1. Job Details

Job title: Financial Accountant – C/F/052

School/Support Department: Corporate Service Group

Unit (if applicable): Finance

Line manager: Assistant Director of Finance (Research Admin, Treasury and Financial Accounting)

2. Job Purpose

To contribute to (a) the provision and further development of timely corporate Financial reporting for both statutory and operational purposes, including the completion of financial returns, the monitoring of balance sheet and cash position and the provision of financial expertise to maintain and develop the University’s financial control processes and systems.

3. Main Responsibilities

1. To assist with the provision and development of corporate financial information including the following:  
   • Contributing to the preparation of annual consolidated accounts and the related planning process and completion of other financial returns.
   • Liaising with other Finance sections and College finance teams to address financial accounting and restricted fund reporting within the devolved organisation and contribute to Transparent Approach to Costing (TRAC) reporting and Full economic Costing (FEC) accounting.
   • Contributing to the University’s quarterly forecasts of Balance Sheet and Cashflow position, monthly reporting process and 5 year forecasts in conjunction with the Management Accounting Section.
2. To contribute to:

- Implementing and operating University financial accounting procedures and reviewing balance sheet control, suspense and bank accounts and reconciliations.
- Operating accounting control processes pertaining to the University’s Property and major equipment assets including the maintenance and developments of the fixed asset and deferred capital grant registers and related Estates projects and refurbishments financial controls.
- Arranging with secondary external audit compliance such as on Student Award Agency for Scotland Hardship funds or ad-hoc engagements as required.

3. To undertake projects and reviews

- Liaising closely with Income Section to support areas of accounting development in the Support Groups include Registry fees collection and reporting and accounting for Accommodation Services and their commercial subsidiary.
- Developing working arrangements with the four Cashiers Office staff and integrating the Central financial controls for the newly integrated Accommodation Services Cashier and Sales Ledger functions in liaison with the divisional finance team.
- Integration of the accounting for the Development Trust’s Fundraising activities and reviewing proposals to merge the separate Endowment Trust charities.
- Participating as required in the review and implementation of changes required under Accounting Standards, Statements of recommended accounting practice (SORPs) and by Funding Councils. Assisting in ensuring the financial aspects of related disclosures are complied with as are any financial governance, risk management or transparency and accountability aspects.
- Benchmarking and Balance Scorecard exercises.

4. Planning and Organising

Some of the workload is delegated by the Assistant Director of Finance, however the Financial Accountant plans and prioritises his/her own workload. In particular, the financial year end process requires meticulous planning by the Financial Accounts team to ensure all reporting deadlines are adhered to.

5. Problem Solving

The Financial Accountant has to use problem solving skills on a daily basis in dealing with a variety of issues, such as analysing financial results, reviewing systems and resolving complaints. The process of problem solving is undertaken by the post holder alone or in consultation with senior management and other staff working in Finance and across the University. Examples of recent problem solving: designing business case models to forecast the future profits and cashflows of subsidiary companies to feed into the University group forecasts and budgets; co-ordinate a meeting of Finance staff to discuss problems in
processing payments, agree a workable solution and communicate the proposed solution to the Finance Directorate; ensure compliance with government legislation by reviewing regulations, drafting explanatory guidance and communicating to schools and planning units.

6. Decision Making

The Financial Accountant will use professional expertise and skill to take decisions and influence policy. The post holder has a wide remit and decision making is required at all levels. Some decisions will be taken directly, others will form the basis of a brief to senior management. Examples of decisions made are:
- Decide on new records retention strategy of Financial Accounting records with the Assistant Director and oversee the archiving of records to a new location;
- Initiate new procedure for processing student payments through the Purchase Ledger. Lead the discussion on the proposed change with the Director of Finance and Registry staff to obtain their approval prior to introducing the new system;

7. Key Contacts/Relationships

The Financial Accountant liaises with a range of colleagues of varying degrees of seniority, including members of the senior management team, the Estates and Buildings Management Accountant and College Accountants and their teams.

8. Knowledge, Skills and Experience Needed for the Job

**Education/Professional Qualification**
- Membership of a recognised accounting professional body

**Experience/Training**
- A strong financial management and accounting background
- Experience of an integrated accounting package in operation in a large multi-departmental organisation
- Excellent working knowledge of Excel
- Experience in reviewing and documenting financial controls and procedures and implementing improvements
- Knowledge of financial reporting in compliance with either GAAP and Financial Reporting Standards or Statements of Recommended practice for HEIs or Charities and compliance with external audit and taxation requirements
- Demonstrable success in staff development and training

**Specific aptitude and abilities**
- A logical, focused and constructive approach
- A positive, self-reliant, open-minded and enthusiastic attitude
- The ability to work both as part of a team and under your own initiative with minimum supervision
- The ability and discipline to plan and prioritise your own work and to ensure that staff are able to do likewise
- The ability to consistently work to extremely tight deadlines
- Excellent interpersonal skills
- Excellent planning and organisational skills
- Excellent oral communication skills, able to deal confidently with senior management both academic and non-academic
- Excellent written communication skills
9. Dimensions

10. Job Context and any other relevant information