

Job Description

Post Details	Last Updated: February 2024
Job title	Senior Finance Manager
Department	Central Finance
Grade	LP10
Place of work	Learning Partners Academy Trust central team offices in Guildford
Responsible to	Head of Finance
Responsible for	Finance Assistant
Internal communication	Cross-functional Central Team, SCITT staff, Central Finance Team, School Business Managers and Local Finance Personnel.
External communication	HMRC, external (and internal) audit firms, banking/investment partners, financial software suppliers, payroll provider and Teachers Pension Service.

A. Job Purpose Statement

Reporting to the Head of Finance, this post is core to the day-to-day financial activities and effective financial management of the central trust accounts. The post is instrumental in ensuring that the underlying financial data is complete and accurate, that the internal control framework is adhered to, and that statutory and regulatory financial reporting requirements are met. The Senior Finance Manager is responsible for providing support, training and cover if required, to schools to ensure they are able maintain accurate financial data

B. Core Purpose of Role

This is not designed to be a list of all tasks undertaken but an outline record of the main responsibilities.

Operational Finance – Central & SCITT

- Manage the purchase, sales and nominal ledger activities in relation to the Central Team & SCITT.
- Responsible for the month end process, including the provision of accurate management accounts.
- Preparing and inputting the accruals, prepayments, accrued income and deferred income information each month.
- Work with HR to ensure payroll procedures are followed, in line with statutory, internal and third-party payroll provider requirements, ensuring all internal deadlines are met. Keep staffing budgets up-to- date and use this to complete the monthly payroll reconciliations. Ensure differences are investigated and resolved.
- Use the budget software to upload budgets, forecasts. Work with the finance analyst to update central forecasts in line with reporting deadlines.

- Line manage and support the Finance Assistant regarding their duties and their on-going development.
- Oversee day-to-day banking activities for the Central Team, including review of bank reconciliations
- Manage the central BACS run process ensuring that all paperwork is signed according to the bank mandate & finance policy
- Produce the monthly FMR, including commentary and variance analysis for both the central trust and the SCITT.
- With the Finance Analyst, provide central budget holders with financial monitoring reports including variance analysis, commentary, and recommendations to ensure budget positions are understood.
- Provide finance support to SCITT as agreed with the Director of Teacher Training.
- Regularly review and make recommendations on improvements to systems, processes, and procedures.

Operational Finance - Schools

- Ensure a consistent, compliant approach to accounting across all schools
- Provide technical accounting advice, including VAT advice to finance personnel and SBMs working across the trust, to deliver a professional service for our schools and business units, meeting trust-wide expectations.
- Undertake the group VAT submissions to HMRC on behalf of all schools on a monthly basis.
- Visit schools to ensure that financial procedures are being adhered to, providing advice and support to schools as required to ensure compliance.
- Review trust-wide finance training needs, recommend and provide training to relevant staff as required.

Financial Systems

- Manage and maintain the Trusts banking system, HSBCnet & Lloyds. Investigate and resolve any issues, providing user support as required.
- Main point of contact for central purchasing cards on MiVision & Lloyds.
- Work with the Finance Analyst to ensure Trusts accounting System: Access is maintained, and users are appropriately trained.
- Act as a point of contact for the Budget software.
- Act as a point of contact for all Finance System users in schools and at the centre, in areas including system functionality, transactional accounting and financial processes.

Financial Reporting

- Lead on the planning and organisation of the teachers' pension audit, working with schools and external auditors as required, to ensure the process runs smoothly and schools are well supported.
- With the support of the Head of Finance, plan and lead the annual external audit process ensuring statutory audit requirements are met.
- Lead on production of audit information in relation to the Central Team & SCITT and consolidated trust information as required.
- Ensure appropriate accounting records for the SCITT are maintained to meet internal reporting.
- To lead on the preparation of Annex G information ready for audit.
- Review and ensure accuracy and understanding of trust wide financial reporting, including consolidated reports and budgets.
- Provide support and challenge to schools, where required, on the accuracy of financial information produced.
- If required, provide short-term cover to school finance teams.
- With the support of the Head of Finance prepare information for accounting returns to the ESFA.

Financial Standards

- Work collaboratively as part of the finance team to identify, devise and implement more effective and efficient finance procedures and assist in the dissemination of these across the trust.
- Encourage and support the promotion of good financial management, regularity and propriety across the trust.
- Deliver excellent internal customer service to all staff involved in financial procedures throughout the trust.

All Learning Partners Employees

- All employees may undertake any other reasonable duties expected of them, commensurate with their grade, as directed by their line manager and/or the CEO.
- All Learning Partners employees are expected to follow the employee code of conduct and are thereby required to have due regards for safeguarding, health and safety in the workplace regulations, promote equal opportunity, exercise professionalism and uphold the values of member schools and Learning Partners.

C. Expectations

All Staff are expected to:

- Contribute effectively to raising student achievement and maintain a positive and supportive culture where all can fulfil their potential and be happy.
- Positively support equality of opportunity and equity of treatment to colleagues and students.
- Help maintain a safe working environment by:
 - Attending training in Health and Safety requirements as necessary, both on appointment and as changes in duties and techniques demand.
 - Following local codes of safe working practices and the School's Health and Safety Policy.
- This post is classified as having substantial access to children and appointment is subject to an enhanced police check of previous criminal convictions (DBS). Applicants are required, before appointment to disclose any conviction, caution or binding over including 'spent convictions' under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exemptions) Order 1975. Non-disclosure may lead to termination of employment. However, disclosure of a criminal background will not necessarily debar from employment – this will depend upon the nature of the offense(s) and when they were recorded.

Learning Partners Academy Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and we expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

D. Summary

Every effort has been made to explain the main duties and responsibilities of this role, however, each individual task undertaken may not be explicitly identified. You will be expected to comply with any reasonable request from the CEO to undertake work of a similar level not specified in this job purpose.

As the Trust and the post-holder develop, there will inevitably be some changes to the duties for which the post is responsible, and possibly to the emphasis of the post itself. The Trust expects that the post-holder will recognise this and will adopt a flexible approach to work. This could include undertaking relevant training if necessary.

Should significant changes to the job purpose become necessary, the post-holder will be consulted and the changes reflected in a revised job purpose.

F. Person Specification

This section describes the knowledge, experience and competence required by the post holder that is necessary for standard acceptable performance in carrying out this role.

		Essential /Desirable
Education & Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educated to Degree Level or Equivalent 	E
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant professional accountancy qualification (ACA, ACCA, CIMA) 	E
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educated to Degree Level or Equivalent 	E
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstration of an on-going commitment to own professional development 	E
Skills, attributes and knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant experience of working in a finance function 	E
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of working in a school or education environment 	D
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proven experience of financial and budgetary controls 	E
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proven experience of computerised bookkeeping and management information systems 	E
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability and knowledge to produce budgets, reports, cash flow, and financial and statistical summaries. 	E
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well-developed literacy, numeracy and ICT skills 	E
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A willingness to seek advice and awareness of where to seek it 	E
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to evaluate and meet changing priorities, responding flexibly and work well under pressure. 	E
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well-developed written and verbal communication skills 	E
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective interpersonal skills and ability to work in partnership with a diverse range of stakeholders 	E
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To work flexibly 	E
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enthusiasm, optimism and energy 	E
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability and willingness to work flexibly, including attending meetings off-site or out-of-hour 	E
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to prioritise & manage a variable workload 	E
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driving licence as may be required to attend meetings off the site 	E
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Microsoft Excel – Intermediate / Advanced 	E
	Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial planning and analysis, including budget setting in an academy or other organisation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of working with a range of stakeholders 		E
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of producing financial and management accounts and budgetary control 		E
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of recommending and supporting the implementation new processes 		D
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound knowledge of educational systems 		D

Signed: _____

Date: _____