The Scottish Funding Council’s work in tertiary education makes a real difference to people’s lives through learning, research and innovation. Joining us could be a transformative decision for you too.

We are currently looking for:

POST: Budgeting and Reporting Officer
DIRECTORATE: Finance
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WELCOME

Thank you for your interest in joining our team at the Scottish Funding Council (SFC).

We are the national funding authority for tertiary education and research. We invest around £2 billion every year, and our funding enables colleges and universities to provide life-changing opportunities for over half a million people.

What drives us is our ambition to create and sustain world leading learning, research, and innovation. So, naturally, we have a clear focus on recruiting the best people and developing them throughout their career.

Our policies and investments spread far beyond campuses, and they have real impact on Scotland’s economy and on wider society: this makes the Scottish Funding Council an inspiring place to work.

This is a really exciting time for us. We recently led a national review and are now actively refocusing our priorities, operations, and capabilities to play an even more central and effective role in Scotland’s future.

We are a friendly, welcoming team and we believe we are at our best when our work is informed by different perspectives. We are always keen to receive applications from talented people from all walks of life, whose skills will help us serve all of Scotland’s communities.

We look forward to hearing from you, and very much look forward to welcoming new members to the team.

Karen Watt
Chief Executive
ABOUT THE VACANCY

OVERVIEW

We are looking for an experienced and enthusiastic person to join our Finance Directorate as Budgeting and Reporting Officer.

We would love to hear from you and welcome applications from people with disabilities and those from minority ethnic and language communities, as well as those who have skills in Scottish Gaelic or British Sign Language.

FINANCE DIRECTORATE

Ensures SFC’s financial and property resources are deployed and managed to support delivery of its strategic framework and outcome agreements.

The Directorate is responsible for all financial and funding processes across SFC and ensures that SFC’s public funds (circa £2 Bn) are protected in relation to effective governance, management and use of teaching, student support, research and capital resources in colleges and universities. Approximately £10m relates to SFC’s running costs.

In addition, the Directorate manages the development and monitoring of the standard prices and rates used in SFC’s main funding models, carries out planning, management, monitoring and checking of European Social Funds (ESF) and student support funding, and provides advice and guidance to colleges. Finally, the Directorate is responsible for monitoring and assessing the long-term financial sustainability of the tertiary sector, capital and environmental sustainability.

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF ROLE

You will perform a key role in ensuring the public funds we allocate are accurately managed and budgeted as well as providing associated accounting and procurement support. This will involve working closely with budget holders across SFC to provide a high-quality service.

Working within the Finance Directorate you will carry out month end reporting processes, journals and reconciliations, and production of monthly accounts, liaising with Finance Team colleagues to produce accurate and timely financial information.

Using your knowledge of finance and budget processes you will support the provision of monthly management information for senior management. You need to provide assurance over the validity of data in the accounts and budgets. This includes working with other finance staff to maintain accurate data on our grant payments system and assisting in the production of monthly payments to institutions as well as progressing grant funding awards.
Working in accordance with our Financial procedures you will ensure that these are complied with, gathering financial information and querying data as necessary to ensure it is suitable as evidence for audit purposes. As a member of Finance, you will support the review and updating of financial procedures and policies to maintain their currency with SFC’s financial practices. Other duties include online bank administration support for Finance team colleagues, as well support to the Finance Directorate and across SFC as necessary.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Assist with the procurement processes, liaising with budget holders across the organisation.

2. Undertake month end processes including journals and reconciliations and production of accounts, liaising with colleagues in the finance team, to produce accurate and timely financial information.

3. Understand and interpret information to provide assurance over the validity of data in accounts and budgets.

4. Support the provision of monthly management information for the organisation’s senior management.

5. Support grant funding processes, along with other finance staff, by maintaining accurate data on the organisation’s grant payments system, assisting in production of monthly payments to institutions and progressing grant funding awards.

6. Gather supporting information and query data in line with SFC’s Financial Procedures and ensure its suitability for use as evidence for audit purposes.

7. Comply with Financial Procedures and support updating of Financial Procedures Manual and related policies as appropriate to ensure that SFC’s financial practices align with written processes.

8. Provide online bank administration support for Finance team.

9. Provide support to Finance team, Strategic Finance and across SFC as required.

The above list is not exhaustive, and the job holder may be required to undertake such duties commensurate with their grade or that may reasonably be required of them.
PERSON SPECIFICATION

ESSENTIAL SKILLS, QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

• Relevant financial and budgeting experience, or qualified to at least SCQF Level 9 (Degree) in a relevant subject (e.g. Accountancy).

• Sound analytical and report writing skills, including presentation of financial data.

• Good communication and interpersonal skills to build and develop positive working relationships with colleagues both within the Finance directorate and other directorates, to facilitate the timely provision and exchange of guidance and information necessary to manage the Council’s budgets (both programme and running costs).

• Able to work within a team to deadlines and tight timescales to meet set objectives.

• Flexible, able to co-ordinate a diverse range of priorities and react positively to change.

• Good IT skills including use of MS Word, Excel and a familiarity with financial/budgetary systems and processes.

DESIRABLE

• Understanding of the further and higher education sector.

STATUS OF VACANCY OUTLINE

This outline has been created to describe 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.

FURTHER INFORMATION

More details on the SFC can be found on our website including more specifics on the role of the Finance Directorate.
OUTLINE TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

The salary range for this post (Grade E2) is £32,883 to £38,724 per annum (1.0FTE).

- Normal **hours** of work are 36 per week. We will consider flexible working arrangements. A flexi-time system is in operation.

- This role is normally based in our Edinburgh office. At present many of our staff are still largely working from home, although our office has reopened for those who choose to use it. We are developing our future approach to **hybrid** working in consultation with our workforce.

- Annual **leave** entitlement is 26.5 days pro-rata, rising to 30 days pro-rata after 4 years’ continuous service, and calculated from date of commencement. Public and privilege holiday entitlement is 11.5 days pro-rata.

- The **salary** range for this post is £32,883 to £38,724 per annum (pro-rata). Placement in the pay range is dependent on qualifications and relevant experience. Existing employees appointed on a level transfer will retain their current salary.

- Salaries are reviewed annually in April for employees who commence employment prior to 1 October in the preceding year. Under current arrangements salary increases (base pay and progression) for all employees at this grade are determined in negotiation with the recognised trade union and are awarded to staff that have performed satisfactorily in the previous year.

- All staff are paid monthly in arrears by bank credit transfer on the last working day of every month.

- On joining SFC most employees will be auto-enrolled into the **Civil Service Pension Scheme** (alpha). At current rates, employees on this pay range will pay a pension contribution of 5.45% of salary. Details of **contribution rates** together with further details of the **pension benefits** are available on the Civil Service Pensions website. There is also the option of a Partnership pension account.

- You must be eligible to work in the UK to apply for these roles: we do not offer sponsorships. As part of our pre-employment process we will ask you to provide relevant documentation to show that you are eligible to work in the UK and a Basic Disclosure Scotland certificate.
HOW TO APPLY

To apply, please send us:

- Your CV and a supporting statement to recruitment@sfc.ac.uk. Please use this to set out your educational and professional qualifications, and career history, with key responsibilities, dates and achievements. Please provide reasons for any gaps.

- Your supporting statement should give evidence and examples of your proven experience in relation to each of the selection criteria in the Person Specification section above, as far as you can. If you progress to interview stage, the interview panel will assess you across the full range of experience, skills and knowledge in the Person Specification. In your statement provide the following:
  - your current salary
  - any dates when you will not be able to attend the interview
  - when you could take up appointment if successful
  - details of two referees. One must be your present or most recent employer. We will take up references for the successful candidate at the offer stage
  - a completed Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form (downloadable via this link and from the SFC website). It is not essential to provide this, but this data is valuable in supporting our equality and diversity aims. We will treat your diversity data in the strictest confidence. It is not provided to the selection panel and will not affect your application in any way. For each of the questions on the form you have the option to select 'prefer not to say'
  - if relevant, you should also tell us if you wish to claim a guaranteed interview under the Disability Confident Scheme. Under this Scheme, all applicants who consider themselves to be disabled in terms of the Equality Act 2010, and who meet the essential minimum criteria for the post will be guaranteed an interview. You can find further guidance on the definition of disability for these purposes on the DirectGov website here: Disability and the Equality Act 2010.
If you give any information which you know is false, or if you withhold relevant information, this may lead to your application being rejected, or if you have already been appointed, to your dismissal.

Please email your application to recruitment@sfc.ac.uk by 9am on Monday 7 November 2022, clearly stating the vacancy you are applying for. You should receive an automated acknowledgement. If you have any problems with your application, please phone 0131 313 6500 and ask for Human Resources.

RESERVE LISTS

Please note that if we have more appointable candidates than vacancies available a Reserve List may be used for up to 12 months to fill the same role or other similar roles with closely matching essential criteria without further testing of merit via an interview process.

YOUR PRIVACY

To read more about how we collect, store and share your data please read our privacy notice which can be accessed on our website here: Privacy Notice (sfc.ac.uk).

THE SELECTION PROCESS

SHORTLISTING

The selection panel will assess your application by considering the evidence you have provided against the “Experience” criteria in the Person Specification section. Failure to address any or all of these may affect your application. The selection panel will then select the shortlist of candidates to take forward to interview stage.

INTERVIEWS

If you are shortlisted, we will invite you to attend a panel interview in which you will be invited to discuss your interest in the post and to give evidence of your experience and professional competence in relation to the Key Responsibilities and criteria in the Person Specification. You may find it helpful to use the STARR model to prepare for this.

We will also invite you to give a brief presentation to the panel on a topic which we will send you in advance.
INDICATIVE TIMELINE

This timeline below indicates the date by which decisions are expected to be made. We will aim to advise all candidates of the outcome as soon as possible at each stage.

Please note that these dates are indicative and may be subject to change. If you are unable to meet these timelines please tell us on your application form.

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