University of Edinburgh

Job Description

1. Job Details – 031

Job title: Senior Management Accountant

School/Support Department: Finance Department, Corporate Services

Unit (if applicable):

Line manager: Deputy Director of Finance

2. Job Purpose

To lead (a) the provision and further development of timely corporate management information for both strategic and operational purposes, covering financial planning, budgeting, forecasting, monitoring and reporting, and (b) the provision of financial expertise to the University’s Support Groups.

3. Main Responsibilities

The Management Accounting Section provides timely corporate management information for both strategic and operational purposes. Corporate financial costing (including fEC), planning, budgeting, forecasting, monitoring and reporting, all fall within its remit, as does the provision of financial expertise to the University’s Support Groups. The Senior Management Accountant leads a team comprising two Management Accountants, a trainee Management Accountant and two clerical support staff. Working closely with the Deputy Director of Finance, the postholder’s main duties and responsibilities are:

1. To manage the provision and development of corporate management information including the following:
   - Preparation of the University Recurrent Budget
   - Monitoring corporate income and expenditure
   - Preparation of University monthly management accounts and quarterly forecasts, incorporating I&E Accounts, Balance Sheet and Cashflow Forecasts, in conjunction with the Financial Accounting Section.
   - Preparation of monthly financial performance indicators for the University’s Senior Management Team
   - Mid-Year return and Financial Forecasts including Income and Expenditure, Cashflow and Balance Sheet
   - Working with the Planning Section and developing a detailed understanding of the University resource allocation and income incentive schemes.
   - Monitoring and Reporting Corporate income and expenditure – Recurrent Grant, Tuition Fees and Other Income, Depreciation, Loan Interest, Student Union Grants, etc.

   Approx. % of time
   35%

2. To manage the provision of financial expertise to the University’s Support Groups which comprise:

   Approx. % of time
   30%
Corporate Services Support Group – Finance, Human Resources, Estates, MIS (admin computing), Centre for Sport & Exercise, Accommodation Services and Edinburgh Research & Innovation.

Information Services Group – Library, EUCS (computing), and MALTS (audio visual).

Administration, Communication & Student Services Support Group – Principal & Secretariat Offices, Planning, Registry, International Office, Communication and Public Affairs Office, Development Office and Student Services including Careers, Counselling, Chaplaincy, Disability, Pharmacy and the University Health Service.

3. To prepare the annual Transparency Review Return, and to develop and promote Full Economic Costing (fEC) and Pricing Strategies
   - Annual TRAC/fEC Return
   - Benchmarking Exercises
   - TRAC/fEC Reporting
   - Maintenance of fEC annual indirect cost rates
   - TRAC/fEC model

4. Planning and Organising

Within parameters established by the Deputy Director of Finance, the Senior Management Accountant plans and prioritises his/her own workload and liaises with team members to ensure others actions are complete and required information is provided.

Successful financial management requires careful forward planning and organisation, to ensure that excellent decision-support information and analyses are quickly and readily available, and that regular reporting deadlines are achieved consistently on schedule.

5. Problem Solving

Problem solving ability of a high level is required, as solutions proposed will generally be highly visible to senior and junior colleagues both within the Finance Department and across Colleges and Schools. It is essential to be able to work effectively across section or departmental boundaries, as optimum solutions are likely to be achievable only with a clear perspective of the aspirations and objectives of colleagues across the University. It is particularly important to have a detailed understanding of the construction of the University's financial accounts and financial accounting policies.

The Senior Management Accountant must exhibit tact, diplomacy, persistence and a thoroughly professional approach in order to be successful.

6. Decision Making

Decision-making is made in the context of (a) University policies on Planning, Budgeting and full economic costing (to the development of which the postholder will contribute), (b) the Finance Manual, and (c) guidance provided by the Deputy Director of Finance. However, a significant degree of autonomy is expected in terms of day-to-day decisions, appropriate to the grade.

7. Key Contacts/Relationships

The Senior Management Accountant liaises with a range of colleagues of varying degrees of seniority, up to and including the Heads of Support Groups, Support Service Directors and
their staff, College Accountants, the Estates & Buildings Management Accountant, and Schools’ finance staff.

8. Knowledge, Skills and Experience Needed for the Job

The Senior Management Accountant must match the following essential and desirable criteria:

**Educational and Professional Qualifications**
- Membership of a recognised accounting professional body (essential)
- Educated to degree level (essential)

**Experience/Training**
- at least five years’ experience of managing teams in a large multi-departmental organisation (essential)
- a strong financial management and accounting background, (essential)
- experience of an integrated accounting package in operation in a large multi-departmental organisation (essential)
- Experience in developing strategic and operational plans (essential)
- Experience in project costing (essential)
- demonstrable success in staff development and training (essential)
- effective project management skills (essential)
- excellent working knowledge of Excel (essential)

**Specific aptitude and abilities**
- a logical, focused and constructive approach (essential)
- a positive, self-reliant, open-minded and enthusiastic attitude (essential)
- the ability to work both as part of the team and under your own initiative with minimum supervision (essential)
- the ability and discipline to plan and prioritise your own work, and to ensure that staff are able to do likewise (essential)
- the ability to consistently work to extremely tight deadlines (essential)

**Interpersonal Skills**
- excellent leadership, interpersonal and staff management skills (essential)
- excellent planning and organisational skills (essential)
- excellent oral communication skills, able to deal confidently with senior management, both academic and non-academic (essential)
- excellent written communication skills, including report-writing (essential)

9. Dimensions

Duties are overseen by the Deputy Director of Finance, via regular meetings. The Senior Management Accountant is, however, responsible for providing leadership and guidance to the Management Accounting Section.

10. Job Context and any other relevant information