

JOB DESCRIPTION AND PERSON SPECIFICATION

Job Title	Senior Finance Business Partner	Location	Ideally based in or near the Northamptonshire / Buckinghamshire area
Salary	Dependent upon experience	Hours	Permanent, Full Time
Department	Finance	Reports To	Head of Finance Business Partnering
Working Pattern	Regular (at least weekly) travel to each school which the role is responsible for, but also occasional travel to other Trust sites as required.		

JOB PURPOSE:

The overall purpose of this post is to be professionally responsible and accountable for providing a high-quality financial service to the academies that the post-holder has responsibility for. The post is central to supporting the Trust and its academies to achieve their strategic aims and objectives, via effective and efficient management of its financial resources to enhance the life chances of children.

The post holder will be a senior finance business partner to the school leadership teams and will work closely with the Trust's Head of Finance Business Partnering and the Trust's Financial Controller to continuously develop processes and the Central Finance team.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES:

LEADERSHIP AND STRATEGY

- Meet regularly with the assigned academies' leadership teams to discuss financial strategy, monthly management accounts, ongoing rolling forecasts and to provide financial and commercial advice.
- Attend relevant leadership meetings at the academies and negotiate and influence operational decision-making, within each schools' senior leadership team.
- Lead on the development of budgets and the three-year financial plans for the academies, ensuring they reflect the strategic priorities of the academies and the academy development plan.
- Lead on the financial aspects of Integrated Curriculum Financial Planning (ICFP) for the academies, working with the school leadership team.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- Ensure that financial management and procedures within the academies complies with the requirements of the Trust's Finance Manual, applicable accounting standards, the Charities SORP, the Companies Act and with DfE guidance including the Academy Trust Handbook and Academies Accounts Direction.
- Proactively implement the Trust's policies and procedures and ensure compliance with the Trust's framework of internal controls.
- Promote a culture of continuous improvement within the finance function and promote shared learning and good practice across Trust academies.
- Prepare the budgets and 3-year plan in line with Trust guidance for the academies.
- Continuously update the rolling financial forecasts for the academies using the Trust's budgeting software, and ensure budgeting controls are upheld and that the academies work within the approved budget.

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- Manage the production of insightful month end reporting in line with the Trust's timetable and maintain procedures to ensure financial transactions are recorded and reported accurately within the accounting system.
- Identify income generation opportunities for the academies including preparation of grant applications, cost/ benefit analysis for new income generating measures and the development of new initiatives.
- Ensure compliance with the Trust's procurement processes including competitive tendering and approval in line with the Finance manuals Delegated Authorities.
- Appraise and develop procurement business cases.
- Manage the provision of information for the year-end statutory accounts, DfE returns, internal and external audit, in line with the guidance issued by the Trust's Financial Controller and implement audit recommendations on a timely basis.
- Provide financial training for school leadership teams, budget holders and other members of staff as required.

TRUST-WIDE FINANCIAL SUPPORT

- Work with Financial Controller and the Head of Finance Business Partnering to actively develop and improve existing financial processes, procedures and analysis to promote best practice across the Trust.
- Undertake agreed project work for the Trust.
- Attend and participate in Central Finance team meetings and Regional Operational meetings.

MANAGEMENT OF STAFF

- Coach and develop colleagues within the Central Finance team, providing regular feedback, mentoring and support to build capability, improve performance and promote a culture of continuous learning and professional growth.

This job description is not necessarily a comprehensive definition of the post, and the post holder will be required to undertake other duties appropriate to the grade and character of the work as directed. The job description will be reviewed at least once a year, and it may be subject to modification or amendment at any time after consultation with the post holder. The duties may be varied to meet the changing demands of the school at the reasonable discretion of the Head of Finance Business Partnering.

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JOB REQUIREMENTS:		
	Essential	Desirable
QUALIFICATIONS	- Fully qualified accountant (ACCA, CIMA, ACA, CIPFA etc.) - Qualified by experience (QBE) candidates with significant relevant Finance Business Partnering experience will also be considered.	
EXPERIENCE	- Experience in a Senior finance role - Experience of managing teams across multiple locations/ branches/ subsidiaries - Significant post-qualification experience - Experience working as a Finance Business Partner, supporting a variety of stakeholders - Experience in financial management and compliance with internal control frameworks - Experience in preparation of management accounts - Experience in preparation of budgets and rolling forecasts - Experience of people management and developing staff - Experience of liaising with auditors	Education sector experience
KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING	- Up-to-date knowledge of applicable accounting standards and legislation - Understanding of investment appraisal techniques and business case development - Knowledge of financial controls, governance and risk management frameworks - Knowledge of financial performance management, including variance analysis and performance reporting - Understanding of cost management methodologies and approaches to improving business performance and efficiency - Knowledge of data analysis techniques and the use of financial and non-financial information to support decision-making	- Knowledge of academy specific guidance including the Academy Trust Handbook and Accounts Direction issued by the DfE - Knowledge of the Charities' Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) and charity law - A good understanding of the work of a Multi-Academy Trust and schools - Knowledge of PS Financials or similar accounting software

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		• Knowledge of IMP budgeting software or similar
SKILLS AND PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES	• A desire to participate in the delivery of the Trust's vision for a high-quality financial service for the Trust and its schools • Aligned with Creative Education Trust's high aspirations and expectations of self and others • Ability to main robust financial systems and processes • Excellent inter-personal skills with the ability to build effective relationships • Sound decision making that is proactive and solution oriented • Efficient and organised • Proactive, self-motivated, flexible, trustworthy, dependable and reliable • Proven ability to manage a significant workload, meet deadlines and prioritise responsibilities to maintain effectiveness and deliver results • Ability to understand, interpret and clearly communicate financial performance and concepts to colleagues and stakeholders with varying levels of financial understanding • Ability to deliver financial support through a team and ability to motivate and develop the team • Excellent negotiation skills • Demonstrable commercial skills to enable effective evaluation of options and negotiation of excellent terms for service provision	
CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST VALUES	All colleagues are expected to demonstrate the Creative Education Trust values in their work by: • Empowering Ambition: Supporting personal growth, innovation and high performance. • Championing Equity: Promoting fairness, inclusion and high expectations for every student. • Unlocking Opportunity: Helping create access to knowledge, experiences and networks that broaden horizons. These values should be evident in how the post-holder works, collaborates and contributes to the wider Trust community.	
EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES	• A demonstrable commitment to supporting and promoting safeguarding, student welfare, equality and diversity	

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SAFEGUARDING	• A thorough understanding of up-to-date safeguarding requirements and best practice
OTHER REQUIREMENTS	• Regular (at least weekly) travel to each school which the role is responsible for, but also occasional travel to other Trust sites as required. • Full UK driving license and own vehicle is desirable but not essential.

Creative Education Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The successful applicant will be required to undertake relevant safeguarding checks in line with Government safer recruitment guidelines.