



Job Description

Summary

Sammary	
Job title	Finance Operations Manager
Division	Social Sciences
Department	School of Geography and the Environment (SoGE)
Location	Oxford
Grade and salary	Grade 7
Hours	Full time
Contract type	Permanent
Reporting to	Finance Manager
Vacancy reference	178045
Additional information	Applications are particularly welcome and encouraged from women, black, and minority ethnic candidates, who are under-represented in posts in SoGE. SoGE are committed to equality and values diversity.
	The School of Geography and the Environment holds an Athena Swan Silver award in recognition of our commitment and success in addressing gender equality.
	The School of Geography and the Environment is committed to promoting a culture of equality, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace, including the undertaking of appropriate training as opportunities arise and/or when asked to do so

The role

This is an exciting opportunity to join a busy finance team and support exceptional service delivery in a dynamic and research-intensive Department. The Finance Operations Manager is a new role, created in response to recent rapid growth and the development of a wide range of new activities including executive education. The Finance Operations Manager is a key investment and will play a crucial role within SoGE's wider professional support team. The postholder will have management oversight of finance operations and will support the Finance Manager (FM) and the Head of Administration and Finance (HAF) to prepare and deliver on all the financial planning and reporting activities of the School. The Finance Operations Manager will help to oversee budgeting, forecasting, and monitoring for School courses, centres, and activities. The













postholder will also champion compliance with university procedures and be responsible for initiatives to promote awareness of, and compliance with, financial assurance policies.

The Finance Operations Manager will report to the Finance Manager and will line manage the Finance Officer and three Finance Assistants. They will be responsible for overall day to day supervision of finance operations ensuring the effective and efficient delivery of the financial transactional processing for SoGE. The post holder will also work closely with the Head of Administration and Finance and maintain close links with the finance staff in the Social Sciences Division joining University networks for finance professionals.

Responsibilities/duties

General

- Deliver an effective and comprehensive finance service to the Department to ensure efficient,
 accurate and effective management, including financial transactional processing and reporting.
- Provide expert advice and assistance on financial issues to all staff and students, including the interpretation and explanation of financial data, rules and regulations and general compliance matters.
- Improving upon existing processes, systems and feedback opportunities to ensure we are providing a high standard of service delivery whilst raising the profile of the finance team.
- Deputise for the Finance Manager when required including but not limited to: reporting to and attending committees, liaising with Social Sciences Division, and contributing to strategic costing and planning exercises.
- Exercise delegated authority to scrutinise and approve a wide range of financial and payroll transactions and taking a lead on financial assurance matters.
- Keep up to date with and comply with university and School finance related directives, policies and procedures and act at all times in the interests of the School to ensure good management practice.
- The postholder may be asked to undertake other duties in the School from time to time as determined by the Finance Manager commensurate with the grade and responsibilities of the post.
- Maintain confidentiality regarding financial and personnel issues at all times.
- Be accountable for your own professional conduct and pay due regards to the University Equal Opportunities and Data Protection policies.

Financial Planning and Management Information

Contributing to reliable budgeting and financial planning in support of School strategy: -

Assisting the Finance Manager and the Head of Administration and Finance with preparation of the
annual School budget, in-year forecasts and longer-term financial plans. In particular taking the lead
responsibility for a number of discreet School courses, cost centres, and activities. This will involve

working closely with budget-holders and entering budgets and forecasts into the University's Budgeting and Forecasting Tool database when required.

- Producing management accounting reports for stakeholders that are timely, accurate and assist in managing budgets and promoting greater financial awareness.
- Producing costings and financial advice and support in respect of for one-off events such as conferences and workshops, and in support of fundraising bids.

Financial Assurance and Controls

Championing compliance with University policies throughout the School, raising awareness of good practice and helping to develop and maintain robust local procedures: -

- Develop a sound understanding of financial regulations and guidelines as set out by the University and funders.
- Being an approachable source of expert advice and responding to queries on university financial policies in areas such procurement, expenses, payments to individuals, taxable expenses, VAT, employment status, relocation expenses etc.
- Promoting effective use of financial processing dashboards and reports and follow up as appropriate. Being proactive in regard to strategies that will improve School's financial processing parameters.
- Developing standard operating procedures as a local resource for non-financial colleagues to assist them in managing their budgets and adhering to University policy.
- Promoting the importance of cost control throughout the School, advising, and support staff to achieve best practice and best value.
- Working proactively with School staff to advise them of changes to and ensure adherence with regulations.
- Maintain appropriate access for users to Oracle, SAP E Expenses and Key Travel by preparing and/or approving access requests. Setting up new Oracle Source of Funds and advising the HR Team payroll cost allocations as necessary.
- Providing advice and assistance to colleagues on systems use and regularly reviewing user access dashboards.
- Working with the HAF, FM and the Finance Officer on the annual Financial Assurance self-assessment return.

Financial Accounting and Reporting

Working with the Finance Manager to maintain the integrity of the School accounts. This will include:-

- Responsibility for month and quarter end routines such as posting prepayments, accrual journals and payroll reconciliation posting corrections where necessary, to ensure accuracy and completeness of the records.
- Running regular general ledger reports, identifying anomalies for investigation, and posting timely journals to correct.
- Responsible for monthly checks of deferred donations against the trial balance.
- Overseeing records relating to a number of budgets, particularly Academic Research allowances, including reconciling records to Oracle and responding to queries.
- Ensuring correct coding of expenditure against cost centres, natural accounts and source of funds to ensure accurate reporting.
- Preparing analyses as required for Divisional and University-wide reporting requirements.
- Assisting the Finance Manager with year-end processes.

Financial Processing

Contributing to the efficient processing of a large volume of financial transactions by exercising delegated authority to:-

- Liaise with HR team and check monthly casual and paid-as-claimed payroll submissions including the appropriate use of pay scales and correct coding.
- Work with development colleagues and Gift Registry to set up deferred designations for new pledges, instruct the Finance Officer to invoice donors promptly and monitor receipt of donations.
- Coordinate month and year end transactional returns, completing the month end completeness schedule to confirm to the Finance Manager that all activities have been conducted.

Team Management

- Professional line management of the Finance Officer and three Finance Assistants with accountability to the Finance Manager for the performance of these postholders. Lead and develop finance operations team, and identify training requirements and development opportunities, and recruitment.
- Guidance and support to all administrative staff in the School with a finance element in their role. This will include induction, advice on training, and on-going support and coaching.
- Empowering direct reports and other colleagues to manage their own areas, and provide hands-on assistance as required.
- Providing direct cover for the work of the Finance Officer during absences and developing a system of mutual support and cover for Oracle

Use of Software and Systems

Use of the following University software and systems is essential to undertake this role, and the postholder will be expected to undertake and maintain training on all the following:

Oracle Financials

Budgeting and Forecasting Tool

Splash BI reporting.

SAP Concur E Expenses

Additionally, the postholder may be asked to undertake training on:

X5 (research project costing and pricing system)

Selection criteria

Essential selection criteria

- Educated to degree level, with strong accounting knowledge.
- Extensive finance and management experience, with the ability to manage an efficient Finance operation in a complex organisation.
- Demonstrable experience of using technical finance skills in a relevant context, including management accounting, reporting, budgeting, and financial planning.
- Ability to work and analyse large and complex data sets, showing an appreciation of control and reconciliation — demonstrating the ability to think holistically and consider the implications on the whole account whilst also being able to identify detailed issues.
- Highly computer literate, with advanced spread sheet skills and a thorough understanding of financial systems, including experience of using such systems.
- Self-motivation and organisation: ability to set and meet objectives and standards on own initiative and the ability to manage a range of tasks whilst meeting tight deadlines.
- Ability to work accurately particularly when under pressure and with a minimum of supervision.
- Proven ability to think about financial issues strategically and to contribute to decision making; ability to understand the information needs of others; ability to communicate complex information in an understandable way, both orally and in writing, to a diverse range of audiences.
- Ability to engage and work with people whilst ensuring adherence to financial regulations and concepts where necessary, sometimes delivering unpopular messages. Ability to lead and manage teams for effective delivery of targeted results balancing customer service with financial compliance and deadlines.
- Flexible team worker with co-operative and helpful approach; respectful of ideas and expertise of others; able to motivate others to achieve organisational goals and to build good working relationships at all levels.
- Ability to exercise judgement, tact and discretion when dealing with sensitive and confidential information.
- Experience of team management

Desirable selection criteria

- Hold or studying towards recognised accounting qualification or equivalent.
- Experience in a Higher/Further Education or similar public sector organisation
- Experience of implementing new financial controls or procedures
- Experience of supporting budget holders who are non-financial experts

Pre-employment screening

Standard checks

If you are offered the post, the offer will be subject to standard pre-employment checks. You will be asked to provide: proof of your right-to-work in the UK; proof of your identity; and (if we haven't done so already) we will contact the referees you have nominated. If you have previously worked for the University we will also verify key information such as your dates of employment and reason for leaving your previous role with the department/unit where you worked. You will also be asked to complete a health declaration so that you can tell us about any health conditions or disabilities for which you may need us to make appropriate adjustments.

Please read the candidate notes on the University's pre-employment screening procedures at: https://www.jobs.ox.ac.uk/pre-employment-checks

About the University of Oxford

Welcome to the University of Oxford. We aim to lead the world in research and education for the benefit of society both in the UK and globally. Oxford's researchers engage with academic, commercial and cultural partners across the world to stimulate high-quality research and enable innovation through a broad range of social, policy and economic impacts.

We believe our strengths lie both in empowering individuals and teams to address fundamental questions of global significance, while providing all our staff with a welcoming and inclusive workplace that enables everyone to develop and do their best work. Recognising that diversity is our strength, vital for innovation and creativity, we aspire to build a truly diverse community which values and respects every in dividual's unique contribution.

While we have long traditions of scholarship, we are also forward-looking, creative and cutting-edge. Oxford is one of Europe's most entrepreneurial universities and we rank first in the UK for university spin-outs, and in recent years we have spun out 15-20 new companies every year. We are also recognised as leaders in support for social enterprise.

Join us and you will find a unique, democratic and international community, a great range of staff benefits and access to a vibrant array of cultural activities in the beautiful city of Oxford.

For more information, please visit www.ox.ac.uk/about/organisation.

School of Geography and the Environment

The School of Geography and the Environment (SoGE) is a dynamic, diverse, interdisciplinary department at the University of Oxford combining natural and social science research interests and analytical skills, underpinned by geography's tradition of working in many different situations and contexts. The School is internationally recognized for the quality of its teaching, research and wider engagement across the breadth of human geography, physical geography and environmental studies. Based within the Social Sciences Division, the School incorporates three affiliated research centres as well as Geography: the Environmental Change Institute (ECI), the Smith School of Enterprise and Environment (SSEE), and the Transport Studies Unit (TSU).

The School is based partly within the Oxford University Centre for the Environment (OUCE) building and partly in the Dyson Perrins building, which was completely refurbished in 2022. The School's physical location enables us to easily connect with many academic departments and organisations across the University, and we collaborate with many of them. For example, the School is an active participant in fostering the Oxford University Networks for the Environment (ONE), which links up over 1000 individuals within the University around the themes of Biodiversity, Climate, Energy, Food and Water.

Our research spans issues related to the environment, climate change, energy, transport, development, geopolitics and cities. The School's research portfolio totalled approximately £105million across more than 170 research projects in 2021/22, from a wide variety of funders.

Much of this work is collaborative, and we currently estimate that research with our partners takes place in over 70 countries across the globe. We aim to contribute to the common good, and many of our researchers actively engage in advising local, national and international organisations; in giving written and oral contributions to government consultations both locally and nationally; and in engaging with others through policy, partnerships, business and social enterprise.

The School also provides world-class, multidisciplinary teaching. Our Undergraduate Honour School gives undergraduate students research-led teaching across the breadth of human and physical geography and environmental studies by internationally recognised academic staff. Two hundred and fifty graduate students from a wide range of nationalities currently study for taught and research postgraduate degrees with us, in our International Graduate School. For more information the School please visit: http://www.geog.ox.ac.uk

The School is committed to supporting the career development of all its members. Everyone is encouraged to undertake professional training from the range offered by the School, the Division and the University's People, Organisation and Development Unit. The School has a mentoring scheme and all staff are encouraged to work with a mentor during their time at SoGE; academic staff are also encouraged to have regular meetings with the Head of School to plan their career progression.

Since 1973 the **Transport Studies Unit** has established an international research reputation in transport research. Based within the world-leading School of Geography and the Environment at the University of Oxford, the TSU approaches global transport challenges from social science and holistic perspectives. By advancing understandings of the systems, processes and practices that shape the way people and goods move, the TSU hopes to inspire and inform change towards a more sustainable, just and accessible transport system. Our position within Geography and the University fosters interdisciplinary collaboration with researchers in other parts of the University and based elsewhere.

From geography to engineering, energy research to science and technology studies, and beyond, the TSU draws on the latest relevant developments in various disciplines and research fields. Our core team of researchers come from various disciplinary backgrounds, bringing with them a range of insight and expertise which enriches our research practice. Most TSU staff are full-time researchers working on specific externally funded projects. In addition to the core staff, it also hosts a number of academic visitors working more independently on cross-cutting issues. There is also an active group of international DPhil students working with individual staff.

The TSU has an excellent track record in collaborative projects. TSU researchers often works in partnership with colleagues in many UK universities, and has very active and well-established links with universities and research institutes across the EU, the Americas, Asia and Africa. They also work with partners from international agencies, transport policymakers, local authorities, businesses and industry, employers, non-governmental organisations, and activists.

For more information on the TSU please visit: http://www.tsu.ox.ac.uk

Since 1991, the **Environmental Change Institute** has worked alongside partners in government, business, academia and the community to understand environmental change and explore possible responses to the risks and opportunities it poses. Promoting an interdisciplinary approach, ECI explores sustainable solutions to global problems ensuring a fairer and more equal world for people today and in the future.

ECI has over 100 academics and researchers working around the world, establishing itself as an active and influential player in environmental change science. With a well-established track record in relation to Infrastructure, climate, energy, ecosystems, food, land use governance and water.

ECI is a leading player in a number of large research activities. In 2022 there are over 80 research projects totalling over £57 million funded through the UK's research councils and charitable foundations and trusts. We are proud of all our work but of particularly note we host the multi-agency UK Centre for Research into Energy Demand Solutions (CREDS), understanding the role of energy demand change in accelerating the transition to a zero carbon energy system. As part of Oxford University's strategic research Oxford Net Zero is an interdisciplinary research initiative working to track progress, align standards and inform effective solutions in climate science, law, policy, economics, clean energy, transport, land and food systems and greenhouse gas removal and storage.

In addition, The Oxford Programme for Sustainable Infrastructure Systems (OPSIS) is at the forefront of research and education to enable sustainable and resilient infrastructure. While the Leverhulme Centre for Nature Recovery Centre aims to investigate how to halt and reverse ongoing nature and biodiversity loss, by understanding how implement and finance nature recovery that is scalable, effective and socially just.

The ECI is also home to the MSc in Environmental Change and Management, the School's first taught postgraduate masters' programme, established in 1994. Through this MSc the ECI have successfully trained over 700 upcoming environmental leaders who comprise a lively and increasingly influential alumni community. For more information on the ECI please visit: http://www.eci.ox.ac.uk

The Smith School of Enterprise and the Environment (SSEE) was established at the University of Oxford in 2008 with a generous benefaction by the Smith family. We bring enterprise – public and private - together with world-leading teaching and research to achieve global net-zero emissions and sustainable development. Located within the internationally top-ranked School of Geography and the Environment, we work in close collaboration with leading academics across Oxford and beyond.

Decisions made this decade will determine the future of humanity and the planet. To stop the climate crisis, we need to shift global economic and financial systems towards sustainability. The Smith School's approach combines academic excellence with real-world impact. Our research shapes business and government policy and practice. We offer innovative evidence-based solutions to the environmental challenges facing humanity.

We apply expertise in economics, finance, business and law to tackle environmental and social challenges in six areas: water, climate, energy, biodiversity, food and the regenerative economy.

We equip the next generation through undergraduate and graduate teaching as part of the top-ranked School of Geography and the Environment. SSEE's new master's course in Sustainability, Enterprise and the Environment (MSc SEE) is already one of the most applied to at Oxford. Our executive education programmes empower business leaders and policy-makers throughout the world to take action.

SSEE's <u>Advisory Board</u>, <u>Business Fellows</u> and our wide-ranging external partnerships bring together experts from industry, consultancy, governments and NGOs to achieve the vision of a cleaner, fairer and more prosperous future

Social Sciences Division

The University's academic departments and faculties are organised into four large groups, known as Academic Divisions (Social Sciences, Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences (MPLS), Medical Sciences, and Humanities). The academic divisions are responsible for academic oversight of the teaching and research of their constituent departments and faculties, for strategic and operational planning, and for personnel and resource management. The Head of the Social Sciences Division is Professor Timothy Power, who is a member of the University's Council. The Social Sciences Division is a world-leading centre of research and education in the social sciences. The social sciences at Oxford are distinctive for both their depth and breadth, with activity spanning fourteen departments and faculties and one cross-divisional unit. (These are as follows: Law, the Saïd Business School, Economics, Politics and International Relations, the Blavatnik School of Government, the School of Anthropology and Museum Ethnography, International Development, Sociology, Social Policy and Intervention, the Oxford Internet Institute, Archaeology, the School of Interdisciplinary Area Studies, Education, the School of Geography and the Environment and the Oxford Martin School.) Interdisciplinary links within and beyond the university are strong, extending to the humanities, natural sciences, and medical sciences.

Academic and research staff and research students are engaged in world-leading research that challenges current ideas and theories and is tackling some of the major challenges facing humanity, such as sustainable resource management, migration, governance, poverty and development, and justice. REF 2014 confirmed Oxford as the UK powerhouse for research in the social sciences, where Oxford accounted for more world-leading (4*) research than any other institution, across the social sciences units of assessment to which it made submissions. The division has an extensive portfolio of external funders and collaborators, with competitively-awarded external research income exceeding £40million per year. Researchers in the division engage actively beyond academia and their research has influence in many spheres from innovation in public policymaking to practitioner communities such as law, business, education, social welfare and NGOs.

The division also delivers an exceptional range of high quality educational programmes (undergraduate, postgraduate taught and postgraduate research), all of which are underpinned by the innovative research being undertaken by our academics. Programmes range from those at the interface of the natural sciences, through to professionally-oriented provision in areas such as business, law and education. The division is home to several of Oxford's most widely recognised teaching programmes, such as Philosophy, Politics and Economics (PPE); the BCL; the MPhils in International Relations, in Economics, and in Development Studies; the MBA and EMBA; and the nationally regarded PGCE.

For more information please visit: http://www.socsci.ox.ac.uk/

How to apply

Applications are made through our online recruitment portal. Information about how to apply is available on our Jobs website https://www.jobs.ox.ac.uk/how-to-apply.

Your application will be judged solely on the basis of how you demonstrate that you meet the selection criteria stated in the job description.

As part of your application you will be asked to provide details of two referees and indicate whether we can contact them now.

You will be asked to upload a CV and a supporting statement. The supporting statement must explain how you meet each of the selection criteria for the post using examples of your skills and experience. This may include experience gained in employment, education, or during career breaks (such as time out to care for dependants)

Please upload all documents as PDF files with your name and the document type in the filename.

All applications must be received by **midday** UK time on the closing date stated in the online advertisement.

If you currently work for the University please note that:

- as part of the referencing process, we will contact your current department to confirm basic employment details including reason for leaving
- although employees may hold multiple part-time posts, they may not hold more than the equivalent of a full time post. If you are offered this post, and accepting it would take you over the equivalent of full-time hours, you will be expected to resign from, or reduce hours in, your other posts(s) before starting work in the new post.

Information for priority candidates

A priority candidate is a University employee who is seeking redeployment because they have been advised that they are at risk of redundancy, or on grounds of ill-health/disability. Priority candidates are issued with a redeployment letter by their employing department(s).

If you are a priority candidate, please ensure that you attach your redeployment letter to your application (or email it to the contact address on the advert if the application form used for the vacancy does not allow attachments).

If you need help

Application FAQs, including technical troubleshooting advice is available at: https://staff.web.ox.ac.uk/recruitment-support-faqs

Non-technical questions about this job should be addressed to the recruiting department directly; recruit@ouce.ox.ac.uk

To return to the online application at any stage, please go to: www.recruit.ox.ac.uk.

Please note that you will receive an automated email from our online recruitment portal to confirm receipt of your application. Please check your spam/junk mail if you do not receive this email.

Important information for candidates

Data Privacy

Please note that any personal data submitted to the University as part of the job application process will be processed in accordance with the GDPR and related UK data protection legislation. For further information, please see the University's Privacy Notice for Job Applicants at: https://compliance.admin.ox.ac.uk/job-applicant-privacy-policy. The University's Policy on Data Protection is available at: https://compliance.admin.ox.ac.uk/data-protection-policy.

The University's policy on retirement

The University operates an Employer Justified Retirement Age (EJRA) for very senior research posts at **grade RSIV/D35** and clinical equivalents E62 and E82 of 30 September before the 70th birthday. The justification for this is explained at: https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/the-ejra.

For **existing** employees on these grades, any employment beyond the retirement age is subject to approval through the procedures: https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/the-ejra.

There is no normal or fixed age at which staff in posts at other grades have to retire. Staff at these grades may elect to retire in accordance with the rules of the applicable pension scheme, as may be amended from time to time.

Equality of opportunity

Entry into employment with the University and progression within employment will be determined only by personal merit and the application of criteria which are related to the duties of each particular post and the relevant salary structure. In all cases, ability to perform the job will be the primary consideration. No applicant or member of staff shall be discriminated against because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

Benefits of working at the University

Employee benefits

University employees enjoy 38 days' paid holiday, generous pension schemes, flexible working options, travel discounts including salary sacrifice schemes for bicycles and electric cars and other discounts. Staff can access a huge range of personal and professional development opportunities. See https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/staff-benefits

Employee Assistance Programme

As part of our wellbeing offering staff get free access to Health Assured, a confidential employee assistance programme, available 24/7 for 365 days a year. Find out more https://staff.admin.ox.ac.uk/health-assured-eap

University Club and sports facilities

Membership of the University Club is free for University staff. It offers social, sporting, and hospitality facilities. Staff can also use the University Sports Centre on Iffley Road at discounted rates, including a fitness centre, powerlifting room, and swimming pool. See www.club.ox.ac.uk/.

Information for staff new to Oxford

If you are relocating to Oxfordshire from overseas or elsewhere in the UK, the University's Welcome Service includes practical information about settling in the area, including advice on relocation, accommodation, and local schools. See https://welcome.ox.ac.uk/

There is also a visa loan scheme to cover the costs of UK visa applications for staff and their dependants. See https://staffimmigration.admin.ox.ac.uk/visa-loan-scheme

Family-friendly benefits

We are a family-friendly employer with one of the most generous family leave schemes in the Higher Education sector (see https://hr.web.ox.ac.uk/family-leave). Our Childcare Services team provides guidance and support on childcare provision, and offers a range of high-quality childcare options at affordable prices for staff. In addition to 5 University nurseries, we partner with a number of local providers to offer in excess of 450 full time nursery places to our staff. Eligible parents are able to pay for childcare through salary sacrifice, further reducing costs. See https://childcare.admin.ox.ac.uk/.

Supporting disability and health-related issues (inc menopause)

We are committed to supporting members of staff with disabilities or long-term health conditions, including those experiencing negative effects of menopause. Information about the University's Staff Disability Advisor, is at https://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/disability-support. For information about how we support those going through menopause see https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/menopause-guidance

Staff networks

The University has a number of staff networks including for research staff, BME staff, LGBT+ staff, disabled staff network and those going through menopause. Find out more at https://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/networks

The University of Oxford Newcomers' Club

The University of Oxford Newcomers' Club is run by volunteers that aims to assist the partners of new staff settle into Oxford, and provides them with an opportunity to meet people and make connections in the local area. See www.newcomers.ox.ac.uk.

Research staff

The Researcher Hub supports all researchers on fixed-term contracts. They aim to help you settle in comfortably, make connections, grow as a person, extend your research expertise and approach your next

career step with confidence. Find out more $\underline{\text{https://www.ox.ac.uk/research/support-researchers/researchers/hub}}$

Oxford's Research Staff Society is a collective voice for our researchers. They also organise social and professional networking activities for researchers. Find out more https://www.ox.ac.uk/research/support-researchers/connecting-other-researchers/oxford-research-staff-society