

Head of Financial Planning & Analysis

Job Description

The Role

Job title:	Head of Financial Planning & Analysis
Department:	Finance
Responsible to:	Associate Director of Finance
Location:	Royal Agricultural University, Cirencester
Salary:	Grade 9 (£42,977 to £54,395 depending on experience)
Term:	Permanent; full-time
Relationships with:	All staff of the University, Executive Team, Senior Management Team, Legal Advisors and External/Internal Auditors
Line management:	FP&A team

Purpose

A member of the Finance Senior Leadership team, responsible for the successful provision of an effective FP&A function to key stakeholders across the RAU, providing the necessary information and insight to assist in the decision-making process and deliver the Corporate Strategy objectives. The post supports the annual business and financial planning cycle including the production of the RAU's long-term financial plans. It includes managing the delivery of monthly management reporting packs; the production and submission of regulatory returns; provision of business partnering to senior stakeholders and investment and project appraisals across the RAU as and when required.

Key Responsibilities

1. As a member of the Finance Senior Leadership team, help to set the direction and objectives of the team, and take joint management responsibility for all Finance deliverables, including Accounting, FP&&A and Regulatory deadlines.
2. Line manage and organise the work for the FP&A team. Set objectives for direct reports; ensure they are fulfilling the requirements of their roles; provide coaching and identify knowledge gaps and arrange training; and conduct annual appraisals.
3. Provide leadership to the FP&A team in the production of Monthly Management Reporting Packs, ensuring the timely submission of the pack and commentary, ensuring major variances are explained and, if appropriate, identify remedial action(s).

4. Provide leadership to the FP&A team to facilitate the production and submission of all regulatory returns to external bodies such as the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) and the Office for Students (OfS).
5. Provide leadership to the FP&A team in the provision of finance business partnering across the organisation, building strong and positive relationships with budget holders and senior managers across all functions as and when needed.
6. Ensure the Finance Business Partners are supporting each area of the RAU appropriately, providing the necessary financial and business support to enable managers to understand and take responsibility for their budgets and receive analysis that informs and supports effective decision making.
7. Be the focal point for complex financial queries, providing advice to stakeholders.
8. Support the University in gathering evidence to assess the costs, benefits and risks of a wide range of delivery options when making decisions, and provide advice which helps secure value-for-money.
9. Provide leadership to the FP&A team with investment and project appraisals across the RAU as and when required. Apply various tools such as investment appraisal techniques to better inform decision making and adopt a partner/challenger role in evaluating business plans and business cases.
10. Act as the finance lead / participate in projects/committees as a team member as required.
11. Lead role in the annual business and financial planning process, working closely with senior management across the RAU throughout the business and financial planning process, challenging business assumptions, providing financial support and ensuring that all key milestones are met.
12. Assist in the production of the RAU's long term financial plans.
13. Assist in the production of financial data as part of the financial planning process.
14. Assist in the production and delivery of supporting presentations for senior management and other internal stakeholders, including the Finance & Estates Committee and the Governing Council.

General responsibilities:

- The University is committed to equality of opportunity. All staff are required to comply with current legislation, University policies and good practice guidance.
- All staff are required to act in a way that safeguards the health and wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults at all times. The post holder must be familiar with and adhere to appropriate safeguarding policies and guidance and participate in related mandatory/statutory training. Managers have a responsibility to ensure their team members understand their individual responsibilities with regard to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.
- All staff are required to participate in the University appraisal process and should ensure they are familiar with the process and plan time to prepare for their appraisal. Following the

appraisal, staff are expected to undertake in any necessary learning and development and work towards the objectives that have been set.

- The University expects staff to attend any training designated as mandatory and to undertake learning and development activities to support their role. Managers must facilitate learning and development within their teams.
- It is a condition of employment that staff will not disclose any information obtained in the course of their duties other than to those entitled to receive it. The post holder must ensure that the confidentiality of personal data remains secure and that restricted information or highly restricted information to which they have access remains confidential during and after their employment at Royal Agricultural University. All staff must undergo appropriate data protection training as required.
- All absence from work must be reported in accordance with the University's absence procedures and recorded on iTrent.
- The University acknowledges its responsibility to provide a safe, smoke free environment, to its employees, service users and visitors. It is the policy of the University not to allow smoking on University premises other than in specifically designated areas.

University Values

As a University we have chosen five values to underpin our learning community. These are the values which we will all work by and for which we want the RAU to be known. We are:

- Collaborative - we believe in the power of working together. We are stronger as a community of practice - inspiring each other, identifying shared goals, and providing reciprocal support leads to greater success.
- Open-Minded - we are receptive to new ideas and we value the diversity of experiences and skills. We are committed to listening to everyone across the RAU community.
- Resourceful - we adopt creative approaches to achieve our goals while setting higher standards, promoting professionalism and sustainability.
- Responsible - individually and collectively we take accountability for our actions working with integrity to achieve the highest ethical standards.
- Inclusive - we acknowledge the fundamental value and dignity of all individuals and are committed to maintaining an environment that seeks to eliminate all forms of discrimination and respects diverse traditions, heritages, and experiences.

Person Specification

Requirements The post holder must be able to demonstrate:	Essential or Desirable	Measured By A) Application Form B) Interview C) Presentation
Qualifications:		
Qualified or working towards relevant accountancy qualification, ACA/CIMA/ACCA or equivalent	E	A, B

Requirements The post holder must be able to demonstrate:	Essential or Desirable	Measured By A) Application Form B) Interview C) Presentation
Evidence of continuing professional development	D	A, B
Knowledge, Experience and Skills:		
Experience of working in Financial Planning and Analysis, with a background in management accounting and financial analysis and demonstrable strong analytical skills	E	A, B
Experience as a Finance Business Partner, partnering senior budget holders throughout the organisation.	E	A, B
The ability to communicate effectively with a unique stakeholder group and convey financial issues in a straightforward way to non-financially trained staff.	E	A, B
Experience of producing a management reporting pack for senior stakeholders	E	A, B
Experience of managing budgeting and forecast processes in a complex environment	E	A, B
Experience of accounting for Research projects and International Partnerships and assessing financial viability of potential projects and partnerships.	E	A, B
Experience of working in higher education and a demonstrable understanding of the challenges currently facing the sector.	E	A, B
Strong staff management skills. Including the ability to develop individuals to reach their potential and deal with underperformance if required.	E	A, B
Team player, with exceptional interpersonal skills, able to work with a diverse and broad range of stakeholders across the organisation.	E	A, B
Good written and oral communication skills, able to communicate clearly, concisely, accurately and in ways that promote understanding, to both finance and non-finance specialists.	E	A, B
Strong influencing skills, able to challenge stakeholders at all levels when needed.	E	A, B
Strong finance system skills, including Excel and Access Dimensions, and experience of using and developing reporting tools.	D	A, B

Application Procedure

If you are interested in applying for this role, please send:

- University [Application Form](#) together with the [Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form](#) available on the University website www.rau.ac.uk – you may attach your up to date CV if you wish to add additional information.
- Details of two referees who must be people who can comment authoritatively on you as a person and as an employee in relation to the level of the post, and must include your current or most recent employer or their representative.

- Please forward to the HR Team, Royal Agricultural University, Cirencester, Gloucestershire, GL7 6JS or via email to jobs@rau.ac.uk stating where you saw the advert for the role
- Informal enquiries can be made to Becky Owen, Associate Director of Finance:
Becky.Owen@rau.ac.uk
- **Closing date:** 25 March 2025 with **Interviews on:** w/c 31 March 2025
- Should you be selected for interview please be aware that we are unable to reimburse interview expenses.

The RAU is an equal opportunities employer and we particularly welcome applications from black and minority ethnic candidates as they are underrepresented within the RAU at this level.