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Job Description

Post Title: Financial Planning Accountant (TRAC)

Date last updated/evaluated: January 2025

Author: Mark Shutler

Standard Occupation Code: Not applicable

Department: Finance Department

Directorate: Professional Services

Job Family: Management, Specialist and Administrative (MSA)

Grade: Level 5

ERE Pathway (if applicable): Not applicable

Post reporting to: Mark Shutler – Head of Financial Planning

Post line report(s): none

Post base location: Hybrid: Campus / Home

Job purpose:

To manage and coordinate the provision of financial planning, in particular leading the annual Transparent Approach to Costing (TRAC) process for the University.

To act as a main point of financial advice for both Faculties and Professional Service areas, carrying out a range of professional accountancy tasks to assist in costing and pricing, planning and decision making in the University’s best interests.

## Key accountabilities and indicative time allocation:

1. **45%**

**TRAC Return**

Produce the annual TRAC return, which allocates the University’s costs and income to activities.

Operate the TRAC process, including detailed and complex interrogation of Microsoft Access database. Recommend and implement changes and improvements to aid efficiency and accuracy.

Liaise with academic and support departments to ensure that appropriate data collection techniques are in place for source data and cost drivers (e.g. staff, students, space).

Collate, interrogate and manipulate large datasets, validating results to ensure correct application of formulae.

Be the Finance lead for the University’s TRAC Steering Group.

1. **25%**

**Costing & Pricing**

Use the TRAC methodology and data for internal University purposes including management information and investment appraisal.

Support the enhancement of costing and pricing practice throughout the University, including the enhancement of course costing methodology and systems.

1. **10%**

**Business Planning and Management Accounting**

Support the business planning and budgeting process and the production of monthly management accounts.

1. **10%**

**Academic Performance Reviews**

Work with colleagues in the Strategic Planning team to support the University’s reviews of academic school performance.

1. **10%**

**Other**

Produce and present reports for formal meetings.

Deliver guidance and briefings for key stakeholders.

Any other duties as allocated by the line manager following consultation with the post holder.

Internal and external relationships:

Internal Relationships

* Vice-President Research & Enterprise (Chair of TRAC Steering Group)
* Faculty Finance Teams – the nature of the post holders’ tasks will require frequent communication with Heads of Faculty Finance and their staff.
* Executive Director, Directors of Finance and senior University Management – liaison over TRAC return, time allocation surveys and carrying out of various ad-hoc tasks as required.
* The post holder is required to attend and make an active contribution to a number of formal University committees as well as ad hoc meetings involving Senior University Management.

External Relationships

* Required to work with external auditors in connection with the annual accounts for the University and with internal auditors where relevant.

Special requirements:

# Person Specification – Skills and Competencies

All essential and desirable criteria outlined in this Person Specification will be assessed through a combination of recruitment application and CV, and where applicable numerical or written assessment.

**Knowledge, Experience and Qualifications**

Essential

* Qualified accountant with substantial post-qualification experience.
* Proven experience of managing outcomes in a specialist field.
* Proven project and/or people management skills.
* Able to apply experience and awareness within specialist field.
* Able to appreciate University priorities and to apply these in managing work outcomes.

Desirable

* Experience of completing TRAC return.
* Knowledge of the higher education system.

**Teamwork and Communication**

Essential

* Able to manage team dynamics, ensuring any potential for conflict is managed effectively.
* Able to formulate development plans for own staff to meet current and future skill needs.
* Able to provide expert guidance and advice to colleagues to resolve complex problems.
* Able to persuade and influence to foster and maintain relationships.
* Able to resolve tensions and difficulties as they arise.

**Planning, Organisation and Resource Management**

Essential

* Able to plan and manage major new projects or significant new activities, ensuring plans complement broader organisational strategy.

**Problem Solving and Initiative**

Essential

* Able to identify broad trends to assess deep-rooted and complex issues.
* Able to apply originality in modifying existing approaches to solve problems.

**Other skills and behaviours**

Essential

* Excellent working knowledge of accounting systems and Microsoft Office applications.

Desirable

* Experience of working with and developing database systems for complex data analysis.

# Job Hazard Assessment

A full health clearance is required for this role where any hazards marked “**^**”, using the agreed Occupational Health referral template [available from here](https://sotonac.sharepoint.com/teams/HealthWellbeing/SitePages/Occupational-Health.aspx). Where a full health clearance is required, this will apply to all role holders, including existing members of staff.

## Physical Environment

Working outside **^** Not applicable

Exposure to noise levels >80dbA **^** Not applicable

Working with dust or fumes **^** Not applicable

Working with skin irritants **^** Not applicable

Working with chemicals (industrial or cleaning) **^** Not applicable

Working in a confined space **^** Not applicable

Working at height **^** Not applicable

Working with sewage **^** Not applicable

Contact with cytotoxins **^** Not applicable

Exposure Prone Procedure (EPP) work **^** Not applicable

Contact with clinical specimens or pathology work **^**  Not applicable

Direct patient care or patient contact Not applicable

Exposure to temperature extremes Not applicable

Frequent hand washing Not applicable

Ionising radiation Not applicable

## Psychological and Social Environment

Working shifts **^** Not applicable

Working nights **^** Not applicable

Lone working Not applicable

Working with children Not applicable

Exposure to persons with challenging behaviourNot applicable

Working with larger groups Not applicable

## Equipment, Tools and Machines

Working with vibrating machinery or tools **^** Not applicable

Driving duties e.g. LGV, PCVs, forklift trucks **^** Not applicable

Food handling Not applicable

Contact with latexNot applicable

## Physical Abilities

Prolonged physical movements or actions e.g. walking **^** Not applicable

Prolonged Standing or Sitting **^** Not applicable

Moving or handling heavy loads **^** Not applicable

Repetitive pulling or pushing **^** Not applicable

Repetitive climbing (steps, stools, ladders, stairs) **^** Not applicable

Repetitive crouching, kneeling or stooping Not applicable

Repetitive lifting Not applicable

Fine motor grips (e.g. pipetting) Not applicable

Repetitive reaching below shoulder height Not applicable

Repetitive reaching at shoulder height Not applicable

Repetitive reaching above shoulder height Not applicable

# Behaviours

Our [Inclusion and Respectful Behaviour Policy](https://www.southampton.ac.uk/about/governance/regulations-policies/policies/inclusion-respectful-behaviour) describes the expectations of everyone who is a part of our community.

Our **Southampton Behaviours** (below) outline the responsibilities we each have in working collaboratively to achieve our University strategy.

**Personal Leadership**

 - I take personal responsibility for my own actions and an active approach towards my development.

 - I reflect on my own behaviour, actively seek feedback and adapt my behaviour accordingly.

 - I demonstrate pride, passion and enthusiasm for our University community.

 - I demonstrate respect and build trust with an open and honest approach.

**Working Together**

 - I work collaboratively and build productive relationships across our University and beyond.

 - I actively listen to others and communicate clearly and appropriately with everyone.

 - I take an inclusive approach, value the differences that people bring and encourage others to contribute and flourish.

 - I proactively work through challenge and conflict, considering others’ views to achieve positive and productive outcomes.

**Developing Others**

 - I help to create an environment that engages and motivates others.

 - I take time to support and enable people to be the best they can be.

 - I recognise and value others’ achievements, give praise and celebrate their success.

 - I deliver balanced feedback to enable others to improve their contribution.

**Delivering Quality**

 - I identify opportunities and take action to make improvements.

 - I plan and prioritise efficiently and effectively, taking account of people, processes and resources.

 - I am accountable for tackling issues, making difficult decisions and seeing them through to their conclusion.

 - I encourage creativity and innovation in others, to deliver workable solutions.

**Driving Sustainability**

 - I consider the impact on people before taking decisions or actions that may affect them.

 - I embrace, enable and embed change effectively.

 - I regularly take account of external and internal factors, assessing the need for change, and gaining support to move forward.

 - I take time to understand our University strategy and communicate this to others.