

The **E21C Associate Staff** Career Pathways





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Introduction

A message from our CEO

At Education for the 21st Century Trust (E21C), we are dedicated to creating a happy and ambitious workforce and are proud to see staff thrive across our schools, as they build relationships with our communities and create fantastic outcomes for children. As a strong Trust, through our Career Offer, we develop, deploy and retain outstanding staff by offering evidence-informed training, the opportunity to study for professional qualifications and progression opportunities, as well as ensuring manageable work life balance to preserve staff motivation and job satisfaction.

We are committed to tackling the key challenges faced by schools across the UK in retaining the very best staff. We do this by prioritising the continuous enhancement of our working conditions and relationships. We recognise the value of our associate staff workforce our leadership consistently re-evaluates staff workload, professional support and career development, often in the context of the work undertaken by our operational leaders.

The development, wellbeing, and support of staff within the Trust will play a crucial part in our strategy. We adapted quickly to new ways of working and continue to refine and develop our HR processes. The ongoing development of all staff is critical if we are to 'improve outcomes, transform lives and enable social mobility'.

Simon Garrill

CEO, Education for the 21st Century Trust





Talent Management at E21C

Talent management is for everyone at E21C. It is important that line managers regularly include all their staff in discussions about their development, aspirations and performance. This will support the right people into the right roles, provide access to the right opportunities, exposure, stretch and development to reach their potential. Career development conversations will happen at least once a year for all staff.



Institute of School Business Leaders (ISBL)

The **ISBL** is the Professional Body for School Business Leaders. Uniquely dedicated to supporting every version of the school business profession operating across our school system.

To support career development and planning, ISBL have produced a suite of documents [here](#).

A list of the documents below.

ISBL career pathways and qualifications

What do you need to know as a new School Business Professional

Professional development guidance

Blueprint for school business leadership practice

ISBL professional standards

ISBL self-assessment tool

You can download the self-assessment tool to assess yourself against the professional standards.

You may benefit from having a discussion with your line manager about your self-assessment during your career development conversation.





Chartered Management Institute (CMI)

The **CMI** works with business and education to inspire people to become skilled, confident and successful managers and leaders. Programme levels are well suited to all levels of leadership, from aspiring managers through to senior strategic managers and designed to equip participants with the knowledge, skills and behaviours to achieve organisational & personal development goals.

The full range of programmes can be found [here](#).



The programme is fully funded through the Apprenticeship Levy

The Variety of Associate Staff Roles at E21C

E21C is an ambitious and responsible employer, we are continually looking to enhance our provision with innovative and effective projects and roles. We are always open to staff feedback about how we can best cater towards our school communities with the jobs we provide locally, and within the Central Team. As a member of the E21C Associate Staff Team, you could work as a:

**Learning Mentor /
Pastoral Staff**

Teaching Assistant / HLTA

**School Site Manager /
Lead Site Manager**

Cover Supervisor

Technician

School librarian

SEND Lead / Manager

HR Business Partner

Director of HR

Finance Manager

Finance Officer

Head of Estates

Data Manager

Exams Officer

Receptionist

School Business Manager

Administrator

Office Manager

Personal Assistant

Chief Operating Officer

Chief Financial Officer

HR Administrator

Mid-day Supervisor

Breakfast Club Supervisor

After School Club Supervisor

Attendance Officer

Admissions Officer





So you want to be a **School Business Manager?**

Often called their “right hand”, our Headteachers truly rely on the expertise of their school business managers. As the expert in the school on all financial matters, you will help steer and guide decision making at a strategic level. There is an even wider remit, looking after facilities, health and safety, IT, HR administration in particular being the link between managers and the Trust HR team, and contributing to the Trust. This leadership position is critical to the smooth and effective running of our schools.

GETTING QUALIFIED

The Institute of School Business Leaders (ISBL) is a good place to start. They have a variety of accredited qualifications for any existing school business professional or those aspiring to become a school business professional. The training will give you a thorough understanding of how to carry out administer and manage the financial, site and support services within a school. Some other core skills that will be developed are finance and procurement, human resources, governance and risk, marketing/communications, project and change management, as well as relationship building.



Spotlight on: **Lisa Crichlow** SBM

Scotts Park Primary School • School Business Manager

Before working in schools, I worked in sales and marketing for several years and was becoming disengaged with working in an environment where meeting targets and profit margins were prioritised over everything. The path to schools came from a conversation with my sister-in-law who was a deputy head at a school. She said my skills were transferrable and I should consider a career in School Business Management. I started to research the role further and started talking to friends who worked in schools and soon realised that the role would be both fulfilling and rewarding! From there, I applied to schools and eventually started my school career at a small primary school in Balham.

I am most proud of being able to adapt to the pace of school life which changes quickly. I pride myself in being solutions-focused, driving efficiencies and above all else, being a friendly and approachable face.

To an aspiring SBM my advice would be to do your research. If you think you have the right skill set, talk to your SBM and see how they can support you. If you can, shadow them for the day so that you can see how they work with different stakeholders within the school. I would also consider taking a course such as an Aspiring School Business Managers course provided by SBM Partnership – a great way of understanding the core requirements and principles of the role.





So you want to work in **Finance?**

The main finance roles in E21C are in the central Trust team. Every Trust, no matter what its size, needs finance experts to manage their complicated budgets and ensure all those figures add up. In Trusts this role is so diverse, from keeping Headteachers on track with their spend, to ensuring we have all the grants and funds we are entitled too, to finding innovative ways to help get the best from every penny - the role is never dull.

GETTING QUALIFIED

We recommend **The Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT)**. To further develop a career in finance we recommend **The Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA)**.



Spotlight on: **Dave Merry** Finance

Education for the 21st Century • Finance

I started working in education in 2013 for Coopers having previously worked in finance in the construction, retail and audit fields where I obtained my management accounting qualification (CIMA).

Education was a sector I was always interested in working in, as it creates the building blocks for young people to achieve their full potential in life and opens up opportunities that otherwise might not be accessible.

I enjoy working with the schools and interacting with staff at all levels to maximise what they are able to achieve with the resources available, analysing their position throughout the year and building budgets for future years.

For someone looking to work in finance I would encourage them to develop their skills through both practical courses(excel), but also look into studying for further qualifications such as AAT, CIMA, as these open up opportunities for promotion both within education and in other sectors.

Working in finance is not just about adding numbers, as communication with other staff, and the ability to interpret those numbers is key to being successful at the job.





So you want to manage **Estates?**

As a site manager, you will be accountable for all aspects of the operational management of our school estates. Our site management teams are integral in making sure we are ensuring best value for money and providing our children with the best learning environment we can give them. They will be able to deliver effective management of a school site and its grounds, as well as having practical maintenance experience. For those who aspire to progress in estates management beyond their own school, we also have a Trust Head of Estates who works closely with all our site teams.

GETTING QUALIFIED

Alongside the **Institute of Workplace and Facilities Management** (IWFM) we recommend specialist training in health and safety. **The Institution of Occupational Safety and Health** (IOSH) and **The National Examination Board in Occupational Safety and Health** (NEBOSH)



Spotlight on: **Mick Wilmot** Site Manger

The Ravensbourne School • Site Manager

In 2010, I started working in schools as an evening and weekend lettings facilitator at Stationer's Crown Woods in Eltham. After a short while I was given the opportunity to work as Site Assistant and then, in 2016, an opportunity arose to become the Site Manager with a Business Manager role combined and I jumped at the chance. I started out looking after one Secondary School in Eltham and by the time I left, I oversaw three Secondary Schools and four Primary Schools that I supported over Kent and the Southeast. At the start of 2022, I decided with the support of my family that I needed a new challenge and to relight that spark of passion again. I applied for the Site Manager position at The Ravensbourne School and in April 2022 and was delighted to receive the job offer and haven't looked back since.

I am passionate about making a difference to the lives of students and staff and for them to be able to walk the site knowing that we - myself and the amazing site team - have done our best with Health and Safety checks, cleaning and managing the grounds. We walk the site with a feeling of pride. I know that every day is different and as a team we are on a journey and have a long way to go, but I have that bounce back in my step knowing that my team and I have a hand to play making a difference on a day-to-day basis.

For anyone aspiring to be a Site Manager, I would say: if you are driven, passionate about making a difference, have a flexible working approach and strong leadership skills, take that leap of faith and don't look back because you won't regret it.





So you want to be a **Teaching Assistant?**

Teaching assistants support teachers and help children with their educational and social development, both in and out of the classroom. The job will depend on the school and the age of the children.

This role can include:

- **Getting the classroom ready for lessons.**
- **Listening to children read, reading to them or telling them stories.**
- **Helping children who need extra support to complete tasks.**
- **Helping teachers to plan learning activities and complete records.**
- **Supporting teachers in managing class behaviour.**
- **Supervising group activities.**
- **Looking after children who are upset or have had accidents.**
- **Clearing away materials and equipment after lessons.**
- **Helping with outings and sports events.**
- **Taking part in training.**
- **Carrying out administrative tasks.**



GETTING QUALIFIED

To qualify as a teaching assistant, you can enrol onto a Level 3 Teaching Assistant programme which takes 15 months. By completing this programme, you will be able to demonstrate full competency as a teaching assistant. This programme provides a foundation for potential progression into a number of career pathways within E21C such as coming a higher-level teaching assistant. Please see our teaching staff careers pathway booklet for more details.



Spotlight on: **Casey Mills** Teaching Assistant

Ravensworth Primary School • Teaching Assistant

Working in primary education has always been a passion of mine since I was a child. I've always wanted to recreate my fond childhood memories in education as those early experiences left a lasting mark on me and I wanted to help create similar positive memories for children starting their educational journey.

In 2017, I turned my career dream into reality by enrolling at Bromley College, where I gained a Level 3 Support Teaching and Learning Diploma. My journey continued as I volunteered as a Teaching Assistant at my former primary school, providing invaluable practical experience and reaffirming that this was the right career path for me. I was fortunate enough to secure a Teaching Assistant role at Ravensworth Primary School shortly after graduating and have been here for just over five years now. Every day is a delightful and ever-changing experience.

In my role, I take immense pride in the effective partnership that exists between my teacher and me, as it allows us to create a truly exceptional team. Every day our reception children are full of smiles, brimming with happiness, contentment and have a profound sense of safety – the very essence of what we aspire to provide.

To any aspiring Teaching Assistants, my advice would be to seize every opportunity for personal and professional growth. Create a positive partnership with your teacher, as this collaboration will be the foundation of an exceptional learning environment for your students. Embrace the diverse roles you'll play, extending beyond academics, as you become a trusted source of safety and reassurance for children. They will require unwavering attention and guidance from you to flourish in their educational journey. This career is immensely rewarding knowing that you play a vital role in their growth and development.





So you want to be a **Personal Assistant?**

A Headteacher's Personal Assistant provides support so that the Headteacher can fulfil their daily responsibilities. Their duties include administrative tasks such as planning and scheduling events, handling correspondence and managing diaries. They are the 'gatekeeper' to the Head.

GETTING QUALIFIED

Proven administrative experience is key. Reception or team assistant background is relevant as evidence of supporting people in the past. The key to success as a PA is to have the right mix of soft skills. The role is best suited to people who are organised, detail-oriented, good at multitasking, and able to handle sensitive information with discretion.

Time management and the ability to prioritise are key. Professional qualifications can be obtained through the **Institute of Executive Assistants and Administrators**.



Spotlight on: **Chirstine Drury** Personal Assistant

Eden Park High School • Personal Assistant

In 1991 I left school with nine GCSEs and had no idea what career path I wanted to take so I went along to Sixth Form where I studied a BTEC in Business and Finance. I left sixth form in 1993 with a distinction in my course and started working as an Office Junior in London. I stayed working in London in various Team Secretary and Administration positions until moving on to some PA roles. At 47 I made the decision to leave the hustle and bustle of London as I wanted to work Local. I always thought if I did this I would work in a School, which is where I am today, at Eden Park High School which has turned out to be my favourite place of work and role to date.

I was incredibly lucky in my roles in London to be given a lot of training to be able to grow my experiences and skills from a young age. This prepared me well for coming into a school environment. I came into my role with strong IT knowledge, organising and people skills and never imagined I could grow that. I was drawn to apply for this role as I knew that no day would be the same. I never know who is going to come into my office, Teacher, or Student, or what it is they are going to ask you to help them with. You have the daily 'asks' from students whether it be to print off timetables, help them find a lost item, help them find a classroom or maybe just be able to sit and talk as they need a bit of time out. Whatever it might be, my door is always open, and everyone is welcome.

If you are every thinking of applying to a School for a PA, you will always be glad you made this jump. I have never looked back and do not miss working in London or in the corporate world at all. We are such a tight team as everyone wants the same thing, for the students to flourish and be happy in their school environment. There is so much more to working in a school than just your own role, you get to work with the best team, a whole school.





So you want run a **School Reception?**

School receptionists are the public face of our schools. They require exceptional individuals with patience, empathy, quick thinking and the ability to calm and reassure others quickly and professionally.

This role is one of the most critical to the reputation of a school.

GETTING QUALIFIED

Customer service training is available through **The Institute of Customer Service** for anyone who is working within a school reception environment or anyone who is working to provide direct support to customers within a MAT.



Spotlight on: **Sarah Wilfort** School Receptionist

Spires Academy • School Receptionist

I started as an Administration Assistant and Receptionist within the Physiotherapy Department at the NHS. I stayed there for four years, before going on to work in Colposcopy, as a receptionist, at Kent and Canterbury hospital.

One of the proudest moments in the four weeks I have been in my current role, is that I have managed to help many of our school parents to start using the homework app. This has resulted in a lot more children completing homework on time and parents knowing what homework has been set and what the children have been working on at school.

For anyone aspiring to become a Receptionist within a School I would tell them the role is very important and key and you help in the general running of the school and acting as a liaison between teachers and parents and this is very rewarding.





So you want to work in **Human Resources?**

HR roles at E21C are within the central team. From recruitment through to leaving we manage the employee lifecycle.

This role includes:

- **Managing payroll**
- **Developing policies**
- **Coaching managers**
- **Giving advice**
- **Analysing data**
- **Writing reports**
- **Issuing offer letters, contracts and variations to contracts**
- **Meetings with Trade Unions**
- **Supporting managers**



GETTING QUALIFIED

The **Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development** is the professional body for HR. CIPD **qualifications** are taught by external study centres but are awarded by the CIPD. When you successfully complete your CIPD qualification, you will receive a qualification certificate from the CIPD and be awarded Foundation or Associate Membership, depending on your qualification level.

There are three levels of CIPD qualifications: Foundation Certificate, Associate Diploma and Advanced Diploma.



Spotlight on: **Nicola Knight** HR Business Partner

Education for the 21st Century • HR Business Partner

I started my career in financial services where I worked for 25 years, during this time I took on many different roles and opportunities that came my way as I was keen to develop my skill set. The first leap I took out of my comfort zone was when I moved into Learning and Development and became a qualified trainer. I loved the role and thoroughly enjoyed working with people. I'm always interested in getting to know individuals and this is where my passion for this role began. I'm experienced in leadership, project management, people development and risk management. These skills have all been enhanced from the many roles I have taken on over my career, but I soon realised they all had one thing in common.

Over my career I have taken many roles which all had one thing in common "People", I love helping and developing individuals and I am genuinely excited by this part of my role. I truly believe that everyone should be treated fairly and working in HR I can influence this and help people develop their skills which in turn influences how they treat other individuals now and in the future. I am most proud of the relationships that I have built – In HR you don't always give people the answer they want so forging relationships and building trust is key to ensuring that people can be honest and trust you with the advice you are giving them. I genuinely am interested in people and always keen to get to know people more which helps with understanding people and helping them in ways that best suits their personality. To an aspiring HR professional, I would say Do it!

If you generally are interested in people, it could be a great job for you. A keen eye for detail and good listening skills help as some Employment relationship cases can be very complex. If you have strong analytical skills, you will enjoy analysing the data that we collect from staff surveys and looking for patterns when it comes to handling individual cases.

I can generally say I love my job and work with a great team who are very supportive which makes my job enjoyable!





So you want to be a **School Data Manager?**

School Data Managers play a vital role in how schools run, yet they can sometimes get forgotten. Doing everything from resetting passwords, to churning out graphs and spreadsheets – it's a really varied role. Often as one of the only members of staff with highly technical skills, it can sometimes seem like magic how Data Managers are able to transform data into something understandable for other staff. But behind the scenes there's a lot of (usually manual) work involved.

This role includes:

- **System administration**
- **Managing data**
- **Data analysis and reporting**
- **Statutory reporting and census**
- **Data collection**
- **General administration**

GETTING QUALIFIED

Attention to detail is paramount in this role. Proficient in the use of Microsoft applications and in particular advanced knowledge of Excel, experience of working with data management systems, knowledge of GDPR.



Spotlight on: **Emma Perry** Data Manager

The Ravensbourne School • Data Manager

I have worked in education for 25 years, starting as a part time technician and progressing through various roles including non-teaching Head of Year. I have been a Data Manager for the past 16 years, as well as writing and maintaining the school's timetable.

I joined The Ravensbourne School in September 2022 as Data Manager and Timetabler. I was excited to be able to bring the skills, knowledge and experience I had gained at my previous school and be able to support TRS in this pivotal role.

I feel privileged to work in great environment surrounded by a supportive team. When I joined TRS, the school had just started to use a new MIS system; one that I hadn't used previously. During my first year here, I have been able to support the school in ensuring it is used effectively and efficiently. I love helping and enabling people and seeing little things I do on a day-to-day basis having a positive impact.

I particularly enjoy providing the information/data to staff which identify areas where additional support to struggling students can be made, contributing to improving outcomes for the school and students. I am also proud to have been involved in Ofsted visits where the quality of the Data Management has been praised.

To an aspiring Data Manager, I would say the role of Data Manager is hugely varied, and no day is the same. It is essential to be organised to complete the many and varied tasks. You must be ready to undertake urgent tasks if required and to meet the deadlines set by the DFE, Trust, School, SLT and Departmental heads. You must be prepared to learn the different systems inside out to support colleagues.

To be an excellent Data Manager you need to be calm, approachable, and supportive, providing quality data which can be used to improve the students' education, and most importantly to do everything with a smile!





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