

Job title:	Finance Consultant – Academy Finance
Job ref:	HFL1405
Hours:	37 hours per week / 52 weeks a year (part-time / term time plus two weeks considered)
Salary band:	Band 5 – FTE £34,000- £40,000 p.a plus excellent benefits (pro-rata for reduced hours)
Contract:	Permanent
Reports to:	Academy Finance Team manager
Team:	Academy Finance
Location:	Remote working with flexibility required to work across educational settings in Hertfordshire and occasional visits to Robertson House, Stevenage.

Our company

Herts for Learning (HfL) is an award-winning provider of products and services to schools and educational settings within and outside Hertfordshire. We believe that every young person, through access to a great education, should be able to realise their potential, regardless of where they live or their circumstances.

We focus on supporting the schools we work with to achieve successful long-term outcomes for their children. HfL is majority owned by Hertfordshire schools and operates with a not-for-profit ethos.

Job context

The Academy Finance Team provides a wide range of financial reporting and financial management services to support single academy and multi academy trusts primarily in Hertfordshire and surrounding counties.

A key part of this role is to support the development and delivery of our services to academies and multi academy trusts. This includes maintaining and developing your expertise in the financial reporting and management requirements of academies within a fast-changing educational landscape.

Purpose of the job

The post holder will be responsible for supporting the internal monthly monitoring, budgeting and forecasting and external financial reporting for a portfolio of clients including single academies and multi academy trusts. The post includes liaison with

clients to provide sound budget advice to budget holders and stakeholders and support them in terms of advice on financial strategies and financial performance.

The post holder will also play a key role in the development and delivery of our services to academies including the management of our internal audit services. The role will also include the delivery of key finance services to academy trusts including Chief Finance Officer Support services including internal assurance services.

Main areas of responsibility

- To provide complex financial accountancy services to a portfolio of schools and academies to include;
 - the preparation of ESFA financial returns
 - completion and submission of VAT returns
 - reconciliation of accounts
 - preparation of year end accounts and audit working papers
- To provide business partner services to schools within a trust and academy trusts including the preparation of monthly management accounts to include profit and loss reviews, balance sheet reports and cash flow forecasting.
- To provide strategic financial planning support to schools, to include the preparation of annual budgets, support with ongoing budget planning and scenario planning.
- Attendance at academy trust resource meetings as required to report on year end and management accounts.
- To support the provision of internal audit and assurance services to academies, to include the planning and overseeing of the audit process and submission of reports within set deadlines.
- To support schools converting to academy status, supporting the set-up of new finance systems and processes for the opening academy.
- Working as a critical friend and carrying out peer reviews of academy work completed by members of the Academy Finance team, ensuring compliance with The Academies Financial Handbook.
- To support on project work, working with academy trusts, to improve financial reporting, processes and procedures.
- To develop and deliver training courses to schools, trusts and colleagues in the wider Financial Services Team.
- Liaison with external organisations as appropriate including Audit Firms, Hertfordshire County Council and the Education Standards & Funding Agency.

Full training on school and academy trust finances will be given.

The duties and responsibilities listed above describe the post as it is at present. The post holder is expected to accept any reasonable alterations that may from time to time become necessary, particularly in light of the current Covid-19 situation.

Person specification

Please provide a supporting statement outlining why you are applying and how you meet the criteria below;

Knowledge

- Strong academic background
- Full or part-qualified accountant working towards an accounting qualification
- Knowledge of school's finance (desirable)
- Knowledge of academy trust finance (desirable)
- Knowledge of internal audit for academy trusts (desirable)

Experience of

- Production of financial accounts and working papers for year end
- Application of financial policies and procedures in your work
- Preparation and monitoring of budgets
- Using a variety of financial accounting systems, including PS Financials, Sage, Access, Xero and FMS (desirable)
- Schools' financial management (desirable)
- Working with auditors.

Skills and abilities

- Ability to work independently and on own initiative
- Ability to build effective relationships with senior management and other external stakeholders e.g. auditors.
- Ability to explain through instruction, guidance and training, complex financial information and best practice.
- Highly organised with the ability to plan and manage work to achieve results and meet deadlines.
- Ability to lead and deliver specific projects with little direct supervision
- Ability to provide high quality commentary and analysis of management accounts
- Ability to communicate effectively in both written form and face to face
- To demonstrate a passion and motivation to support schools of all types to achieve the very best for their pupils.

Equal Opportunities

HfL is committed to being an equal opportunities employer. We insist on the equal treatment of all current and prospective colleagues and will never condone discrimination on the basis of age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, race or ethnicity, religion or belief, gender identity, or marriage and civil partnership.

HfL is also equally committed to becoming an anti-racist organisation and we encourage you to view our [Black Lives Matter statement](#) which gives clarity on our anti-racist stance. In our relentless efforts to be an anti-racist organisation, we recognise the negative impacts of under representation and lack of diversity in our

organisation, our education system and in all aspects of our society. Therefore, for recruitment into any HfL post, where we have 2 or more candidates of equal merit, candidates with protected characteristics will be given advantage over candidates without such characteristics. This is sometimes referred to as a 'tie-breaker' and is referred to as 'positive action' in the Equality Act 2010.

To help us meet our high standards and aspirations of a fully diverse and inclusive workplace, we strongly encourage suitably qualified applicants from all backgrounds to apply and to join us.

Please note that if you are invited to interview, we will expect you to be prepared to discuss unconscious bias with us; we find these conversations more than any others give us all a good idea of what working together will be like.

Disclosure and Barring Service

This post may be subject to full pre-employment checks and is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Please note that additional information referring to the Disclosure and Barring Service is in the guidance notes to the application form. If you are invited to an interview you will receive more information.

Health and safety

It will be the duty of every employee while at work to take reasonable care for the Health and safety of themselves and of other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.

Intellectual property rights

It is a contractual requirement of all employees of HfL to protect the intellectual, property rights of the company and to adhere to our company policy with regard to IP.

APPLICATION PROCESS

For an informal discussion regarding the role, please contact Louise Shaw on 07931 530320.

To apply, email a detailed CV to hfl.recruitment@hertsforlearning.co.uk

As part of our move towards eradicating unconscious bias within the recruitment process, we will be anonymising your forms.

To help HfL make sure our policies and working practices are inclusive and non-discriminatory we would like you to complete the HfL equal opportunities form. This will not be stored with your application and will only be utilised by HR.

To submit your application or to discuss any recruitment queries please email our Central Recruitment Team on hfl.recruitment@hertsforlearning.co.uk or 01438 544439.

Closing Date: Wednesday 30th March 2022 at midday

Telephone Interview Date: Thursday 7th April 2022

Interview Date: Wednesday 20th April 2022 in Stevenage