1. Advertisement

**Post Title:** Resource Accountant  
**Department:** Finance  
**Hours:** Full time or part time hours considered up to a maximum of 1.0 FTE. Requests for flexible working options will be considered (subject to business need).  
**Contract:** Permanent  
**Reference:** 1890  
**Salary:** starting at £41,526 and rising to £49,553 per annum  
**Closing date:** 25 September 2019. Applications must be received by midnight of the closing date.  
**Expected Interview date:** Early October 2019  
**Expected start date:** November 2019

The University of Sussex is a dynamic, innovative, top 50 university. With a campus based in the South Downs National Park but just a few minutes from the city of Brighton and Hove, it provides an excellent working environment in a remarkable setting, combined with all that the city has to offer.

Creative thinking, intellectual challenge and collaborative working are fundamental to a Sussex education and that is reflected in our workplace too. This is an exciting chance to join a team working at the centre of the University.

Within the University’s Finance department, the Corporate Reporting Team is responsible for statutory and regulatory financial returns, budgeting and forecasting for the University Group, income and cost allocations, treasury and tax.

We have an opening for a Resource Accountant. You will play a crucial role in helping to shape our finance capability going forward. We’re looking for a proven finance professional who is technically strong and has the ability to make sound recommendations to the university based on credible managed data.

You will be a confident Excel user; specifically you should be familiar with Activity Based Costing Models.

You will have excellent interpersonal skills as the post will involve persuading and influencing staff from across the University to provide sound financial advice. You will also be required to ensure that the processes operate efficiently and be able to advise senior University management on the strategic use of the data and returns.

**Key responsibilities:**
- Management of Resource Allocation Model (RAM) which is used to allocate budgets to the Schools of Study within the University
- Management of Transparent Approach to Costing (TRAC) and associated data returns.
- Higher Education Statistics Agency Return and other statutory financial returns
Being an integral part of the team that delivers the Year End Process and Audit and the University’s 5 year financial forecasts

Skills & experience:
- CCAB/CIMA qualified Accountant
- Excellent written and oral communication skills at a level appropriate to liaise with senior managers and academic staff
- Ability to communicate complex financial concepts to a non-financially literate audience
- Excellent numeracy and analytical skills
- Advanced IT skills (Excel, able to write reports in standard reporting tools)

For full details and how to apply see our [vacancies page](#)

*The University of Sussex values the diversity of its staff and students and we welcome applicants from all backgrounds.*

2. The Finance Division

The Finance Division is led by the Director of Finance and comprises some 80 staff who provide high quality finance and procurement functions co-located with other professional services and senior management at Sussex House on the University campus at Falmer.

The division provides advice and information on all financial matters to all schools and professional services at the University of Sussex. The University’s annual budget is c£300m so the division plays a key role in managing budgets, forecasting and reporting as well as supporting the development of the University’s existing capital and service portfolio. These portfolios include a complex and challenging range of strategically and financially significant projects to support the delivery of the University’s ambitious strategy to 2025 and beyond. This includes state of the art facilities for teaching and research, investment in IT systems to ensure delivery of a world class customer experience for our students and other innovative and sector leading projects.

The division is continually renewing itself and its ambitions to provide consistently high quality services to the University, equipping staff across the University with excellent financial literacy, capability, competence and confidence and supporting the achievement of value for money through improved processes and support, better access to suitable suppliers and improved commercial terms.

The Division has a strong commitment towards staff training and development including where appropriate professional qualification study enabling staff to fulfil their potential.
3. **Job Description**

   Job Description for the post of: Resource Accountant

**Department:** Finance

**Section:** Corporate Accounting

**Location:** Sussex house

**Grade:** 8

**Responsible to:** Senior Corporate Accountant

**Purpose of Post:**
The post will be responsible for the continued development of the University's approach to costing and pricing its activities, including the implementation of Transparent Approach to Costing (TRAC) principles at institutional level and providing full economic costing (fEC) data to inform strategic investments.
The post will be responsible for producing the annual TRAC Data Returns, the Resource Allocation Model (RAM) and other statutory financial returns as required. They will also be expected to play a part in the Corporate Accounting team that compiles the annual Financial Statements and University’s 5 year financial forecasts.
The postholder will be required to have excellent interpersonal skills as the post will involve persuading and influencing staff from across the University to provide information required to complete these returns. They will also be required to ensure that the processes operate efficiently and be able to advise senior University management on the most advantageous strategic use of the data and returns.

**Organisational Positioning**
The Resource Accountant reports to the Senior Corporate Accountant in the Corporate Accounting team which sits in the Finance Division. The Corporate Accounting Team is responsible for the production and reporting of key financial information to both internal and external stakeholders of the University.

**Key Responsibilities**

1. **Resource Allocation Model (RAM)**
   
   The Resource Allocation Model is the methodology used to allocate budgets to the Schools of Study within the University.
   
   a. Manage the operation and development of the RAM in order to meet published deadlines.
   
   b. Ensure that all data used in the model is correct, fit for purpose, robust and received within the deadlines set out.
c. Identify and recommend any significant policy changes required to senior Finance management.

d. Produce papers for University Executive Group on the outcomes of the RAM process, including analyses of the impact of significant changes in data inputs, outputs or policy decisions.

e. Communicate the RAM outputs to Heads of School and respond to queries.

f. Provide training to Heads of School and other interested parties on the RAM.

g. Provide expert input to periodic reviews of the University’s resource allocation methodology, including the modelling of different scenarios and advice to senior management on how their strategic objectives can be met through changes to the methodology.

h. Develop finance system data structures to support systemised reporting of RAM costs and income, working closely with the Corporate Accounting and Management Accounting teams.

2. **Transparent Approach to Costing (TRAC) and associated data returns.**

   a. Complete the TRAC and TRAC T Returns within the published deadlines, including allowing sufficient time for review and institutional approval.

   b. Develop and maintain the University’s models for completion of the above returns, ensuring that they meet external requirements for reporting in the most efficient way and they are updated for any changes in these external requirements in good time.

   c. Work with Heads of Schools to promote the understanding of the importance of TRAC amongst schools to increase the completion rate of the Academic Time Survey.

   d. Oversee completion of the Academic Time Survey and act as the main point of contact for queries that arise from those completing it.

   e. Lead the University’s TRAC Steering Group to make sure that the institution takes effective action to ensure the quality of the return and considers any policy changes required.

   f. Prepare papers for University Executive Group on the outputs of the returns and recommendations for any action that can be taken to improve the reported position in future years.

   g. Prepare papers for approval of the TRAC return by the University’s Committees.

   h. Participate in regional and national sector groups on TRAC, where appropriate leading on specific initiatives where these are of benefit to the University.

   i. Working with the Research and Knowledge Exchange Division, ensure that TRAC and fEC principles are embedded in the University’s approach to the costing and
pricing of activities, and provide advice and costing and pricing support to Finance and Research and Knowledge Exchange staff in the development of major initiatives.

j. Develop appropriate quality assurance and monitoring frameworks to satisfy the demands of external verification and audit processes.

3. Higher Education Statistics Agency Return and other statutory financial returns

a. Complete the annual HESA Estates Return, within the published deadlines, including allowing sufficient time for review and institutional approval. Working with colleagues in Estates and Facilities Management to analyse and interpret the financial elements of the HESA EMR return, supporting them in ensuring that the Estates Return meets the published requirements of HESA and is in accordance with the guidance of the University's quality assurance process.

b. Complete any other statutory financial return as required by the Senior Corporate Accountant or Lead Financial Accountant.

c. Provide guidance to the Data Insight Group on the HESA Estates Return and any other financial data returns that influence the University’s League Table positions.

d. Work with finance Division colleagues to embed devolved responsibility for maintaining HESA data and HESA reporting. Perform quality assessment over devolved responsibility.

4. Year End Process and Audit

a. Assist the Lead Financial Accountant in all aspects of the production of the Financial Statements to ensure that deadlines are met and that statements give a true reflection of the University’s position.

b. Maintain high levels of accuracy in the supporting notes created for the Financial Statements.

5. Other

a. Working as part of the university’s workload allocation model (PAWS) implementation project team, ensure the system implementation and associated processes and reporting comply with TRAC guidance.

b. Other duties as requested by the Senior Corporate Accountant or Lead Financial Accountant from time to time.

c. This Job Description sets out current duties of the post that may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the post or the level of responsibility entailed.
## 4. Person Specification

### SKILLS / ABILITIES

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<tr>
<th>Essential</th>
<th>Desirable</th>
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<tr>
<td>Excellent written and oral communication skills at a level appropriate to liaison with senior managers and academic staff</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ability to communicate complex financial concepts to a non-financially literate audience</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Excellent numeracy and analytical skills</td>
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<td>Advanced IT skills (Excel, able to write reports in standard reporting tools)</td>
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<td>Ability to think strategically and creatively and contribute to institutional policy-making</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>Ability to work independently within the parameters defined by senior Finance management, the TRAC Steering Group and the Data Insight Group</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>Good interpersonal skills, including motivational and team building skills</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>Strong organisational skills with proven ability to meet strict deadlines</td>
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### KNOWLEDGE

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<th>Essential</th>
<th>Desirable</th>
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<tr>
<td>Thorough and up-to-date knowledge of modern financial systems and processes within a complex environment</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>Good knowledge of complex costing techniques including activity based costing</td>
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<td>Good working knowledge of UK and international accounting standards.</td>
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<td>Knowledge of Higher Education, its context and funding arrangements</td>
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<td>Knowledge of the TRAC, TRAC(T) and HESA Finance Data Returns</td>
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### EXPERIENCE (all gained in an organisation of similar size and complexity)

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<th>Essential</th>
<th>Desirable</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experience of working as a management accountant in a complex organisation</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>Significant experience of working with costing and information systems</td>
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<td>Preparation of Year End financial statements to a prescribed timetable</td>
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<td>Experience of process development with significant efficiencies being made as a result</td>
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<td>Managing the successful implementation of complex projects</td>
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<td>Familiarity with major IT packages and experience of large scale financial management systems</td>
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<td>Experience using Agresso Business World</td>
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<td>Experience in the higher education sector</td>
<td>X</td>
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Experience of the University’s Resource Allocation Model or similar from a different organisation | X

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<tr>
<th>QUALIFICATIONS</th>
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<th>Desirable</th>
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<tr>
<td>Fully qualified CCAB/CIMA accountant (or equivalent)</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>Degree level qualification (or equivalent)</td>
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<th>PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES</th>
<th>Essential</th>
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<tr>
<td>Highly motivated with very high standards of professionalism, service and quality</td>
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<td>Competent and conscientious with a methodical approach to work</td>
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<td>Helpful and supportive manner, motivated to deliver improvements</td>
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<td>Able to work on their own initiative, but also to contribute to team goals</td>
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