



## **GROUP FINANCIAL CONTROLLER JOB DESCRIPTION AND PERSON SPECIFICATION**

### **JOB DESCRIPTION**

**Reports to:** Director of Finance and Resources

**Location:** Based at one of the Creative Education Trust schools (with travel to Creative Education Trust head office and schools throughout England)

**Salary:** c£65k (dependent on experience)

**Contract type:** Permanent, full time (part time / job share applications will be considered)

### **Job purpose**

To be professionally responsible and accountable for ensuring the provision of the financial reporting to enable the Trust to achieve its aims and objectives through the effective and efficient management of its financial resources.

To promote best practice and to ensure compliance with the financial processes and procedures set out in the policies of the Trust.

To assist the Director Finance and Resources in directing the financial management and planning of the Group and to contribute to the strategic management of the Trust;

To support regional heads of finance with financial responsibilities and to take responsibility for the speedy and effective introduction of the Trust's financial systems and processes in new Academies joining the Trust

The Group Financial Controller will have a key role in the management of the Trust and will have effective responsibility for:

- Financial statements
- Management accounts
- Financial compliance
- Budget preparation
- Financial reporting
- Audit services
- Payroll services
- Other areas of work commensurate with the purpose of the post.



## **Key responsibilities and accountabilities**

### **Financial management, planning & monitoring**

- Ensure the preparation of annual budgets to agreed deadlines throughout the Trust.
- Prepare financial returns for the Department for Education, the Education Funding Agency, HM Revenue and Customs, Companies House and other bodies as appropriate.
- Manage the Trust's cash-flow, ensuring that no unauthorised overdraft arises, that all cash balances are accurately reconciled to the relevant accounts, and that the Trust does not run at a deficit.
- Review and implement effective financial management in the Trust.
- Ensure the preparation and presentation of relevant monthly and annual financial and management reports, including income and expenditure accounts and balance sheets, to the Director Finance and Resources, the Executive Board, the Board of Trustees and the Department for Education.
- Prepare monthly management accounts for the Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees and Executive Board (consolidated), such accounts to be accompanied by written explanations of variances.
- Ensure the effective operation of financial controls within each Academy, and efficient and imaginative use of resources;
- Devise appropriate accounting procedures to control, monitor and disburse each Academy's budget, including routine financial arrangements;
- Develop and keep updated the computer based financial and management accounting systems for the Trust and each Academy.
- Manage the intercompany recharge process to enable a clear, transparent reconciliation process to take place between the sites operated by the Trust.
- Manage the set up process for new schools joining the Trust in respect of payroll, budgeting software and accounting software. Arrange training for new schools as required to ensure they understand the Trust's financial processes.
- Provide guidance to the Trust Executive team and Regional Heads of Finance in respect of new technical guidance issued by the ESFA.
- Manage the HCSS budgeting system including support to the Regional Heads of Finance in operating the software to achieve the outcome of financial plans
- Manage the linkage between the budgeting software (HCSS) and accounting software (PS Financials) to ensure approved budgets can be reported against in academy management accounts and budget holder statements

### **Audit services**

- Advise the Director Finance and Resources, the Executive Board and each Principal on external and internal audit arrangements as required by financial regulations and memoranda;
- Liaise with auditors and facilitate all audit arrangements;
- Implement audit requirements as they affect all financial activities in the Trust.

### **Support of staff**



- Assist the Director Finance and Resources in providing leadership, motivation and support of finance staff, ensuring that appropriate standards of behaviour, performance and customer care are demonstrated at all times;
- Support regional finance staff with financial responsibilities, in line with the Trust's policies and procedures.
- Assist the Director of Finance and Resources with preparation for regular Senior Finance meetings
- Support Finance staff across the Trust in queries with the accounting software and technical accounting queries.
- Support the Regional Heads of Finance with payroll issues in conjunction with the Director of Human Resources and with understanding the payroll checking process and preparation of payroll journals.
- Actively contribute to the development of quality improvement programmes across the Trust;
- Proactively implement the Trust's policies and procedures.

The job description is a general outline of the job duties and responsibilities and may be amended as Creative Education Trust develops and the role and team grows. The post holder may be required to undertake other duties as may reasonably be required from time to time.



## PERSON SPECIFICATION

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fully qualified accountant (ACCA, CIMA, ACA etc) with proven experience in a senior financial role.</li> </ul>	
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proven experience in financial reporting and in the preparation of annual budgets, monthly management accounts and forecasts, and statutory accounts.</li> <li>Experience of running the financial accounting function for a decentralised group that has a number of branches and/or subsidiaries, each having their own accounting functions with strong financial control orientation.</li> <li>Experience of managing small teams, providing motivation and training to up-skill team members.</li> <li>Experience of setting up and managing internal control systems.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experience of working in the education sector.</li> <li>Experience of acting as liaison with the Trust auditors</li> <li>Experience of acquisitions or mergers.</li> </ul>
Knowledge and understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sound knowledge of accounting standards.</li> <li>Understanding of data protection issues.</li> <li>Basic knowledge of company law.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sound knowledge of academy specific guidance from the ESFA including Accounts Direction and Academies Financial Handbook.</li> <li>Sound knowledge of the Charities' SORP.</li> <li>Basic knowledge of charity law.</li> <li>Good working knowledge of PS Financials accounting software.</li> </ul>
Skills and personal attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Excellent interpersonal skills, with the ability to build effective relationships, both internally and externally.</li> <li>Ability to work pro-actively with budget owners to ensure performance meets agreed targets including KPI's (e.g.</li> </ul>	



	<p>ratios of spend to income)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sound decision making that is proactive and solution oriented.</li><li>• Excellent Microsoft Office skills including exceptional excel skills.</li><li>• Efficient and organised</li><li>• Proactive, flexible, trustworthy, dependable and reliable.</li><li>• Proven ability to manage a significant workload and prioritise responsibilities to maintain effectiveness and deliver results.</li><li>• Aligned with Creative Education Trust's high aspirations and high expectations of self and others</li></ul>	
Equal opportunities and safeguarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A demonstrable commitment to supporting and promoting safeguarding, student welfare, equality and diversity</li></ul>	

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.