

## Job Description

Job Title	Assistant Accountant
Department	Finance
HR Ref No.	NRA1625
Role Code	AACF
Grade	OS6
Base location	Chester - Exton Park - Old College
Reports to	Senior Accountant
Direct reports	N/A
Date created	14/01/2025

### Job purpose

The role is to contribute to the work of the accounting team. Primarily this will be to assist the Senior Accountant in the preparation of the University budget and annual forecasts, performing month end and year end routines and reconciliations, project monitoring and reporting, and assisting with supporting budget holders through business partnering.

The Finance Department provides all financial services at the University, including invoicing for tuition and accommodation fees, costing, supplier payments, treasury and management accounts.

### Key duties and responsibilities

- To assist in business partnering to budget holders (Heads of Departments, Deans and Project Managers) and advise/resolve/respond to queries on faculty/department income, pay and non-pay budgets.
- To provide appropriate management/project information/reports regarding budget/actual forecast variance analysis.
- To attend regular budget holder review meetings, budget setting meetings and project meetings.
- To assist in the budget setting of the University.
- To assist in identifying financial reporting requirements of academic departments, relevant professional services, specific projects and create bespoke reports to meet these needs.
- To assist in the analysing of staffing data to maintain an annual pay forecast and structural information required for budget setting.
- To audit financial transactions to ensure accurate and consistent coding and reporting.
- Liaise with external organisations, such as internal and external audit, funders and statutory bodies and submit information as required.
- The role is part of the management accounts team but will require close collaboration with the breadth of the finance department including fees, income and treasury and purchasing.
- To work collaboratively with other departments within the University, including senior management, to ensure deadlines are met.
- To provide additional support to the Senior Accountant in preparing information and reports for statutory returns and internal financial monitoring throughout the financial year.
- To take a consistent and methodical approach to new and existing financial initiatives/activities, liaising with third parties, developing and employing approved processes as required.
- To have a thorough understanding of the University's financial regulations and procedures and be able to resolve problems within this framework.
- To support the wider finance team regarding financial regulations and procedures where appropriate.

- To undertake investigation and analysis of a query to determine whether they are able to resolve the problem or not. Identify where more complex issues need to be referred to other members of the Finance department, as appropriate.
- To assist in maintenance of the chart of accounts and its use in the University finance system.
- To provide cover for other sections at busy times, e.g. Month end deadlines and holiday cover.
- Ensure timely completion of tasks in order to meet deadlines for Strategic Planning/budget meetings/other internal and external reporting.
  
- In addition to the above, undertake such duties as may reasonably be requested and that are commensurate with the nature and grade of the post.

### **General duties**

- To uphold and comply with all University's policies and procedures, including those relating to:
  - Equality, diversity and inclusion
  - Health and safety
  - Data protection and IT security
  - Safeguarding
  - Sustainability
  - Occasionally required to travel to other university sites.
  
- To support the creation of a culture that is highly performance focused and built on a foundation of fairness, diversity, belonging and inclusivity.

## Person Specification

Job Title	Finance Assistant	Role Code	AACF
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The person specification details the qualifications, skills, experience or other attributes needed to perform the job.

**Essential criteria** are those, without which, a candidate would not be able to do the job. Applicants who do not clearly demonstrate in their application that they possess the essential criteria will normally be rejected at the shortlisting stage.

**Desirable criteria** are those that would be useful for the candidate to possess and will be considered when more than one applicant meets the essential requirements.

### Methods of assessment:

A = Application Form, I = Interview/Assessment Tests, P = Pre-Employment Checks

Selection Criteria	Essential (E) or Desirable (D)	Assessed via A - Application; I - Interview; T - Test/presentation
<b>QUALIFICATIONS</b>		
GCSE English and Maths (grade C/4 or above) or equivalent	E	A
Working towards AAT or higher financial/accounting qualification e.g. CIMA	E	A/I
<b>KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE</b>		
Significant experience working within an accounts office, using computerised financial systems	E	A/I
Experience of setting up new systems and procedures	D	A/I
Experience of budget setting and forecasting	D	A/I
Experience of finance business partnering	D	A/I
Good IT skills, particularly Microsoft Office packages and excellent understanding of spreadsheets	E	A/I/T
Excellent oral and written communication skills, giving the post-holder the ability to deal confidently with a range of people at all levels	E	A/I
<b>SKILLS AND PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES</b>		
Ability to resolve problems within the framework of the University Financial Procedures	E	A/I
Good organisational skills and the ability to work unsupervised	E	A/I
Work as part of a team, to ensure co-ordination of effort and that work is done effectively	E	A/I
Ability to communicate at all levels and ability to work within the wider University community, and budget holders/senior leaders	E	A/I
Ability to build and maintain good working relationships with staff in many different departments	E	A/I
High level of accuracy and attention to detail to ensure compliance with regulations	E	A/I
Excellent interpersonal skills including the ability to explain financial processes to non-financial staff	E	A/I
Good mathematical skills, especially in reconciling items	E	A/I
Ability to remain focused and effective when faced with competing demands in a busy environment	E	A/I
Ability to deal flexibly with a wide range of situations and be open to new ideas and the ability to respond positively to change in the workplace	E	A/I

**UNIVERSITY OF CHESTER**  
**TERMS & CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT**

**FINANCE**  
**ASSISTANT ACCOUNTANT**

**SALARY SCALE**

University Scale OS6, points 19 - 22, £28,081 - £30,505 per annum.

**HOURS OF WORK**

36.5 hours per week, to be worked within the University's core hours, detailed below:

Monday to Thursday	9:00am – 5:30pm
Friday	9:00am – 4:30pm (less one hour lunch break each day)

**HOLIDAY ENTITLEMENT**

22 days per annum (in the annual leave year in which employment commences annual leave entitlement will accrue on a pro-rata basis for each completed calendar month of service), rising to 27 days after five years' continuous service. Two extra statutory days per annum during the Christmas period.

**MEDICAL EXAMINATION**

Successful candidates will be required to complete an Occupational Health questionnaire, and may be required to undergo a medical examination.

**ESSENTIAL CERTIFICATES**

Short-listed candidates will be asked to bring to interview, proof of qualifications as outlined on the Job Description and Person Specification provided. Upon appointment, copies of essential certificates will be required by Human Resources.

**PENSION SCHEME**

The University operates two pension schemes for support staff:

- The default scheme is the Higher Education Defined Contribution Scheme (HEDCS), which is administered by Aviva.
- The Cheshire Local Government Pension Scheme, to which the University is an admitted body.

All support staff are entitled to participate in one of these schemes. Some staff will be automatically enrolled into a scheme, depending on their age and earnings, but if they do not wish to remain a member of the scheme, they will be entitled to opt out after enrolment.

**EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

The University has a policy of equal opportunity aimed at treating all applicants for employment fairly.

**SMOKING POLICY**

The University operates a No-Smoking policy.

**PROBATIONARY PERIOD**

A nine months' probationary period applies to all University posts.

**CLOSING DATE**

Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2025.

