



THE CONSORTIUM
ACADEMY TRUST

Shaping Positive Futures

Finance Assistant

We know from experience that things change throughout the lifetime of a role and so this JD is not a list of everything you will do – this gives our people the chance to play to their strengths.

How you will make an impact...

- Help maintain the ethos of The Consortium Academy Trust by driving our organisational culture forwards and using every opportunity to embed our values.
- Taking responsibility for your own development - that way we can make the biggest impact!
- We are always looking for someone who can contribute to our growth.
- More than anything, we are looking for a team player who puts their heart in to their work. We have some core values that run through everything we do, and we would love it if they resonated with you too.

About the role...

Main purpose of the role:

To assist in providing efficient, effective and timely financial support within the Trust's finance team under the direction of the Finance Operations Manager.

The role involves all elements of acquiring goods and services for a large and diverse organisation from initial requisition and sourcing, to ordering, receipting satisfactory delivery and ultimately approving invoices to pay. To contribute to the development and implementation of Trust policies and procedures with regards to the acquisition of goods and services. Communicate with suppliers and other third parties for any queries relating to the purchasing cycle.

To act as an integral part of the Trust's central team, and as such to contribute to the overall aim of the Trust, working within agreed deadlines, policies and procedures.

Key accountabilities:

- Deliver an accurate and high quality service to the Trust, its staff and relevant stakeholders acting as a specific point of contact for designated Trust schools.
- Respond in a timely manner to any queries from staff with regards to systems, process or needs giving support and advice as required.
- Work to Trust deadlines on the monthly accounting cycle.
- Act as a point of knowledgeable contact on the Trust's financial purchasing platform(s) and interpret this for the users needs. Provide system coaching, advice and intervention where required.
- Hold specific finance system access allowing for administrative amendments not available to most system users. This allows the role to amend coding, VAT treatments and other details on approved orders within the parameters agreed in the Financial Regulations.
- Advise on any issues of value and use experience and judgement to support the colleague in making a quality purchasing decision including use of approved suppliers.
- Respond in a timely manner to external stakeholders such as suppliers, staff and Trustee expense claimants, parents and carers and other third parties such as internal and external auditors, bank and prospective suppliers.

- Ensure the Trust complies with its Financial Procedures and Financial Levels of Authority working with schools to interpret these requirements for the specific context in which a query may arise.
- Use the Trust's approved systems to process requisitions to full order status, ensure appropriate authorisation is in place, support schools with vouching successful delivery and then process invoices for payment.
- Ensure the appropriate VAT treatment is considered, understanding the different VAT treatments of goods and services and how this affects the purchase.
- Be instrumental in the prompt processing of transactions through efficient and effective working methods.
- Prepare payment runs of a significant cash value and all relevant backing information required for ad-hoc payments, ensuring that suppliers are paid in accordance with agreed terms of business.
- Support the Director of Finance, Management Accountant, Business Partners and Procurement Officer in relation to transactional queries, including audit trails, and any relevant month end transactions such as prepayments or accruals.
- Assist in the preparation of management information regarding finance as required by the Finance Operations Manager and Director of Finance.
- Assist with the setting up and maintaining of archive files and historic data in line with the Trust's policies.
- Prompt reconciliation of supplier statements to Trust financial systems and the follow up of discrepancies and resolving queries where required.
- Complete regular internal scrutiny checks on approvals, quality checks on data held and successful query resolution.
- Consult with suppliers, contractors, other schools/academies and organisations, budget holders and address queries as required by the Finance Operations Manager or the Director of Finance.
- Act as Trust purchase card holders for any purchases requiring such purchase options. Ensure appropriate controls and mitigation protocols are maintained as well as all paper trail requirements for monitoring and audit purposes.
- Contribute to the evaluation and development of financial systems and procedures as required.
- Undertake bookings of accommodation and travel where required working alongside school or Central colleagues confidently and professionally.
- Assist in the documentation of finance department tasks and procedures as required.
- Develop knowledge and skills to enable effective working relationships and ability to provide cover for Finance Team colleagues if required.
- Ensure all records are collected and filed in line with audit requirements on documentation storage and retention laws.
- Be available: via telephone, E-Mail or in person for incoming queries and directing them to the most appropriate contact where appropriate.

Administrative

- Ensure that all administrative duties, checks and documentation are completed to the required level of accuracy.
- Process, input and extract data held on the Trust database systems as required.
- Maintain both manual and computerised record and filing systems in line with audit requirements, such as the authorised signatories list, invoices, petty cash vouchers, cheque books.
- Deal with correspondence promptly and as required, including distribution of invoices received, payment queries, communications received from suppliers and the bank.
- Answer incoming calls, dealing with requests and enquiries and taking messages as required.

General

- Attend Trust events as required.
- Attend relevant meetings and training sessions.
- Ensure compliance with all relevant policies and legislation.

Continuous learning:

- Keep up to date with best practice, knowledge sharing within the team to ensure continuous development and improvement in the service offered
- Seek out performance development feedback during the year for self, and the wider finance function and undertake 'back to the floor' days in TCAT to continually learn, reflect and improve our approach.

As a member of staff of The Trust:

- Role model appropriate behaviors within a professional environment including conduct, communication, and personal appearance
- Role model elevated levels of literacy and numeracy including modelling appropriate language
- Aspire to develop own professional skills and qualifications
- Use all forms of social media appropriately
- Take responsibility for the reputational management of all sites across the Trust
- Contribute to systems of evaluation and performance of the organisation positively

About you...

This is the job for you if you hold the following qualifications, experience, knowledge, skills and values:

Qualifications and Training

Essential

- Good standard of basic education including Math's and English GCSE or equivalent

Experience, Knowledge and Skills

Essential

- Excellent communication skills, both written and verbal
- Excellent IT skills including the use of Microsoft Office applications
- Ability to work with a high degree of accuracy and attention to detail
- Ability to prioritise and organise work effectively, with the ability to multi-task
- Ability to work well under pressure
- Ability to ensure confidentiality of information
- Ability to work to deadlines and with minimal supervision
- Ability to work as part of a team to achieve common goals

Desirable

- Use of Finance Systems such as Sage, Xero, Oracle etc.
- Good understanding of financial control and environment
- Knowledge and experience of finance policy and procedures

Values and Personal Competencies

Essential

- Excellent people skills
- Energy and enthusiasm
- Self-motivation
- Excellent organisational skills
- Sense of humour
- Flexibility and adaptability
- Listening skills

Desirable

- Strong adaptability to change and development
- Committed to the values and vision of the Trust.
- Team focused with the ability to work independently and take initiative.
- Committed to equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Strong morals, ethics and sound judgement.
- A role model of the Trust's Values.