



# Trust Finance Officer

## Job Description & Person Specification

### Context

The Diocese of Chester covers a number of Local Authorities, including Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester and Wirral and parts of Halton, Warrington, Trafford, Stockport, Tameside and Derbyshire. There are 116 Diocesan Board of Education (DBE) schools, ranging from small rural to larger urban schools.

A group of DBE schools (currently seventeen) have become part of the Chester Diocesan Academies Trust (CDAT) as both sponsored and converter academies. The growth of CDAT has been undertaken in a measured way to ensure that its growth matches its capacity, but it is now ready to expand more rapidly as it takes on further schools, working within a regional cluster model.

It is envisaged that our Trust Finance Officer will work specifically within the Trust central finance and operations teams, while also contributing to the overall effective running of the Trust.

### Key issues to which CDAT is committed

Going forward as a growing Trust, CDAT is seeking to build a staff complement (centrally and through academies) with the capacity to:

- Develop outstanding practice across every academy
- Intervene to support schools that are not providing the best outcomes for children
- Ensure that church schools within CDAT embed Christian distinctiveness and all schools live out the CDAT vision and values
- Understand that CDAT is built from the ground up and work with schools to develop necessary policy and procedures
- Support the development of the hub model
- Lead school to school collaboration and development both for individual academy improvement and the good of all
- Enhance the educational and business offer currently available to academies
- Improve communication both internally and externally
- Deliver leadership development and succession and development for all staff
- Demonstrate clear accountability in business functions, educational provision and governance.
- Provide clear information and guidance to the Board on the effectiveness of individual academies and the Trust as a whole

## Job Description

### Chester Diocesan Academies Trust (CDAT)

<b>Job Title:</b>	<b>Trust Finance Officer</b>
<b>Salary:</b>	<b>NJC Pt 7-11</b> £24,294 - £25,979 FTE April 2024 (Pay award pending)
<b>Pension:</b>	<b>Membership of Local Government Pension Fund</b>
<b>Job Summary:</b>	<p>The Trust envisages that the Trust Finance Officer will be a key part of the Trust's central team, providing high-quality support the Trust's central functions, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Administer all financial information for the Trust, including the recording of income and expenditure, raising purchase orders, sales invoices and processing invoices, ensuring accurate information is available and financial regulations are followed</li><li>• In conjunction with the Directors of Finance and Operations, ensure Best Value at all times</li><li>• Prepare BACS runs for processing and approval by the Director of Finance</li><li>• Record and reconcile all credit card expenses ensuring the VAT element is recorded</li><li>• Administer the banking of all cash and cheque receipts</li><li>• Reconcile central bank accounts in accordance with Trust Financial Procedures</li><li>• Maintain the Trust's financial database to ensure accurate information is available, including creating/amending supplier and customer records</li><li>• Maintain financial income and expenditure records for specific grants and for Devolved Formula Capital and School Condition Allocation grants</li><li>• Monitor Aged Debtors and follow up where necessary</li><li>• Collate financial information from schools and Local Authorities, such as bank reconciliation statements, FEEE and EHCP funding allocations to support budget planning and month-end processes</li><li>• Collate payroll information from the Trust's payroll provider</li><li>• Prepare inter-company journals and corresponding bank transfers for authorisation by the Director of Finance</li><li>• Prepare the monthly VAT126 for submission to HMRC</li><li>• Support central staff in training as appropriate</li><li>• Support the preparation of reports for the Trust Board</li></ul> <p>Notwithstanding the detail in this job description, the postholder will undertake such work as may be determined by the CEO/DoF/DoO from time-to-time, up to or at a level consistent with the main responsibilities of the job.</p>

<b>Accountable To:</b>	Trust Director of Finance & Director of Operations
<b>Key Relationships:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CDAT Officers and staff</li> <li>• Headteachers and School Business Managers</li> <li>• Diocesan Board of Education Officers and Staff</li> <li>• Service providers</li> <li>• ESFA (Education and Skills Funding Agency)</li> <li>• DfE (Department for Education)</li> <li>• HMRC</li> <li>• The Charity Commission</li> </ul>
<b>Hours &amp; Location:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>30 hours per week – All Year Round (0.83FTE)</b> (08:30 – 15:00 with 30 min unpaid lunch)</li> <li>• <b>Based at the Trust office:</b> Room 518 The Heath Business and Technical Park Runcorn WA7 4QX</li> </ul>

## Core Purpose

To support the provision of a forward thinking, responsive and professional finance and business operations service, while ensuring the Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) remains compliant with the requirements of the Academies Financial Handbook, Companies House, the Charities Commission and other relevant statutory and regulatory requirements.

## Core Expectations

Staff should recognise that as the Trust grows job roles will inevitably develop and change focus, and job descriptions will be reviewed accordingly. Staff need therefore to be flexible in their approach to accommodate the changing needs of the MAT and to participate fully in professional development to support this.

## Key Accountabilities

- 1) Support the Trust's DoF/DoO in ensuring that the Trust's accounting systems are effectively and accurately maintained in compliance with the Funding Agreement, SORP, the Academies Financial Handbook, the Academies Accounts Direction and all relevant Companies and Charities legislation
  - Support the development and monitoring of the Trust's financial procedures and processes
  - Participate in and support finance system administration tasks e.g. creating new suppliers and customers, processing transactions
  - Participate in and support period end procedures for the central function in a timely and efficient manner
  - Identify and perform all necessary accounting adjustments for the MAT central function
  - Support the VAT claims process each month from information provided by the School Business Managers, ensuring that the information is accurate and correct.
- 2) Responsible for ensuring that financial data produced is fit for purpose to support the Trust-level financial reporting and strategic decision making
  - Ensure all income and expenditure is accounted for and provide regular assurance to the DoF
  - Ensure databases are up-to-date and accurate
- 3) Responsible for the production of information to support scrutiny, analysis, Audit and Statutory Financial Statements
  - Ensure that all financial data recording has a clear audit trail and meets audit criteria to adequately evidence the content in the financial statements
  - Support the timely submission of all statutory returns
- 4) Support the achievement of value for money across the MAT
  - Support the DoF and DoO in securing best value through local purchasing, contract monitoring and benchmarking
  - Contribute to the preparation of local bids and tenders for capital projects, grants and services
- 5) To keep professional knowledge up to date
  - Establish a high level of credibility, visibility and professionalism and manage strong working relationships with internal (especially academies and Diocesan staff) and external partners
- 6) Upholding CDAT's Christian and professional values internally and externally by
  - Acting always with integrity and respect for all
  - Delivering day-to-day duties at a consistently strong level

- Acting as a champion for continuous improvement and quality enhancement
- Actively promoting and acting, at all times, in accordance with the Trust's policies, e.g. Health and Safety, Equal Opportunities and Safeguarding
- Making a commitment and contribution to improving the educational opportunities of CDAT pupils
- Contributing to the maintenance of a caring and stimulating environment for pupils
- Undertaking other duties commensurate with the job level
- Interact professionally with colleagues to ensure understanding and awareness of responsibilities of all colleagues and undergo any relevant training.
- Building close working relationships with Head Teachers, Chairs of Governors and the CDAT central team

## **Note**

### **General**

The postholder will comply with the general terms and conditions of service and undertake such other duties appropriate to the salary and content of the work as may reasonably be required. Therefore, the list of duties in this job profile should not be regarded as exclusive or exhaustive.

### **Data Protection**

The post holder is responsible for ensuring that workplace responsibilities are carried out in compliance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act and the Employment Practices Data Protection Code, especially concerning confidentiality, treatment of personal information and records management.

### **Health, Safety and Wellbeing**

With reference to all relevant advice and guidance, ensure each Academy complies with Health and Safety legislation and manage the security, upkeep and improvement its buildings to ensure an effective and safe environment that promotes the welfare of children and staff.

### **Equality and Inclusion**

Chester Diocesan Academies Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The successful applicant will require an Enhanced DBS check. We welcome all applications regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, sexual orientation.

The post holder will take responsibility for behaving in ways that are consistent with fair and equitable treatment for all and take responsibility for their own learning and engagement with equality issues and actions and to consider the impact of their actions to ensure that they do not have a detrimental effect on achieving equality of opportunity. Any breaches may lead to termination of employment.

### **Disclosure Service Certification from the Disclosure and Barring Service**

New members of staff will be required to apply for Disclosure Service certification as part of the staff recruitment process. Further information about the Disclosure and Barring Service is available from the DBS website at: [www.homeoffice.gov.uk/](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/)

Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1075, applicants for this post are among those who are not entitled to withhold information about any previous criminal conviction.

### **Right to Work**

Existing British law states that a person cannot be employed to this post if they do not have permission to live and work in the UK. Please advise if you require any guidance or further information on this.

## Person Specification – Trust Finance Officer

Qualifications/Background	Essential/ Desirable
Recognised qualification in accounting e.g. minimum AAT level 2 or comparable qualification* or qualified by experience with a willingness to work towards qualification (*Degree in accountancy or similar also acceptable)	E
Good standard of general education	E
Prior experience of working within the Education/Academies/Public sector	D

Knowledge, understanding and management experience	Essential/ Desirable
Experience of working in a Multi-Academy Trust finance position	D
Familiarity with financial processes and procedures	E
High level of IT competence, literacy and numeracy skills	E
Experience of using financial software packages, e.g. Access	E
Good organisation and proven administrative skills	E
Good knowledge of statutory requirements, procedures and regulatory requirements relating to academies	D
Experience of advanced Excel skills.	D
Knowledge and understanding of procurement processes	D

Personal and professional qualities	Essential/ Desirable
Excellent communication and interpersonal skills: able to communicate clearly and confidently with a wide range of audiences	E
Good attention to detail	E
Able to work with minimal supervision	E
Capacity to work under pressure, to meet deadlines and organisational priorities	E
Commitment to continuing professional development	E
Interest in working within the education sector	E
Flexible in terms of working patterns and evolution of the role	E
Team player, personable, emotionally intelligent with a sense of humour and a can-do attitude	E

Special requirements	Essential/ Desirable
Occasional travel across the Diocese and beyond to carry out duties may be required	D
Supportive of the principles of the academies programme	E
Be sympathetic to the aims, values, ethos and distinctiveness of Church of England schools and academies	E