Job profile

Post: Senior Financial Analyst - Institutional Sustainability and Governance (ISG) – Grade E3

Directorate: Finance

Purpose: To work individually, or as part of a team, to carry out financial monitoring on the health of further and higher educational (FE / HE) institutions: normally providing advice and guidance on the financial health and governance within an allocated portfolio of institutions. Also provide advice and guidance to inform Scottish Funding Council (SFC) operations in relation to a designated function / specialism.

Line Manager: Assistant Director of Institutional Sustainability and Governance (ISG)

Main Responsibilities

1. Manage workload arising from an allocated portfolio of institutions and designated lead specialism(s) such as Technical Accounting changes or Internal Audit.

2. Through the application of professional accounting principles and practices, carry out effective analysis (in full compliance with Scottish Government public sector finance practices where appropriate), seeking expert external advice from specialists – e.g. legal advisors – as necessary, to help inform recommendations and proposed actions.

3. Provide accurate and timely financial management information to relevant management, including SFC’s Senior Management Team (SMT) and the Council, on the financial health of an allocated portfolio of institutions in order that the Council and stakeholders are aware of the developing landscape of the sectors, including any specific concerns.

4. Provide accurate and timely information/reports on the standards of governance in allocated portfolio of institutions, providing support and advice on governance matters as required, ensuring the sectors develop and maintain effective standards of governance. These reports and information to be provided to relevant management, including SMT, Council and key stakeholders.
such as Scottish Government, Audit Scotland etc., to ensure awareness of practices in general, including any specific concerns.

5. Keep up to date on changes in technical accounting developments covering UK accounting as well as auditing standards and governance codes; also represent SFC in technical accounting meetings with institutions, other UK funding bodies, auditors and other key stakeholders.

6. Represent SFC in negotiations and discussions with external bodies on matters concerning sector financial health and governance, in relation to the allocated portfolio of institutions.

7. Provide financial and governance advice to SFC and the sectors on specific matters as required, for example the appropriateness of sector severance schemes or disposals of assets which have been paid for with money from the taxpayer.

Knowledge, Skills and Experience

Essential:

- Fully qualified accountant (equivalent to level 11 in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework) with sufficient post qualification experience to demonstrate the necessary level of understanding and professional judgement required for the role
- Professional awareness of technical accounting issues, with up to date knowledge of UK accounting and auditing standards and governance codes
- Sound experience of business analysis, financial management, budgetary control and audit issues
- Demonstrable experience in providing advice and guidance on governance issues to internal and external stakeholders
- Good level of organisational ability – to manage self and to contribute to the work of team in meeting any changing organisational priorities
- Effective interpersonal skills, able to form effective working relationships with people at all levels, with stakeholders including institutions, SFC, Scottish Government and Regional Strategic Bodies (RSBs)
- Effective communication skills both formal and informal: in writing and orally, in presentations. Able to analyse and communicate complex financial and governance issues to those with a non-financial background
- Excellent numeracy skills
- Proficient in desk-top software packages particularly Advanced Excel skills
- Able to establish and maintain networks of key contacts both internally and externally
Desirable:

- Understanding of current governance, leadership and management (including financial management) and other relevant issues in further and higher education
- Strong level of understanding of operational practices in finance departments
- Understanding of Government budgeting and accounting requirements and guidance
- Comprehensive understanding of public sector and the role of an NDPB
- Knowledge of current employment law and procurement issues
- Evidence of continuous personal and professional development and its application in the workplace

Status of Job Profile

This profile has been created to describe, in outline, the nature of appointments at this level. It is an indicative document and the exact nature of these duties will vary with time and from post to post. Post holders will be expected to carry out any work that is commensurate with their grade or that may reasonably be required of them.

Additional information

The ISG Team has 6 established members of staff: the Assistant Director plus 5 Senior Financial Analysts (including the current vacancy). The work is mainly influenced by the academic and financial years, Scottish Government Spending / Budget timetables, SFC Council / Committee Meetings and meetings of SMT.

Key contacts and relationships will include:

Internal

Assistant Director, ISG; ISG Team Colleagues; Deputy Director of Institutional Sustainability and Capital; Director of Finance; Finance and Capital colleagues; Director of Access, Learning and Outcomes (ALO); Outcome Agreement Managers; and (if required) Council sub committees.

External

Scottish Government; Directors of Finance of Institutions within allocated portfolio; External and Internal Auditors; UK and European funding bodies and auditors.

The post-holder is required to make decisions within the delegated framework to ensure SFC adheres to the complex Scottish Government financial controls and policies on the use of and accounting for, public funds. Internally support is available from the Assistant Director ISG and if necessary, the Deputy Director of Institutional...
Sustainability and Capital and the Director of Finance. SFC’s guidance on delegated authority defines the limits of decision-making. Within this specialised field the Senior Financial Analyst has to possess a thorough understanding of how the relevant regulations, practices and guidance are appropriate to each situation, as well as using their professional judgement to consider how to proceed. Where matters require to be escalated to seek a decision or direction these will normally be directed to the Assistant Director, ISG.

*Committed to equality of opportunity*