an annual basis and following consultation with you, may be changed to reflect or anticipate changes in job requirements which are commensurate with the job title and grade in line with the school's changing needs.

In line with the statutory guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education, the Trust reserves the right to request and review references **prior to interview** as part of our safer recruitment process. Any concerns raised will be followed up with the applicant before a recruitment decision is made.