



Particulars of Appointment

Senior Finance Business Partner

The post will support the achievement of the university's Strategic Framework for 2022, by providing professional advice and a responsive, high quality, information reporting support services to Commercial and Contract Budget Managers.

Reporting to the Head of Financial Reporting and Systems, the main purpose of this post is to provide commercial and financial support to business areas of responsibility, ensuring all deadlines are met and all deliverables are produced accurately, timely and of requisite quality.

Key Responsibilities include:

- To work with the Head of Financial Performance and Systems to produce of monthly and annual accounts and the preparation and monitoring of the University's budget.
- To work with academic researchers to provide financial expertise in preparation of research bids, project claims and budgetary control
- To provide business partnering and financial leadership to, the University Management Team and all University Budget Managers for dedicated business units.
- Line management of Assistant Management Accountant.

Major Activities and Responsibilities:

Business Partnering

This role requires the individual to be the Research and Knowledge Transfer specialist for the institution and provide full business partner support to the Crop Science and Engineering Academic Departments.

- Develop effective relationships with academic Head of Departments, collaborators and be seen as the key business lead on all financial matters (operating Income and Expenditure and Capital Investment Planning and Reporting).
- Support managers to appraise capital expenditure plans ensure all investment projects are fully analysed and assessed using appropriate techniques and benefits and risks are properly appraised. Embed strong financial management of projects including creating and monitoring

budgets for both costs and benefits. Deliver capital project reports for expense management, cash flow forecasting.

- Responsible for all aspects of the month-end and period-end management accounts reporting and planning, present financial results and commentary in various formats for the areas of responsibility. Prepare financial forecasts in partnership with budget holders to be included in consolidated management accounts, assist the Head of Financial Performance and Systems to produce monthly consolidated Management Accounts.
- Embed a culture of financial and commercial challenge (income maximisation, cost management, investment appraisal) ensuring that all the impacts of business decisions in particular the student experience are understood, evaluated and communicated.
- Prepare financial plans by supporting and offering input on content and presentation to ensure new business initiatives are robust and the financials are understood by the committees and boards they are presented to. Act as the finance lead on any business appraisals, ensure financial appraisals are complete for review and sign off by senior managers.
- Present financial information to ensure Department Heads and Budget Managers understand clearly their financial position and advise action they need to undertake considering associated risks.
- Assist the Head of Financial Performance to prepare period re-forecasts for the Research and Knowledge Transfer projects, and Academic Areas of Responsibility, as required; support the annual budget process, including the preparation of reports for the University's Board of Governors, and Committees.
- Plan and organise activities for the specific areas of responsibility with key budget stakeholders both internally and externally to Finance, to ensure the annual budget cycle and five year planning process is efficient and effective. To communicate Income and Cost budget templates for review and completion by managers.
- Use data analytics and statistical methods to analyse data and generate useful business reports, use data to create models that depict trends/identify opportunities or analyse costs, work with departmental managers to outline the specific data needs for each department.

Preparation of Management and Statutory Accounts

For the departments of responsibility;

- Prepare the monthly management accounts for the University including the posting of journals as necessary to account for accruals and prepayments. To contribute to the production of the University's annual accounts, including the preparation of supporting schedules for year-end adjustments, accruals, prepayments, debtors and creditor provisions.
- Understand fully the overall reporting methods, procedures and guidelines for the Financial Team across the Harper Adams Group, review and suggest revisions to month end procedures with the view to continuously improve the month end process to adapt to continuous change and ensuring the fifth working day reporting date is not compromised.
- Understand, manage and reconcile balance sheet for areas of responsibility allocated, review and advise as to corrective action required and ensure completed.

Research and Knowledge Transfer

- Provide Research advice to other members in the Finance team, ensure a good understanding of UK and EU public funding methodologies is maintained, provide cover for other Business Partners and the Head of Financial Performance during periods of annual leave and sickness.
- Line manage the Assistant Management Accountant who has specific responsibility for the month-end project accounting, review month-end fEC adjustments and ensure income has been

recognised in line with the HE Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP), this includes the management of project claims.

With the support of the Assistant Management Accountant;

- Support and influence Project Managers to correctly cost new project proposals using the Full Economic Cost methodology (fEC) ensuring all sponsors funding restrictions are adhered and any risks are identified during the review and sign-off process.
- Monitor project files ensuring electronic and paper documents are held on file to support funding claims, ensuring claims are made on time and within the funding parameters of the project sponsor and where appropriate audited in with contractual conditions. Develop management and exception reporting to identify and manage projects which are not delivering performance in line with project budgets and or non-financial milestones. Lead project audits from the project sponsor and both the University internal and external audits partners.
- Monitor the financial performance of all Research and Consultancy projects. Using a structured approach, to contract development which has aspects both of facilitation, and also adoption of prudent controls concerning risk. Influence Project Managers by familiarity of the University's contract management processes and procedures and external funding bodies may be used to speed the development of sound contracts. This will include post award management and the timely submission of project claims, monitoring visits and external audits.
- Ensure project income across all academic areas has been claimed on time and in line with funding agreements and project sponsors. Monitor deferred and accrued income balances highlighting any areas of concern. Develop systems to allow continuous review of completed Research and Consultancy projects to monitor progress and indicate further investigation as required.
- Maintain the electronic systems for the registration, management, monitoring and reporting of proposals and contract activity supporting the Research Grants Administrator. Support and train Academic staff to provide data which ensures consistent data collection and processing.
- Provide data to support annual returns such as TRAC, HEB-CI, HESA and annual Funding Council accountability submission.

General Duties

- Assist the Head of Financial Performance with the preparation of the annual budget.
- Provide financial data for a range of statutory returns to funding bodies (HEFCE) and statistics agencies (HESA). Maintain project data required for the annual TRAC reporting process including the maintenance of finance system indices.
- To constantly review the data systems within the Management Accounts section identify improvements to implement change. Required to work in a matrix structure influencing and advising staff across the organisation including project managers, budget managers and senior managers to engage and embrace change.
- The position will, by nature, have a large element of ad hoc project work rather than strict routine. The post holder will be expected to become involved and knowledgeable in all areas of the organisation to be able to function effectively.
- Undertake general duties required of all Finance staff, including involvement in enrolment, and re-enrolment of students.
- To undertake other duties as required by the senior members of the Finance Team.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

	ESSENTIAL	MOA
Education/ Qualifications	CIPFA/CIMA/ACCA/ACA qualified or finalist with a target date to complete.	CV
Experience	Demonstrate competent IT experience including experience of finance systems, manipulating data within Excel and the maintenance and analysis of databases.	Application /Interview
	Experience of identifying, manipulating, and presenting appropriate financial and non-financial data from a variety of sources.	Interview
	Ability to work on own initiative and effectively prioritise a varied and demanding workload, often to tight deadlines.	Interview
Aptitudes and Skills	An excellent confident and diplomatic communicator who is able to engage and listen to customers and successfully challenge current practices without causing conflict.	Interview
	High degree of numeracy with a logical pragmatic approach.	Interview
	Enjoy working in partnership and teams and welcomes the challenge of influencing across the organisation	Interview
	Attention to detail and accuracy. Ability to report financial data in a diverse multi/disciplinary environment and prepare, controlling and forecasting budgets.	Covering Letter/ Interview
	General IT skills including familiarity with MS office suite and email.	CV

	DESIRABLE	MOA
Experience and Knowledge	Experience of using Business Objects, Tableau or similar data analytics reporting tools.	CV
	Understanding of Full Economic Costing (fEC) methodology for Higher Education.	Covering Letter/ Interview
	Experience/knowledge of a HE and or FE financial environment, knowledge of project reporting and financial reporting in commercial or not-for-profit sector environment.	CV/Interview
	Costing and apportionment of shared costs.	Interview

