

Job title:	Financial Systems Specialist
Job ref:	HFL1397
Hours:	37 hours (Part-time will be considered).
Salary:	Starting from FTE £31,000 p.a. with opportunity for progression plus excellent benefits.
Contract:	Permanent
Reports to:	Systems Team Manager
Team:	Systems Team
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 Financial Services Team provide support to schools and academies with advice and guidance to facilitate their financial reporting and understanding to support their ability to deliver children's realisation of their potential.

The Systems Team, which sits within the Financial Services Team, support, develop and implement the finance software and processes used in schools and academies. Ensuring that they comply with statutory and Local Government reporting requirements, providing integrity of financial information and budgetary control to aid decision making. This role would include leading projects on selected developments.

The Systems Team create and deliver guidance and training to schools and academies on finance and the use of financial software. The team also provide the helpline service used by schools, academies and the wider team when they have finance and software queries.

Financial Services deliver high quality bookkeeping, budget monitoring and financial management services to schools and academies. Whilst this is currently delivered remotely due to Covid restrictions this will return to a blend of remote and on-site visits and will require the ability to travel to meet and communicate finances with school and academy leaders.

The successful applicant will need to be customer focused and have a proactive approach to keeping their knowledge up to date and a commitment to understanding the financial software systems our team supports along with delivering guidance and training to schools, academies, the wider Financial Services team and other interested parties.

Purpose of the job

The successful applicant will join the Systems Team to develop and implement the financial software used in schools and academies. This role requires a full understanding of the supported software, the ability to influence its use and development, generation of guidance on its use and finance processes, along with creation and delivery of training to schools, academies and the wider team. The Systems Team also provide the helpline service used by schools, academies and the wider team to answer financial queries. The post holder will, as scheduled, support the helpline service.

Further aspects of the role include working with a limited portfolio of schools delivering high quality bookkeeping, budget monitoring and financial management services and advice to support the integrity and understanding of their finances and submission of financial returns to both Government and County Council. This will aid their ability to make informed financial decisions to support their pupils in achieving their potential.

The post holder will have access to the wider Systems Team in order to deliver the above and the ability to prioritise, schedule, meet deadlines, work in a team and delegate will be required.

Travel to schools or other locations will be required in order to provide financial support to school leaders or support training, team meetings etc. Therefore, the ability to reach different locations by car will be essential. If you drive, then a full driving licence and appropriate car insurance will be required.

Main areas of responsibility

- Delivery, development and support of financial software, tools, processes and understanding to schools and academies ensuring that they have robust finance systems.
- Ensure finance systems meet statutory and Herts County Council requirements and enable financial management and budgetary control in schools and academies.

- Generate and deliver training and guidance materials to customers and the Financial Services team.
- Maintain a working knowledge of our supported systems and to maintain a strong knowledge of the work our team provides in schools.
- Keep up-to-date with school and academy finances liaising with 3rd parties as appropriate.
- Staff the helpline and support other helpline colleagues contributing to the continual development of our helpline service as an area for sharing best practice, support, training and knowledge for both external and internal customers.
- Provide complex financial accountancy and budget management service and advice to schools on a traded basis. This will include budget planning consultations, strategic forecasting, advice on financial systems and procedures, cash-flow management and compliance with financial standards.

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 and experience of:

- Financial accounting experience
- Knowledge of budget setting and budget monitoring
- AAT qualified, CCAB / CGMA qualified is desirable
- Use of different finance software such as RM Finance, Sims FMS, Sage, Access Finance and Budgeting is desirable
- Projects and development processes and delivering specified outcomes
- Utilising various training delivery methods, both face to face and remote, incorporating use of appropriate tools.
- An understanding of School and Academy finance is desirable
- To produce, interpret and communicate financial information.
- Explaining complex finance information to budget holders and school senior leadership.
- Providing guidance and helpline support

Skills and abilities

- Have a proactive and flexible approach in your work.
- Willingness to learn and keep up to date with financial guidance.
- Ability to create and deliver engaging training and guidance
- Ability to influence to achieve outcomes
- Strong commitment to delivering an excellent customer service, with a customer focused approach and the ability to manage relationships

- High level of organisation skills with ability to plan, manage your diary and delegate work accordingly to achieve results and meet service standards and deliver to project deadlines
- Good IT and Microsoft Office knowledge particularly Microsoft Excel
- Ability to work independently and remotely, whilst working well within and contributing to the team
- Good collaboration, communication and interpersonal skills with the ability to challenge strong personalities
- Able to utilise initiative and influence to develop and deliver solutions

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 Stephen Luff via email on Stephen.Luff@hertsforlearning.co.uk and provide your mobile no. so a mutually convenient time can be arranged to discuss the role.

To apply, email hfl.recruitment@hertsforlearning.co.uk with a detailed CV or the HfL application form (available to download from the HfL website) along with a cover letter to include responses to the following questions/scenarios:

1. Which financial systems have you had experience of?
2. You've been asked to evaluate a finance package / system to assess its suitability for use. What key factors need to be considered and how would you go about assessing and reporting its suitability.
3. Having assessed the finance package / system you have found it basically suitable but identified some reporting shortfalls. It stores the supplier address but not the county and a requirement is that it can report by county. What options would you propose in this instance and how would you proceed to a resolution and / or decision on the software's suitability. What considerations would you give to the future use of the software.
4. The software has been authorised for use and an internal team of 50 staff, 6 helpline experts and 400 external schools need to be trained to use the system. Please propose how this will be achieved, and ongoing, how guidance and support be delivered to these people. Also what factors do you feel are important to ensure effective training.

Please aim to keep your answers to a max 300 words per question.

As part of our move towards eradicating unconscious bias within the recruitment process, we ask that you follow the guidance stated in the application forms and submit these in a word format to enable your application to be anonymised.

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.

This job advert may close as soon as sufficient applications have been received. To make sure you don't miss out on this great opportunity, please submit your application as soon as you can. Please note that the interviews will be taking place remotely.

