

FALMOUTH

UNIVERSITY

JOB DESCRIPTION

FINANCE

Job title:	Finance Operations Lead
Grade:	Grade 7A
Responsible to:	Director of Finance
Responsible for:	Assistant Management/Financial Accountants Finance Business Partners
Date:	February 2026
Job purpose	<p>This post holder will lead the financial and management accounting services and financial operations for a delegated area of responsibility within the University, its subsidiaries and Falmouth Exeter Plus (FX Plus) Group.</p> <p>The post holder will deliver comprehensive, timely, high quality, commercially orientated, and proactive financial and management accounting via a business partnering approach to the University Executive Board, Profit Centres and Professional Services, and the FX Plus Senior Leadership Team.</p>

Main duties and responsibilities

Lead the planning, organising, monitoring and review of Finance operations and resources in order to deliver the University's objectives. To be responsible for managing Financial Business Partnering services provided to either the University or FX Plus, including and not limited to:

1. Building authentic and positive working relationships that foster trust and enable constructive engagement in providing day-to-day finance operations for Falmouth University or FX Plus ensuring the smooth running of an efficient and effective finance service.
2. Providing professional, timely and relevant financial advice to business leaders, including supporting with operational and strategic decisions with non-finance specialists enabling them to make sound and informed choices.
3. Support the Director of Finance in identifying gaps in the services provided to Profit Centres and Professional Services areas in terms of financial support and propose and implement solutions.

4. Be responsible for the production of high-quality monthly management accounts to deadlines showing performance against budget. To review these on a formal basis with Directors, investigating and interpreting variances against budgets, targets and producing informative commentary.
5. Play a significant role in advising and shaping the formation and further development of strategic plans for significant parts of the University and FX Plus (especially Commercial Services) and in some circumstances for the whole Group. This will include financial resource and capital planning, challenging proposals as appropriate and ensuring financial sustainability.
6. Support designated business leaders in the preparation of detailed capital and revenue plans as part of the annual business planning process.
7. Contribute to the development of financial strategies, policies and procedures to meet corporate and service specific business needs, which maintain compliance with legislation and are consistently applied across the University and FX Plus.
8. Mentor and coach a team to deliver high quality, consistent and effective outcomes across the full range of financial systems and controls. Be the main point of contact for providing specialist and expert advice to other teams involved with financial matters e.g. External Funding Office, Student Income team etc.
9. Support the Director of Finance in forming and implementing changes to resource allocation models.
10. Financially appraise new initiatives including evaluation of revenue, capital (including investment appraisal) and cash flow consequences. Take the financial lead for project proposals as delegated including projects of a cross departmental and University wide brief and ensure that information and procedures are cascaded across all organisations to maximise learning and efficiency.
11. Attend and, where necessary, lead task and finish groups required for financial projects to support business planning or commercial proposals. This includes calling meetings and collaborating with a wide range of staff at all levels.
12. Work with the Director of Finance to ensure that there are robust, consistent processes in place for the effective monitoring and control of income and expenditure, ensuring compliance with financial regulations.
13. Responsible for providing appropriate, timely and accurate regular management information with supporting analysis and commentary where necessary for all budget holders within the designated areas. Work in partnership with business leaders to interpret financial management information. Management information to include income, expenditure, capital and forecast outturn.

14. Contribute to the financial year-end accounts including collation of information from other members of staff and preparation of year end files containing audit evidence as required by the external auditors. Communication with auditors and assistance in clearing queries.
15. Main point of contact with Exeter (UoE) colleagues regarding reconciliations and the provision of information to inform financial accounts including annual financial statements for submission to statutory bodies.
16. Preparation of periodic financial information for all entities, such as for submission to the Board and Committee meetings.
17. Organise and lead regular finance business partnering meetings with budget holders to monitor designated income and expenditure against budget allocations, control adherence to budget allocations, identify and take appropriate action to mitigate the potential for overspend. Challenging budget holders where appropriate and communicating any issues or concerns surrounding financial performance to the Director of Finance.
18. In conjunction with budget holders provide accurate forecasts of annual income and expenditure outturn to stakeholders.
19. Work closely with business leaders to support the development of business and cost models and performance drivers for all operations and advise how they may be developed and enhanced. Ensure that full economic costing is fully utilised in assessing business and pricing decisions, deliver added value and profitability etc.
20. Contribute to the completion of the statutory annual financial statements and other contractual returns throughout the year to engage with internal and external auditors. This will include reconciliation of stock, billing, all inter-company recharges, etc. Respond to external auditor queries in respect of the above.
21. Contribute to the development and implementation of accounting policies and procedures within the Finance department and across the University and FXPlus. Benchmark financial performance of operations against industry/HE sector comparators.
22. Responsible for the completion of statutory returns (such as the Annual Finance Return, Transparent Approach to Costing (TRAC) Return, VAT Returns and Corporation Tax Returns) and to complete the regular returns to the Student Loans Company Course Management System.
23. Monitor compliance with financial regulations and propose amendments as required.
24. Act as signatory for the University and FX Plus for the payment of staff and suppliers.
25. Provide a seamless service to the business, by working in collaboration and partnership with other finance leads, providing cover where needed.

General duties and responsibilities

1. To perform to high professional standards.
2. To manage independently any errors or concerns at the earliest opportunity, or notify a senior member of staff as appropriate.
3. To use initiative in order to determine priorities, work with autonomy, and work effectively with senior colleagues.
4. To be responsible for your own continuing self-development.
5. To undertake other duties not specifically stated above, which from time to time are necessary for the effective performance of the University's business without altering the nature or level of responsibility involved.
6. To work in accordance with the University's policies relating to equality and dignity and freedom of speech and academic freedom.
7. To participate in the University's Annual Performance Development Review Process.

Health and safety at Falmouth University

The University takes health and safety matters very seriously. All staff have a responsibility to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others who may be affected by their actions and omissions. They also have a duty to comply with the University arrangements for health and safety. Staff with responsibility for others must ensure the proper enactment of University policy within their areas in line with levels of responsibility set out in the University's Health and Safety Policy.

Health & safety requirements

- In relation to health and safety you must comply with all relevant legal requirements. You are specifically responsible for ensuring that:
- You comply with safe systems of work in operation within your work area.
- You work co-operatively with other staff who have responsibility for health and safety requirements.
- You report any health and safety concerns to your manager or other responsible member of staff as soon as these are identified.
- You attend training as appropriate to your role (see the relevant health and safety training grid for requirements).

In your role as a line manager, you are responsible on direction and on behalf of the relevant member of University Executive Board (UEB) for supporting the discharge of their duty as a member of the senior management team:

- To monitor effective safety implementation.

- To identify health and safety needs and requirements.
- For the care of all those affected by your acts or omissions, so far as is reasonably practicable

You have a responsibility to ensure a safe and healthy environment in line with legislation for staff, students and other users of the areas of the University under your span of control, by ensuring that:

- Falmouth's safety policies and requirements are implemented and that resources are available to the staff under your control to ensure statutory compliance.
- Risk assessments are carried out for relevant activities (e.g. fieldwork, performances, exhibitions etc) undertaken by staff and students within your area, and that any resulting actions are taken and that safe working practices are followed.
- Correct and timely communication of safety issues, both to your superiors and the staff that work for you as relevant to your areas of responsibility.
- You work within a framework of effective governance, ensuring compliance with relevant regulations/legislation/policies and procedures.
- Ensuring that staff within your area fulfill their responsibilities under the University's Health and Safety Policy, including any responsibilities as members of University Committees as appropriate.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Job title: Finance Operations Lead

Attributes	Essential requirements	Desirable requirements
Education and qualifications	<p>A recognised professional accounting qualification (e.g. ICAEW, CIMA, ACCA, CIPFA) or equivalent experience.</p> <p>Evidence of continuing professional development.</p>	<p>Degree in a field such as commerce/ business/ or IT.</p>
Experience and knowledge	<p>Strong experience in a financial or management accounting role in a complex or large organisation.</p> <p>Experience of working at a strategic and operational level with a range of stakeholders.</p> <p>Demonstrable experience working in a high quality, pro-active and commercially focused finance functions.</p> <p>Knowledge and experience of using integrated accounting systems and accounting software.</p> <p>Experience of line managing or supervising others.</p> <p>Proficient with Microsoft Office, in particular Excel.</p> <p>Working knowledge of accounting regulations and related legislation.</p> <p>A track record of driving increased value within a competitive environment.</p>	<p>Experience gained in Higher Education or another educational environment.</p> <p>Experience gained within a commercial environment.</p> <p>Experience of and/or developing innovative or transformational finance software, platforms and systems, e.g. AI.</p> <p>Experience of complex legal and accounting requirements for VAT and Corporation Tax in large multi company organisations.</p>
Skills and personal requirements	<p>Highly organised, with the ability to balance conflicting priorities, meet challenging deadlines and work quickly and accurately under pressure with a high level of attention to detail.</p> <p>Effective decision-making and analytical skills.</p>	

	<p>Excellent and effective communication skills, particularly the ability to communicate technical information to non-specialists.</p> <p>An inclusive approach that facilitates the sharing of best practice across different areas and motivates staff to maximise their personal contribution to the University.</p> <p>Firm commitment to achieving the University's vision and values, with a passion for a transformative student experience and multidisciplinary, impactful research.</p> <p>The ability to work effectively with a diverse staff and student community, in accordance with the University's duties under the Equality Act 2010 and its legal and regulatory obligations in relation to freedom of speech, and academic freedom, within the law.</p> <p>Ability to motivate, lead and develop team members.</p> <p>A professional, collaborative and proactive approach.</p> <p>Able to initiate, drive, and gain acceptance for change.</p> <p>Able to build effective internal & external working relationships.</p>	
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