Job Description

Job Title	**Head of Finance**
Main Purpose	To lead and manage the College's finance function, ensuring the delivery of effective financial planning, reporting, control, and compliance. The postholder will support the Vice Principal – Finance and Resources in maintaining the College's financial sustainability through robust financial management, accurate and timely financial information, strong governance, and efficient financial operations.
Salary Details	Salary – Band M
Line Manager	Vice Principal – Finance and Resources
Date Job Description Agreed	July 2026
Direct Reports	Finance Manager, Learner Support Fund Administrator

MAIN DUTIES

Key Requirements:

Financial Planning, Reporting and Management

1. Lead the operational delivery of the College's annual budgeting and forecasting process, supporting the Vice Principal – Finance and Resources in the development of the College's budget and financial plans.

2. Provide expert financial advice and support to budget holders across the College, including analysis of budget performance, forecasting, and financial planning.

3. Prepare accurate and timely monthly management accounts, including variance analysis, cash flow forecasts, balance sheet reconciliations, and other financial performance information.

4. Develop and produce financial and management information to support decision-making at all levels of the organisation.

5. Prepare year-end financial statements and supporting working papers in accordance with applicable accounting standards and College requirements.

6. Coordinate and contribute to the preparation and submission of statutory, regulatory, and funding body returns, including:

    - Annual Report and Financial Statements

- College Financial Forecast Return (CFFR)
- Finance Record
- Capital project and grant-funded returns.
- Other returns as required by funding bodies and regulatory authorities.

7. Support value-for-money reviews and identify opportunities to improve efficiency, reduce costs, and strengthen financial performance.
8. Deputise for the Vice Principal – Finance and Resources on financial management matters as required.

Financial Operations, Control and Compliance

9. Ensure the effective operation of the College's financial systems, maintaining robust financial controls, procedures, and reconciliations.
10. Lead the month-end and year-end close processes, ensuring financial records are maintained accurately and reporting deadlines are met.
11. Maintain the College's chart of accounts and financial reporting structures.
12. Establish and maintain an annual finance timetable covering budgeting, forecasting, reporting cycles, and key stakeholder meetings.
13. Manage the College's cash flow, banking arrangements, credit cards and investments, ensuring sufficient liquidity to meet operational commitments.
14. Oversee payroll accounting and associated statutory liabilities, ensuring accurate processing, accounting and timely payment of PAYE, National Insurance, and pension contributions.
15. Complete and submit VAT returns, pension returns and other statutory financial returns within required deadlines.
16. Maintain the College's fixed asset register, ensuring assets are appropriately recorded, monitored, and accounted for (including additions and disposals).
17. Work collaboratively with Human Resources and the College’s external payroll provider to ensure the accurate processing, reconciliation and reporting of payroll information.
18. Oversee the accounts payable and accounts receivable functions, ensuring effective management of creditor and debtor balances and prompt resolution of outstanding issues.
19. Support the financial management, monitoring and reporting of capital projects and externally funded schemes.
20. Maintain effective relationships with the College's bankers, insurers, pension providers, and other financial service providers.

21. Manage insurance claims and maintain appropriate financial records relating to claims and recoveries.
22. Ensure compliance with accounting standards, statutory requirements, College Financial Regulations, funding body requirements and relevant DfE guidance, including Managing Public Money principles where applicable.
23. Maintain the College's contract register and support the monitoring of contract renewal dates and associated financial commitments (working closely with the relevant Budget Holders).
24. Identify, monitor, and manage financial risks, implementing appropriate controls and mitigation measures.

Audit and Governance

25. Lead the financial aspects of the annual external audit process, acting as the principal contact for auditors and ensuring the timely provision of information and supporting documentation.
26. Coordinate finance-related internal audits and ensure management actions are implemented effectively and within agreed timescales.
27. Ensure audit recommendations are appropriately addressed and embedded within finance processes and procedures.
28. Prepare financial reports, analyses and supporting papers for senior leaders, governors and committees as required.
29. Attend Corporation Board and Sub-Committee meetings as required by the Vice Principal – Finance and Resources.

Stakeholder Engagement:

30. Build positive and effective working relationships with Governors, senior leaders, budget holders, and external stakeholders.
31. Provide clear financial guidance and challenge to budget holders, promoting financial accountability and good stewardship of College resources.
32. Present financial information in a clear and accessible manner to both financial and non-financial audiences.
33. Develop and maintain effective relationships with external auditors, banks, pension providers, funding bodies, and other key stakeholders.

Team Leadership and Development:

34. Lead, manage and develop the finance team, ensuring the delivery of a professional, efficient, and customer-focused finance service.

35. Foster a culture of continuous improvement, accountability, and high performance across the finance function.

36. Provide coaching, support, and development opportunities to team members to enhance capability and performance.

37. Conduct appraisal and performance review processes in accordance with College policies and timescales.

38. Identify and implement improvements to financial systems, processes, and controls to enhance efficiency, accuracy, and service delivery.

Corporate Leadership Accountabilities:

39. Support the Vice Principal Finance and Resources in the strategic leadership and operational management of the College.

40. Promote and uphold the College's values, strategic objectives, policies, and procedures.

41. Maintain high standards of professional conduct and practice.

42. Demonstrate commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion, ensuring compliance with statutory requirements and College policies.

43. Keep up to date with relevant legislative, technical and sector developments.

44. Undertake such other duties commensurate with the grade and responsibilities of the post as may reasonably be required.

Person Specification

Attributes	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications	- A bachelor's degree in finance, Accounting, Business or a related discipline, or significant relevant professional experience. - Fully qualified accountant (ACA, ACCA, CIMA, or CIPFA) with current membership.	- Leadership or management qualification at level 5 or above. - Evidence of ongoing professional development.
Experience	- Significant experience in a senior finance role with responsibility for financial reporting, budgeting, forecasting, and financial control.	- Experience within the Further Education, education, public sector, or not-for-profit environment. - Experience of preparing College Financial Forecast Returns (CFFR),

	- Experience of producing management accounts, year-end accounts, and statutory financial returns. - Experience of managing cash flow, balance sheet reconciliations, and financial controls. - Experience of leading or coordinating external and/or internal audits. - Experience of managing and developing staff. - Experience of presenting financial information to senior leaders and non-financial managers.	Finance Records or similar regulatory returns. - Experience of capital project accounting and grant-funded projects. - Experience of implementing or developing finance systems and processes.
Knowledge and Skills	- Sound knowledge of accounting principles, financial regulations, and best practice. - Strong management accounting, budgeting, and forecasting skills. - Ability to analyse and interpret complex financial information and present clear recommendations. - Strong understanding of financial controls, governance, and risk management. - Advanced Excel skills and experience of integrated financial management systems. - Excellent written and verbal communication skills. - Ability to communicate complex financial information to non-financial audiences. - Strong organisational skills with the ability to manage competing priorities and meet deadlines.	- Knowledge of Further Education funding methodologies and regulatory requirements. - Understanding of DfE and Managing Public Money requirements. - Knowledge of VAT regulations applicable to education organisations. - Understanding of procurement and contract management processes.
Leadership and Management	- Ability to lead, motivate and develop a high-performing team. - Experience of performance management, appraisal, and staff development.	- Experience of leading organisational or departmental change initiatives.

	- Ability to build effective working relationships with stakeholders at all levels. - Ability to challenge constructively and influence decision-making. - Commitment to continuous improvement and service excellence.	
Strategic Thinking and Decision Making	- Ability to use financial analysis to support operational and strategic decision-making. - Strong problem-solving and decision-making skills. - Ability to identify financial risks and develop appropriate mitigations. - Commercial awareness and an understanding of value for money principles.	
Personal Attributes	- High level of integrity, professionalism, and personal credibility. - Ability to maintain confidentiality and exercise sound judgement. - Self-motivated with a proactive and solution-focused approach. - Resilient and able to work effectively under pressure. - Commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion. - Ability to establish credibility and effective working relationships with Governors, senior leaders and external stakeholders.	