

**Job title:** Finance Consultant – Academy Finance

**Job ref:** HFL1437

**Hours:** Full-time, 37hrs per week.

We will consider applications for part-time working, but the role is advertised on a full-time basis based on operational considerations.

**Salary band:** Band 6: £44,000-£47,000 p.a FTE plus excellent benefits  
Pro-rata for reduced hours

**Contract:** Permanent

**Reports to:** Consultancy Manager

**Team:** Academy Finance

**Location:** Hybrid working – consisting of remote working, flexibility required to travel to client settings as required, and up to 2 days per week in our Head Office in Stevenage, Hertfordshire as required.

## Our company

Herts for Learning (HfL) is an award-winning provider of products and services to schools, trusts 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, on a traded consultancy basis, to support single academy and multi academy trust clients primarily in Hertfordshire and the surrounding counties.

The primary focus of this role will be to deliver these services to a range of assigned clients; including internal audit and assurance, financial management and other financial consultancy support. This will require developing and maintaining 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 delivering financial management and assurance services to academy trusts. Working with trust schools and central functions, the post holder will provide finance consultancy services including CFO support and strategic budget setting support. The role will also work with the wider HfL team to ensure we maintain fully up-to-date technical knowledge including ongoing developments in practice and sector reporting requirements.

The post holder will also play a key role in the development of our trusts service portfolio, working with other teams within HfL to ensure that our services are relevant and appealing to meet the needs of academies. Full training on school and academy trust finances will be given, but the expectation is that the post-holder will then identify ongoing gaps in their knowledge and take responsibility to address these.

## **Main areas of responsibility**

- To lead on our internal audit and scrutiny service for academy trusts, developing terms of reference, overseeing fieldwork completed by the team, and reviewing and signing off final reports
- Providing strategic support to academy trusts, to include budget setting and strategic planning, acting as a trusted adviser and attending academy trust resource meetings as required
- Complex financial accounting and forensic accounting investigation
- Working with trusts in financial difficulty, to provide support with preparing budgets, financial recovery plans and robust financial analysis
- To develop and deliver training, both internally and externally, on academy trust finances
- To undertake peer review and QA of work completed by the team, providing technical guidance and support as required.
- To lead on project work, including development of services, to improve financial reporting and processes to meet the ever-changing needs of academy trusts
- To work with schools converting to academy trust status, leading the support provided by the academies finance team, including liaison with key stakeholders.

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.

## **Person specification**

### **Knowledge**

- Strong academic background (essential)
- Fully qualified CCAB or equivalent accountant (essential)
- Knowledge of academy trust finance (desirable)

## Experience of

- Working in financial management / assurance for a minimum of two years (essential)
- Leading and completing internal audit reviews (essential)
- Production of financial accounts and working papers for year-end (desirable)
- Application of financial policies and procedures in your work (essential)
- Preparation and monitoring of budgets (desirable)
- Working with auditors (desirable)
- Working with a portfolio of customers (desirable)
- Using a variety of financial accounting systems, including PS Financials, Sage, Access, Xero and FMS (desirable)
- Schools' financial management (desirable)

## Skills and abilities

- Ability to work independently and on own initiative
- Highly organised with the ability to work to multiple and conflicting deadlines, to deliver tasks and plans to deadlines
- Ability to build effective relationships with senior management and other external stakeholders
- Highly motivated and able to perform well in a fast-changing environment, thriving in an environment where no two days are the same
- Ability to work well within a team, sharing knowledge and ideas to support team wide development
- Ability to explain through instruction, guidance and training, complex financial information and best practice.
- Ability to lead and deliver specific projects with little direct supervision
- Ability to provide high quality commentary and analysis of management accounts
- Excellent communication skills, with the ability write succinct and compelling reports, according to client needs.
- 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 [Anti-racist position 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 [hfl.recruitment@hertsforlearning.co.uk](mailto:hfl.recruitment@hertsforlearning.co.uk) with a detailed up-to-date CV, along with a cover letter to include responses to the following questions:

- 1) Please explain your motivation for wishing to join HfL and to work with schools?
- 2) Please outline your experience in delivering internal audit duties and oversight
- 3) Please describe how you have managed and delivered your role effectively against multiple and conflicting priorities
- 4) Please describe how you would approach using these skills within an environment with a portfolio of fee-paying external clients
- 5) How do you build relationships with colleagues in your team, to support areas such peer review and developing new practices and services, when the majority of your work is completed or performed remotely? (ie off-site)

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 also like you to complete the HfL equal opportunities form. This will not be stored with your application and will only be utilised by HR.

For recruitment queries, our Central Recruitment Team can also be contacted on the [hfl.recruitment](mailto:hfl.recruitment) email address above.

**Closing Date: Monday 25th July at 9am**

**Interview Date: Tuesday 2nd August in Stevenage.**

**In the event you are shortlisted, please ensure you are available for the Interview date stated above.**