

Job Description

Job title	Research Finance Assistant
Department	Finance
Grade	FA4

Job purpose (a brief summary of the role)	Proactively supporting a portfolio of externally funded research and research related projects from acceptance to closure, ensuring compliance with university regulations and funder requirements. Submitting claims and invoices to funders by the key deadline date and supporting funder audits. Post holders will be expected to work independently and without supervision for much of the time. To demonstrate an excellent customer service ethos, building good working relationships with stakeholders (particularly those in academic departments) through close communication and information sharing, and collaborative working.
Duties and responsibilities	Preparing claims and invoices - To provide post award financial administration assistance for a portfolio including small to medium sized research projects and research related projects. Providing excellent support and advice to Departments and Principal Investigators in close liaison with Research & Impact service (R&IS). Advising on eligibility of spend and budget virements and funder rules. - Responsible for the actual cost recovery invoices for a portfolio of Departments. - Manage the internal awarded research related awards, completing income transfer journals and reporting on actual spend versus budget. Ensuring budgets are utilised whilst avoiding any overspends. - Maintain complete, accurate and auditable working papers supporting claims and invoices. - Post journals to clear reconciling items, or to correct mis-postings/remove ineligible spend in a timely manner. - Producing financial reports from SAP; manipulating the data in excel to produce a reconciliation; reviewing all transactions and reconciling spend on research grants (via line item reports). - Ensuring claims and invoices are complete, accurate and that costs are in accordance with funders' terms and conditions, and in line with budget. Liaising with Departmental contacts and funders as appropriate. Ensuring deadlines are met. - Input claims on various external funder systems as required. - Retain up-to date knowledge on the varying funder rules and financial procedures to ensure compliance. Timesheets - Maintain a timesheet log to ensure that accurate and complete signed timesheets are submitted within two months and signed copies are kept on file or stored on Vidatum timesheet system.

- Download and pivot payroll data. Maintain an automated reconciliation of the salary costs

Project set ups

- Setting up of new research project codes by reviewing and interpreting contracts or grant offer letters to identify, key project data, FEC, awarded budgets and reporting requirements, and then ongoing maintenance of this data. Liaising with R&IS contacts in pre-award regarding project set ups queries.
- Submission of starting certificates if required.

Closing projects

- Monitor research projects which have ended and ensure that appropriate actions are taken for a prompt and orderly close.
- Maintain an action plan for projects which have passed end date but not yet closed off.
- On project completion, ensure all required documents and audit trail is archived and held on file for the contracted period.

Audit

- Assist with audits and prepare documentation for these.
- Respond in a timely manner to basic audit queries from external or internal auditors.
- Provide absence cover for work and undertake other ad hoc duties commensurate with grade, as required.

Person Specification

The Person Specification focuses on the essential and desirable knowledge, skills, experience and qualifications required to undertake the role effectively. This is measured by (a) Application Form, (b) Test/Exercise, (c) Interview, (d) Presentation.

Essential Criterion No.	Essential Criterion Description	Measured by
E1	Good GCSE's including English and Maths grades A-C or equivalent essential.	A
E2	Working towards or qualified in a relevant practical accounting qualification such as Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT) or part CCAB qualified.	A,B & C
E3	Highly proficient in use of IT systems, especially Microsoft Excel (Advance level) and Outlook (essential). With the ability to use the following excel functions: - pivots, vlookups, sumifs, ifs, and conditional formatting etc	A,B & C
E4	Excellent numerical skills with the ability to manipulate data, complete calculations, build financial models and present financial data using spreadsheets and maintain clear comprehensive audit trail	A,B & C
E5	Excellent verbal/written communication in English and interpersonal skills.	A,B & C
E6	Excellent organisational and time management skills. Capacity to manage and prioritise a high workload and achieve strict deadlines whilst maintaining a high standard of customer service.	A,B & C
E7	Demonstrable experience of working to a high standard of accuracy and meticulous attention to detail.	A,B & C
E8	Adaptable and flexible with the ability to learn new areas of knowledge and skills rapidly (for example, to understand and interpret contractual terms and conditions).	A,B & C

Desirable Criterion No.	Desirable Criterion Description	Measured by
D1	Evidence of being able to make independent decisions whilst working as part of a team.	A,B & C
D2	Willing to progress to a full CCAB Professional accounting qualification.	A,B & C
D3	Experience in higher education/research support role or similar environment.	A,B & C
D4	Experience of dealing with detailed contractual requirements.	A,B & C
D5	Experience of budgetary management and working with an ERP system such as SAP.	A,B & C