

Job Description

Date Job Description created: September 2020

Job Title: Senior Finance Business Partner	Job Holder: Grade 7
Department: Finance Department	Location: Although based in Paisley the job holder is expected to visit all campuses as the role requires

Reporting To: Head of Finance

Job Summary:
University of the West of Scotland is driving an ambitious strategy for high-quality learning and teaching, and research and innovation, with a global engagement agenda to reflect the needs of the 21st century workplace.

UWS is reliant on financial sustainability to underpin the delivery of this strategy, which means a drive for increased value for money in all areas. Deans and Directors have accountability and responsibility for delivering the required growth in revenue and management of resources within their area to achieve the aims of the Strategy.

The SFBP will be the key financial adviser to the Dean/Director. Supported by a Reporting Accountant, they will provide management information for both strategic and operational purposes, and undertake financial planning, budgeting and forecasting, risk analysis and business plan appraisal, driving forward financial management strategies and plans. They will work in conjunction with the senior Departmental/School teams in identifying income generation and funding strategies. The post holder will provide information on financial performance and financial planning to the Head of Finance to present to the Vice Chancellor's Executive Group (VCEG) to best manage UWS's financial resources.

Reporting to the Head of Finance, the post holder will be responsible for directly supporting 2 Academic Schools and 15 Professional Services Departments with a combined annual budget of c£60 million.

Dimensions:

Finance
No direct budget control but will monitor and oversee significant budgets on behalf of budget holders.

Staff
The SFBP role has one direct report (Assistant Finance Business Partner or Planning and Reporting Accountant)

Key Result Areas:

- Be the key source of financial expertise, providing specialist advice to underpin the development and delivery of UWS strategy, directly supporting the Deans/Directors in undertaking the financial management of their budget.

- Provide accurate, timely and clear management information in a standard format covering financial performance, strategic financial planning, budgeting and forecasting, ensuring that the reporting of management information is continuously evolving to meet the changing requirements of the University.
- Provide expert and strategic advice and guidance to School/Departmental teams, including producing and communicating robust financial plans; setting parameters for financial planning; leading re-forecasting activities and producing robust financial reports and analyses together with incisive commentary and recommendations.
- Provide appropriate and timely specialist and strategic input for the School/Departments into the University's financial planning and reporting exercises.
- Undertake financial analysis and due diligence assessment of new initiatives, reviewing the financial impact of available options, and providing robust financial challenge to business plans/business cases to ensure they will withstand scrutiny and contain measurable value.
- With the aim of managing and supporting financial sustainability, work closely with the Departmental/School management teams in exploring viable income generation and funding strategies to support improved performance and revenue increases..
- Identify areas of potential financial efficiency, through objective financial review and challenge, seeking improved use of UWS resources.
- Ensure that all activity is subject to rigorous budgetary monitoring, forecasting and control, so that decision-makers are confident in the financial information they receive and understand the business drivers underpinning the figures.
- Act as the link between Schools/Departments and Central Finance on all aspects of expenditure.
- Promote a culture of continuous improvement, applying appropriate professional standards and demonstrating a culture of ownership and accountability to ensure the delivery of excellent services.
- Contribute fully to the Finance Management team to optimise the impact of Finance across the University and deputise for Head of Finance when required.

Planning and Organising:

The post holder will:

- Plan work in conjunction with Schools/Departments to align with the UWS Strategy, and take responsibility for financial long-term planning within their area of responsibility.
- Work independently and shape activity for the FBP team, leading on initiatives and projects both within Schools and departments as well as university wide.
- Ensure that Schools/Departments' financial plans are developed and operate effectively.
- Actively support Schools/Departments to improve contribution to overall value for money.

- Meet regularly with Deans/Directors to support them in managing their budgets effectively, initiating ways of improving efficiency and income generation.
- Deal with and effectively manage conflicting priorities and complex circumstances.
- Contribute significantly to policy and procedural reviews, managing projects that impact both within the Schools/departments and more widely across the University.

Working Relationships:

The post holder will:

- Act as a trusted advisor to Deans/Directors, providing high level expertise, commercial acumen and instigating change.
- Develop, lead and facilitate effective working relationships with all levels of University staff, including Deans and Depute Deans of Schools, Directors and members of the Senior Management Team as well as associated professional services staff.
- Regularly gauge the financial service requirements of the Deans/Directors and their teams, ensuring financial services provided align to these.
- Develop strong and supportive working relationships with colleagues across finance and contribute with influence to the Finance management team.

Person Specification

Department: Finance Department	Job Title: Senior Finance Business Partner
<u>Education/Qualifications/Training:</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualified accountant with post qualification experience gained in a complex commercially focused environment, educated to degree level. • Membership of a recognised accounting professional body. 	

<u>Experience:</u>
<p>Essential</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive experience working in a finance role within a large and complex commercial organisation. • Strategic financial management and leadership experience. • Significant knowledge and experience of financial and budgetary control systems. • Significant cost and income allocation and capital accounting experience. • Considerable experience of leading budgeting, forecasting and reporting activity for E6 - significant areas of a business. • Experienced change agents in relation to financial improvement. • Proven track record of developing and securing excellent business relationships. <p>Desirable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience within the Higher Education Sector. • Experience of organisational change.
<u>Skills/Knowledge/Understanding:</u>
<p>Essential</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly developed IT skills, especially Word and Excel with the ability in particular to structure, analyse and interpret complex financial data for a variety of audiences. • Proven ability to work effectively to tight deadlines and prioritise and manage multiple tasks. • Excellent oral and written presentation skills, to convey complex financial information to a wide audience, including non-financial colleagues, clearly and effectively. • Proven analytical and problem-solving skills with the ability to make considered decisions, resolve conflicts and demonstrate sound, professional judgement. • Strong commercial awareness and business acumen with a clear understanding of strategic objectives and key business drivers; able to work effectively with senior managers to deliver agreed objectives. • Excellent interpersonal skills and the ability to generate personal impact and maintain credibility at all levels. • Ability to work independently or within a team, collaborating and sharing expertise. <p>Desirable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A broad and detailed knowledge of financial issues within a Higher Education environment. • Knowledge of Agresso Finance systems. • Experience of reviewing business plans using strong financial modelling skills.

Personal Attributes:

- Approachable and enthusiastic, adopting a positive “can do” attitude to overcoming challenging situations.
- Self-motivated, able to work effectively under pressure and to tight timescales.
- Team player that will work outside area of comfort to support colleagues.
- Displays commitment and enthusiasm.
- Flexible and actively listens to business requirements.