



Head of Finance

Welcome from the Headmistress

Wycombe Abbey is an exceptional place; it operates as a modern full boarding school for around 660 girls and we are committed to the development of each one. This year we celebrate 125 years of educating young women and our vision remains to provide our pupils with a world class education. We are excited about encouraging curiosity, bold ideas, innovation, leadership and delight in learning - inside and outside the classroom.

Superb academic outcomes are the hallmark of a Wycombe Abbey education and girls regularly secure places at the most prestigious universities globally. However, we understand the importance of looking beyond the narrow confines of excellent examination results to define success. Our rich co-curricular programme includes an array of activities and opportunities, ensuring that every girl develops her passions and explores new possibilities. These experiences, in turn, help to build the skills, discipline and character that will support her future life.

Last year's UVI girls were awarded 63.3% at A* and 93.9% A*-A grades at A Level. Most importantly, the vast majority of the UVI secured places at their first choice universities including the London School of Economics and Political Science, Durham University, University of St Andrews and the University of Bristol, to study a broad range of courses. Sixteen girls took up places at Oxford and Cambridge, and a number of girls secured their chosen places at US universities including Columbia, Stanford, Georgetown, University of Chicago and University of California, Berkeley. At GCSE, 95.2% were awarded A* grades and 99.6% A*-A grades. The vast majority of last year's UV have continued into our Sixth Form.

Ultimately, schools are about people and at the heart of Wycombe Abbey's success is our total commitment to pastoral care through boarding. The core values of mutual respect, encouragement and trust underpin everything we do; in this happy and close-knit community everyone is known as an individual, friendships flourish and girls enjoy each other's company, all within the wonderful surroundings of 170 acres of magnificent parkland.

We offer superb modern facilities, including a sports centre with a heated indoor 25-metre pool, a performing arts centre with its own theatre and recital hall, a wide range of teaching facilities and our Courtyard Cafe. We are constantly improving and evolving our estate and through the development of our site masterplan, we will see the creation of a truly world class campus. You can read more about Wycombe Abbey's Strategic Direction [here](#).

Wycombe Abbey's outstanding reputation for excellence is built on the dedication and skills of our staff. Every member of staff at Wycombe Abbey contributes towards the School's thriving community and works to continually strengthen our ambition for excellence. We seek to recruit well-qualified and enthusiastic staff who demonstrate knowledge of, and passion for their area of expertise and contribute to the wider life of the School. In return, the School provides staff with a wide variety of opportunities to develop professionally within a supportive team and wonderful working environment.

Thank you for your interest in joining Wycombe Abbey; if you would like to discover more about the School, please refer to our website [here](#). We hope that you will find the information in this pack useful and we look forward to hearing from you if you feel that this post may suit your skills and experience.



Mrs Jo Duncan
Headmistress



Executive Summary

Wycombe Abbey is a world-class school operating at the cutting edge of educational excellence. With its distinctive heritage, magnificent 170-acre campus and impressive resources, the School provides an outstanding education for 660 girls aged 11-18.

We are the leading girls' boarding school in the UK, enabling our pupils to achieve an exceptional level of academic achievement. We are international in outlook, reflecting our global community and we actively encourage understanding and respect through appreciation of different cultures. All members of staff at Wycombe Abbey contribute towards the School's thriving community and work to continually strengthen our position as a world leader in girls' boarding education.

Wycombe Abbey now seeks an experienced Head of Finance to assist the Bursar (COO) and Council (Governors) in the financial management of the School and to lead and oversee the financial functions of the School, its four subsidiary companies and two trusts, ensuring statutory compliance with HMRC and Charity Commission requirements.

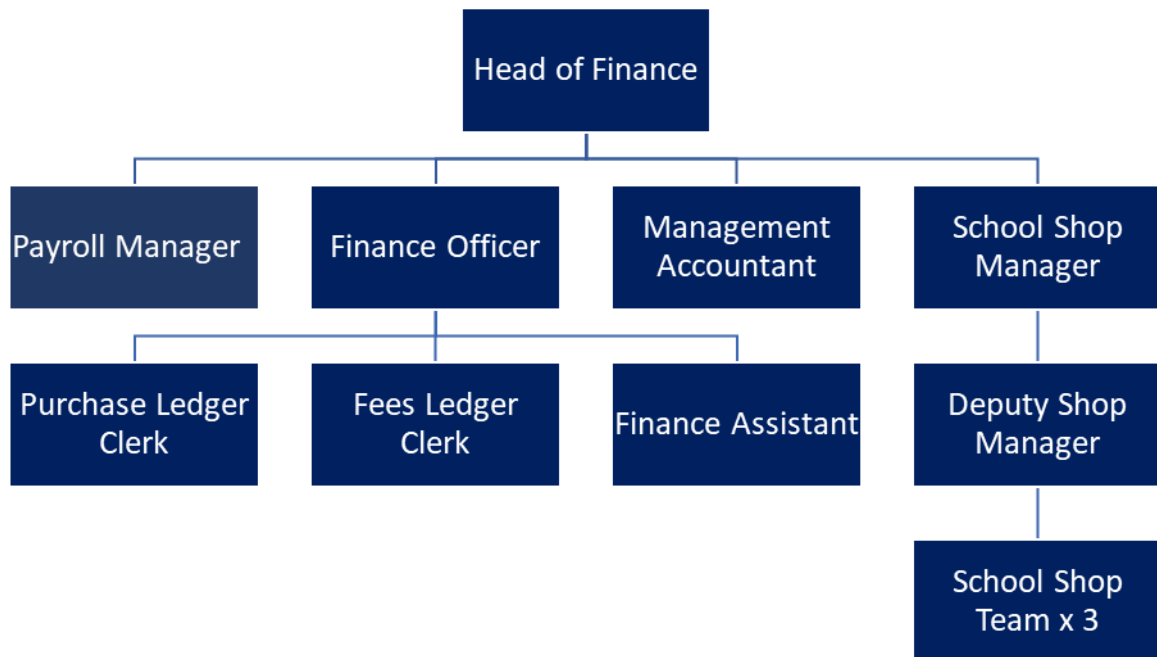
The appointed candidate will be a qualified accountant with a successful track record of management in an operational finance role, possessing strong technical and commercial capabilities. An understanding, ideally gained through experience, of the nature of financial management within the Charitable sector is required, as are strong communication skills and a genuine commitment to Wycombe Abbey's aims and ethos. The role would suit a proactive applicant who is able to reach out to, and communicate with, all areas of the School in order to provide advice and support with financial issues.

The Head of Finance will lead the Finance Department comprising the Management Accountant, the Payroll Manager, the Finance Officer and 3 further Accounts staff. They also manage the School Shop comprising of a Shop Manager, a Deputy Shop Manager and 3 further Shop Assistants.

The Head of Finance will report to the Bursar and will provide regular briefings to both the Executive Leadership Team and Governing Council.



The Finance Department



The Role of Head of Finance

Aim: To assist the Bursar (COO) and Council (Governors) in the financial management of Wycombe Abbey and to lead and oversee the financial functions of the School, its four subsidiary companies and two trusts. To advise on both short- and long-term financial issues affecting the School in order to help set strategic direction. The Head of Finance leads the Finance Department comprising the Management Accountant, the Payroll Manager, Finance Officer plus 3 further accounts staff. They also manage the School Shop comprising of a Shop Manager, a Deputy Shop Manager and 3 further Shop Assistants.

Reports to: The Bursar (COO)

Hours: 40 hours per week, normally Monday to Friday 8.00am – 5.00pm. Flexibility around working hours is possible, and some homeworking, once established in role. This is a senior role with fluctuating demand and the holder will be expected to work the hours needed to achieve their objectives.

Holidays: 30 days + Bank Holidays

Key Responsibilities:

General Financial Management

- Assist the Bursar, Headmistress and Council in implementing the School's strategic financial objectives.
- Bring financial risks and opportunities to the attention of the Bursar and Governors and conduct modelling and feasibility studies as appropriate.
- Ensure financial systems and controls are efficient and effective, eliminating/minimising the opportunity for financial malpractice.
- Prepare papers for, and attend and contribute to, the Finance and General Purposes Committee of the Governing Council.
- Prepare long-term forecasts and sensitivity analysis.
- Undertake competitor analysis and benchmarking studies.
- Retain financial awareness of external changes and development and provide recommendations and advice to the Bursar, including a thorough knowledge of relevant accounting requirements, such as GAAPs, FRSS and the Charity Commission SORP.
- Proactively investigate and promote ways of improving value for money.

Departmental Management

- Line manage direct reports and ensure proper line management of all department members.
- Ensure annual performance reviews and appropriate professional development are carried out for all team members.
- Advise the Bursar on the optimal structure and resources for the Department.
- Ensure that the Finance Department offers a high quality and accessible service to both internal and external customers.

The Role of Head of Finance contd...

Accounting and Finance

- Ensure the School's accounting records, bank reconciliations, fees ledger, purchase ledger, nominal ledger, and fixed assets register are maintained accurately and kept up to date in accordance with agreed timetables and procedures.
- Oversee the staff and systems delivering all salaries and ensure that wages, including PAYE; pension and NI contributions, are paid correctly; ensuring compliance with the regulations for benefits in kind and all other taxation matters.
- Oversee the preparation of monthly and termly management accounts for the School and its subsidiaries.
- Manage the annual budget cycle and the preparation of the annual forecast and budget for each academic year.
- Prepare the annual consolidated and subsidiary statutory accounts for the School and its subsidiaries.
- Liaise with external auditors on all matters connected with the annual audit of the School's accounts and other external accountancy advice.
- Ensure compliance with external regulators, including HMRC, the Charity Commission, ONS and Companies House.
- Prepare and submit accurate and timely tax returns and tax reclaims.
- Support the Development Office in all financial matters relating to fundraising.
- Manage and control fee collection and the associated billing cycle.
- Manage the Composition Fee Scheme (fees in advance) and the investment of the Composition Fee Fund.
- Oversee the School's financial investments, including liaison and review with the School's investment advisors/managers.
- Arrange appropriate review of financial advisors and service providers including auditors, bankers and investment advisors/managers.
- Manage the financial aspects of the Bursary application and funding process.
- Manage and develop the School's accounting and finance systems (Sage 200, Feemaster, SAP Concur, Blue Runner etc).

School Shop

- Ensure the School Shop provides the required service offering to parents and pupils.
- Ensure the School Shop operates efficiently and meets profit targets.
- Review the School Shop delivery and overarching provision on a regular basis.

Other Duties

- Ensure the School has adequate insurances, and that periodic reviews of insurance requirements and broking services are carried out.
- Manage long term service supply contracts, including those for utilities.
- Assist with the management of the Commercial / Letting activity.
- Any other duties to assist in the smooth running of the Bursary and the Finance function. Undertake agreed project work for the School as directed by the Bursar.

Person Specification

Specialist knowledge and experience

- ACA, ACCA or CIMA qualified.
- Strong technical and commercial knowledge.
- Experienced negotiator.
- Knowledge of the Charities SORP highly desirable.
- Working knowledge of VAT and tax matters.
- Experienced user of accounting software packages and advanced knowledge of Excel.

Leadership and Team working

- Successful track record of leading and developing a finance team in the commercial, educational or charity sectors.
- Ability to delegate effectively.
- Comfortable working as part of an operational leadership team to support colleagues in other departments with financial management and planning.

Organisation and attention to detail

- Meticulous attention to detail in both own work and when reviewing work and outputs from the Department.
- Ability to work under pressure to meet deadlines whilst maintaining accuracy.
- Excellent organisational skills with the ability to prioritise work and meet deadlines.
- Ability to use initiative and manage own workload.

Communication

- Outstanding communication and interpersonal skills, both written and oral.
- The ability to build strong relationships with colleagues, Council members, parents and external agencies.
- Ability to present complex financial information in a way that is accessible to the non-specialist.
- Discretion when handling confidential data and ability to act with tact and diplomacy.

Flexibility

- Ability to successfully adapt to changing demands and conditions.
- Ability to manage and deliver change programmes when necessary.
- A 'can-do' attitude with a sense of humour and purpose.

Resilience

- Ability to work under pressure whilst remaining calm.

Special conditions

The post is conditional to an enhanced DBS check.

Child Protection Statement:

The post holder's responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young persons for whom s/he is responsible, or with whom s/he comes into contact will be to adhere to and ensure compliance with the School's Child Protection Policy Statement at all times. If, in the course of carrying out the duties of the post, the post holder becomes aware of any actual or potential risks to the safety or welfare of children in the school, s/he must report any concerns to the School's Designated Lead for Safeguarding or to the Headmistress.

The School values of Trust, Encouragement, Mutual Respect, Dynamism, Excellence, Innovation, Service and Balance should be followed to enhance working relationships and to benefit the whole School community.



Belonging to the Wycombe Abbey Community

Wycombe Abbey is a welcoming and vibrant community for all staff.

Our school is set in 170 acres of parkland. It is a beautiful countryside setting, within a five-minute walk of the town of High Wycombe. There is easy access to London, the Chiltern Hills and attractive towns such as Marlow, Beaconsfield and Henley-on-Thames nearby. There are many National Trust properties within five miles such as Hughenden Manor, Disraeli's home for many years, West Wycombe Park and Cliveden.

There are outstanding Grammar Schools in High Wycombe itself and also in surrounding towns. London is within easy reach, with the fast train from High Wycombe to London Marylebone taking just 24 minutes. Oxford and Bicester Village are within 30 miles, with a new direct train link. Wembley Stadium and Heathrow are just 20 miles away and there are good transport links to the other London airports.

There is a range of committees that staff can join including Wellbeing, Diversity and Inclusion, Sustainability and others. The Wycombe Abbey Community Association works in partnership with the Wellbeing Committee to organise staff wellbeing and social events on a regular basis, which are well-attended.

Wycombe Abbey will celebrate its significant 125th anniversary next year and an exciting programme of celebratory events will be taking place to mark this momentous milestone.

Terms of Appointment

A formal contract of employment will be drawn up on appointment.

The following notes provide guidance, without prejudice, on the main provisions of the agreement.

Contract

This is a full-time, permanent contract. The first six months will be a probationary period.

Appointment Date

As soon as possible.

Hours of Work

40 hours per week, normally Monday to Friday 08:00 – 17:00. Flexibility around working hours is possible, and some homeworking, once established in role.

Salary

Commensurate with skills and experience and not less than £60,000.

Pension Scheme

All eligible staff will be enrolled automatically within the School's pension scheme.

Death in Service Cover

Members of the pension scheme are provided with life cover at 3x annual salary.

Training and Development

There is an extensive induction programme for new colleagues and ongoing professional development and training of all staff.

Provision of Meals

Meals and refreshments are provided free of charge during the working day.

Sports Centre

The facilities in the Davies Sports Centre (swimming pool, squash courts, fitness suite, etc.) are available for staff use.

Fee Remission

Fee remission is available for daughters attending the School, subject to the usual entry requirements and space being available.

Parking

Free parking is provided.

Equal Opportunities

It is the policy of Wycombe Abbey to ensure equality of opportunity for all members of staff, both teaching and support staff.

Safeguarding

All staff share responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of the pupils and must adhere to, and comply with, the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy at all times.

Pre-Employment Checks

The appointment is subject to an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring check.

Applications

The closing date for applications is 10 October 2021. First round interviews will be held week commencing 18 October.

Please submit a completed application form, which you will find on our website, as soon as possible, together with a covering letter addressed to the Bursar, Mr Mark Mackenzie Crooks, outlining the experience and personal qualities that you believe qualify you for this position.

The application form and letter should be emailed to Mrs J Wetenhall, HR Manager:
wetenhallj@wycombeabbey.com



WYCOMBE
ABBAY

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