



Candidate Information

Position: Assistant Accountant
School/Department: Finance
Reference: 22/110456
Closing Date: Monday 30 January 2023
Salary: £35,333 - £42,155 per annum.
Anticipated Interview Date: Wednesday 22 February 2023

JOB PURPOSE:

To assist in the provision of a comprehensive, professional financial management service in support of financial planning, financial management accounting and reporting activities across all aspects of University operations. The post-holder will be involved in producing timely business critical information and analysis to assist planning and decision-making.

MAJOR DUTIES:

1. Working with the Commercial/Management Accountants to provide professional financial advice and support to all relevant stakeholders on a total economy basis with a view to facilitating the delivery of the key targets of the broader University strategy.
2. Assist with the preparation of detailed annual budgets and financial operating plans, ensure that they accurately reflect the underlying level of activities, and are regularly reviewed and updated.
3. Work closely with business areas to prepare accurate in-year estimates and future forecasts of financial performance to pre-defined deadlines, probing and challenging the estimates/forecasts information and assumptions returned from departments.
4. Undertake regular reviews of performance against budget/plan/targets including undertaking detailed analysis, highlighting trends, obtaining an understanding of key drivers of variances and providing commentary for reporting.
5. Proactively identify and report financial risks and assist in the development of timely action plans that mitigate the risk, ensuring financial understanding of relevant issues.
6. Assist with the development of business plans across all lines of University Operations, including critical analysis of plans for commercial initiatives. To include financial input to the development of plans for new lines of business as an element of the set-up and implementation of the Belfast Region City Deal Innovation Centres at the University.
7. Responsible for ensuring the day-to-day integrity of financial information in the University's financial and budgeting systems, including completing reconciliations and key controls, to ensure accurate information is available for effective financial management and reporting.
8. Assist with the development of dynamic financial management reports to support business areas to understand their financial position and assist decision making.
9. Assist in the production and development of the University's monthly and quarterly management accounts including the provision of analysis, information and supporting commentary to allow timely and accurate reporting.
10. Assist in the provision of a comprehensive pre-award research grant support service, in partnership with Faculties and Research and Enterprise. Oversee the preparation of financial aspects of grant applications including the costing and pricing of proposals using the costing system and in line with full economic costing (fEC) principles and guidelines.
11. Ensure that University processes, for the approval of research and other grant applications and acceptance of awards, are adhered to in line with sponsor requirements and timeframes working closely with funding bodies and collaborating organisations.
12. Plan, delegate, review and supervise the work of finance support staff in accordance with reporting and other deadlines.
13. Provide assistance with the preparation of external statutory financial returns, claims and reports.
14. Provide guidance and support to non-financial stakeholders to aid their understanding of complex financial information and participate in the delivery of training programmes on financial management and budgetary control to budget managers.

15. Undertake any other duties which are appropriate to the post as may be reasonably required by Line Manager/relevant Director for the area.

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA:

1. * Part-qualified in ACA/ACCA/CIMA or equivalent professional exams and actively working towards full qualification.
2. * Significant relevant experience in an accounting/finance environment including the preparation of financial and/or management accounts, budgets and estimates.
3. * Experience of preparing financial analysis and reports including providing advice to inform decision making.
4. * Extensive experience in the use of complex computerised accounting and reporting systems.
5. * Experience in staff supervision.
6. * Substantial working knowledge and experience of IT packages, in particular advanced Microsoft Excel spreadsheet design and usage of key functions.
7. High level of oral and written communication and interpersonal skills.
8. Ability to analyse complex issues and recommend action.
9. Ability to assess, organise and prioritise in a complex and busy working environment.
10. Able to work on own initiative and as part of a team.

DESIRABLE CRITERIA:

1. A member of a recognised accountancy body (ACA, ACCA, CIMA, CIPFA) or equivalent.
2. Experience of working in Finance within a large public sector organisation.
3. Experience of UNIT4 ERP.
4. Experience of budgeting systems and tools.
5. Experience of preparing financial aspects of research grant applications.