

# **VALUATION TRIBUNAL SERVICE**

## **Appointment of Financial Controller**



**September 2020**

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## **FINANCIAL CONTROLLER (ADVERT)**

Salary: £55,240 - £58,379 (pay award pending)

Location: Aldgate/Tower Bridge area, London, E1 8EU

The Valuation Tribunal Service (VTS) is a statutory, non-departmental public body (NDPB), sponsored by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), with responsibility for the administration of Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rating appeals. What we do and how we do it has an impact on the multi-million pound income the Government brings in from local property taxation to support other public services.

This job offers great exposure to a range of finance related work within a small but busy finance team in the VTS Head Office. You will report to our Finance Director and on a day-to-day basis you will be responsible for managing the Finance Team.

Your specific responsibilities will include:

- leading, managing and developing the finance team to deliver the finance function and ensure compliance with internal controls and framework of authorities;
- leading and managing the preparation of the annual accounts and the MHCLG quarterly returns in accordance with the Financial Reporting manual (FReM) and accounting Standards frameworks;
- managing the production of management accounts and financial information for internal and external stakeholders.
- providing financial analysis and business advice to senior management and non-financial stakeholders

Our ideal candidate would be someone with the ability to lead a small finance team as well as business partner with non-finance stakeholders. Knowledge of the work involved in central government financing and specifically within an NDPB would be a positive advantage. To perform successfully in the role you will need to be someone who is proactive, organised and who works well with a range of different stakeholders across different functions. You will be advising them (as “lay” colleagues) on financial accounting, management accounting, systems development and making a contribution to range of ad-hoc finance and corporate projects. You will need to communicate financial concepts in an easily understandable manner to those who will not possess the same level of financial knowledge.

### **Application details:**

To apply for this role you should complete the attached application form and return it to us via email at: [recruitment@valuationtribunal.gov.uk](mailto:recruitment@valuationtribunal.gov.uk) by no later than **23:55 on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2020**.

*The VTS is keen that its workforce should represent the communities it serves and welcomes applications from people of all backgrounds*



# JOB DESCRIPTION

**JOB TITLE:** Financial Controller

**REPORTS TO:** Finance Director

**GRADE:** SCP 49 – SCP 52 (£55,240 - £58,379 - inclusive of London Allowance element)

**RESPONSIBLE FOR:** Finance Team

Internally - All staff within the Valuation Tribunal Service – specifically the Finance Team and the Finance Director; Chief Executive; VTS Board; Directors; Managers and Registrar; President; Vice Presidents and Members of Valuation Tribunals for England (VTE).

Externally - MHCLG as sponsor Department, internal and external Auditors, all other stakeholders and VT users, Professional bodies and organisations, third party contractors and Statutory bodies.

*JD & PS last reviewed 8-9-20*

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## MAIN PURPOSE

To proactively assist the Finance Director in the development and maintenance of all necessary financial controls, system and processes to ensure the efficient and effective management of the VTS's finances and compliance within statutory requirements and requirements governing the Framework Agreement with our sponsoring department.

To develop systems and procedures to ensure the efficient and effective management of VTS's finances in line with statutory and sponsoring department requirements.

To produce accurate and timely financial information about the VTS's financial status and performance that will enable decisions to be taken relating to the VTS's financial strength and security.

To manage and direct the Finance team in ensuring the efficient and effective delivery of robust finance processes and policies necessary to support the VTS in its policy objectives, taking them through a period of change and development whilst maintaining the integrity of the financial system and ensuring compliance with the regulatory framework.

To lead in budget management, regular and mid-year reviews with budget holders, providing accurate advice on financial management and financial controls and ensuring that spending is maintained with any underspends/overspends identified in a timely manner.

## **MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES**

Prepare robust VTS Annual Accounts and MHCLG quarterly returns into Group Accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) and Accounting Standards frameworks, to the agreed timetable and providing adequate time for management review and challenge in advance of submission. Ensure that the associated budgeted impact is clearly communicated and any budgetary issues are raised with the Finance Director.

Proactively manage the production of monthly management accounts, Board Reports, Grant-in-Aid requests, cash management returns, key performance indicators, transparency reports and other returns for both external and internal users, including MHCLG. This will include presentation to stakeholders as required.

As required, deputise for the Finance Director.

Ensure compliance with internal controls and Framework of authorities and maintain appropriate policies and procedures.

Liaise with external audit on the audit of the Annual Accounts ensuring delivery of the Accounts and all supporting data to a high quality and within a clearly defined and acceptable timeframe.

Liaise with internal audit and ensure delivery and compliance with audit requests facilitating any audit activities. Monitor and report on any audit actions arising from internal and external audit reports.

Ensure that the annual budget setting process is carried out with reference to the Standing Financial Instructions, Scheme of Delegation, the VTS Framework Agreement and the Finance Manual.

Production of monthly returns to budget holders reporting on actual expenditure to date and working with them to provide robust and supportable forecasts for the coming year.

Responsible for the delivery of the transactional processing requirements for the VTS and ensuring that all financial transactions reported on SAP are fully supported, applied and authorised in the correct manner.

Direct and control Finance staff to ensure that they are appropriately motivated and trained and carry out their responsibilities to the required standards, driving up standards and providing an environment in which staff can positively contribute, influence change and develop expertise.

Carry out performance development reviews with direct reporting staff in accordance with VTS policy and to the timeframe specified, ensuring that all staff have challenging objectives in place providing the opportunities for development and training so that they can deliver high quality services. Take proactive action in line with HR policies in the event of underperformance.

Adopt a culture of continuous improvement to ensure that all policies and processes are continually reviewed for accuracy and updated accordingly dealing with non-compliance where this is found.

Manage and implement effective reconciliation processes and procedures.

Contribute proactively to the production of high quality and persuasive business cases as required.

To keep up to date with changes in Accounting Standards, new initiatives, HMT and MHCLG requirements and other changes in order to highlight risks and challenges and maintain compliance with the regulatory framework.

Advise on best practice, professional standards and codes of conduct relating to financial matters.

This is an indicative document of the duties involved but as a small organisation you may be involved in other work not specifically mentioned above. You will therefore be expected to undertake such other duties as may reasonably be required of you, commensurate with your grade and role.

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

### SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

- A fully qualified finance professional with a recognised accountancy awarding body (ACA, ACCA, CIMA, CIPFA etc.)
- Proven experience of taking charge and delivering financial and management accounts successfully within a robust financial framework and engaging with senior management for reporting purposes.
- Experience of designing and implementing robust financial controls and reconciliation procedures.
- Experience of working in a public sector environment delivering financial and management accounts, including the experience of central government budgeting and accounting practices and public sector accounting requirements (e.g. government accounting including FReM, MPM, budgets and estimates).
- Experience of applying complex accounting issues and public sector guidelines and rules (IFRS experience preferred), including management of defined benefit pension scheme.
- Experience of financial accounting processes, including producing financial statements.
- Experience of leading, managing and developing a team.
- Experience of the provision of financial and practical advice to senior management - Directors and the Chief Executive - including the provision of high-level written reports/papers dealing with complex issues.
- Experience and skills in presenting relevant reports and updates clearly to stakeholders within both formal and informal settings.
- Excellent analytical skills and personal credibility to communicate and present complex financial issues clearly to senior managers, board and committee members, as well as to relevant third parties including MHCLG and external auditors.
- Experience of working with and building effective relationships with colleagues to ensure effective business planning and decision making.
- Excellent Microsoft Office knowledge including excel to an advanced standard.
- Experience of using financial management systems, including financial reporting tools, preferably SAP.
- Able to challenge and influence others, to contribute to effective decision making.
- A highly motivated self-starter with the ability to organise, plan and prioritise work of themselves and others, identify challenges and risks and deliver agreed objectives.
- Positive attitude and a can-do approach.

# **APPOINTMENT OF FINANCIAL CONTROLLER**

## **Key Terms and Conditions**

This appointment is expected to be made during October 2020 and the successful applicant will be expected to take up the position as soon as possible.

### **Salary**

The salary will be £55,240 - £58,379 per annum inclusive of London Allowance element (pay award pending).

### **Location**

The Financial Controller will be based at Head Office (currently 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, 120 Leaman Street, London E1 8EU).

### **Official Travel**

As a condition of appointment, you must be prepared to travel and will be expected to travel as part of your job. The successful candidate will be reimbursed for travelling in accordance with VTS policy. He or she may use their private car for the carrying out of official duties. In such cases the post holder shall be paid the appropriate mileage rate as detailed in the VTS Staff Handbook. The successful candidate shall be designated as a 'Casual User' for this purpose. Please note that use of standard class public transport is preferred wherever it is sensible and appropriate to do so.

### **Annual leave**

Annual leave is 25 days rising to 30 days after 5 years' continuous (VTS-only) service. In addition, you will be entitled to all nationally recognised public holidays and two non-statutory days (to be taken as directed by the Employer). The annual leave year is from 1st April to 31st March. Leave will be pro-rated depending on start date.

### **Hours**

The successful candidates will normally be required to work a 5-day week of 36 hours excluding meal breaks.

The Financial Controller will be expected to work such additional hours as may from time to time be reasonable and necessary in the successful discharge of their responsibilities. This will not attract the payment of overtime.

The VTS operates a flexi-time system. However, given the nature of this role, flexi-time will not be available for this position.

### **Commitment to role**

This role is full-time and the individual will be expected to commit to that requirement. Any additional work, voluntary or otherwise, must be disclosed on the application form. The expectation is that the person will not undertake any other work when in the role without the express written permission of the Chief Executive.

Any current or on-going roles should be disclosed with your application. Any failure to be absolutely transparent on this matter may result in your application [or employment] being terminated.

**Probation**

The successful applicant will, like all VTS staff, be subject to a six month probationary period. Performance within the period will be assessed in accordance with the VTS's Probation Policy. This period may be extended if necessary to do so. Unsatisfactory performance during this period may result in the termination of the appointment.

**Note on continuous service for redundancy purposes & pension transfer**

**The VTS does not accept continuous service for redundancy purposes from Civil Service employment.**

**In most instances even though you will not have continuity of service from the Civil Service you will be able to transfer-in your pension to the Local Government Pension Scheme from the Civil Service scheme(s) but naturally this will depend if it benefits you to do so.**

**However, continuous service from organisations listed in the Redundancy Payments (Continuity of Employment in Local Government, etc.) (Modification) Order 1999 (as amended from time to time) will be accepted - for redundancy purposes only - should such a situation ever arise.**

## SELECTION PROCESS

Guidance on making an application is contained in Annex A.

**To apply for the post, please complete the form in Annex B. This will also be attached on the website as a separate document so that you do not have to send the whole of this pack back to us.**

**We would prefer it if you use the separate forms for this, and that is why this full application pack is created as a non-editable pdf but it is provided for full information.**

Please ensure that your application fully addresses the appointment criteria in the person specification.

Please also complete and return the enclosed Diversity Monitoring Questionnaire in Annex C. This will help us to follow the recommendations of the Equal Opportunities, Racial Equality, and Disability Rights Commissions (now all superseded and consolidated within the Equality and Human Rights Commission), that employers should monitor selection decisions to assess whether equality of opportunity is being achieved.

**This Questionnaire will be attached on the website as a separate document for completion, so you do not have to send us back the whole of this pack.**

The information on the Diversity Monitoring Questionnaire will be treated as confidential and used for statistical purposes; HR team members will see the form for legitimate purposes. It will not be made available to the selection panel or form part of the selection assessment. i.e. the form will not be treated as part of your application. The closing date for applications is **23:55 on Friday 2 October 2020**.

Please ensure that your application fully addresses the appointment criteria in the person specification. Please note that CVs will not be accepted unless accompanied by a fully completed application form.

**Applications should be emailed to [recruitment@valuationtribunal.gov.uk](mailto:recruitment@valuationtribunal.gov.uk).**

If you have problems with e-mail, then hard copy applications should be sent marked "Private and Confidential: Address Only" to:

Steve Watts  
Head of HR and Training  
Valuation Tribunal Service  
Second Floor, 120 Leaman Street  
London E1 8EU

The VTS respects the privacy of any initial approach or expression of interest in this role, whether formal or informal.

## RECRUITMENT PROCESS

The recruitment process is in two stages:

### Stage 1

Application Form – to be returned no later than **23:55 on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2020**. Applications will be acknowledged.

### Stage 2

Interviews and testing – The VTS policy is to use various tests - including personality, ability and competency tests - to try to help ensure we recruit the right candidates. Further details of this, and if we do wish you to be involved in such tests, will be provided if you are successful in being shortlisted for interview.

The assessment process may also involve you making a short presentation, details of which will be provided in due course if you are successfully shortlisted.

The interviewing panel will be chaired by the Finance Director, and it is likely another Finance team member and an HR representative will also be present. The interview will be conducted in 120 Lemn Street (or video conferencing if necessary).

The indicative timetable is as follows -

Closing date of applications:	23:55 on 2 <sup>nd</sup> October 2020
Interview Date:	Likely to be mid-October 2020
Second Interview Date (if necessary):	If necessary, end of October 2020
Appointment Offered by:	1 <sup>st</sup> November 2020

If you have any queries about any aspect of the appointments detailed in this information pack, then please call and ask for Human Resources on 0207 426 3900. Given the current Covid situation, it would be preferable if you could e-mail [HR.admin@valuationtribunal.gov.uk](mailto:HR.admin@valuationtribunal.gov.uk) with any queries and we will direct your query to the appropriate people.

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT**

The VTS is an equal opportunity employer. Applications are invited from all suitably qualified individuals irrespective of ethnicity, gender, disability, marital status, age, religion or belief, or sexuality.

Under the Data Protection Act (and forthcoming GDPR), the data provided on completed application forms will only be used for the specific purpose of recruitment and will not be processed in any manner incompatible with that purpose. All such data will be destroyed securely after 12 months following the job closing data unless you are successfully appointed to the role.

For this purpose, we would be grateful if Annex C could be completed and returned with your application. Ideally this should be using the separate form but otherwise the HR team will separate the Equal Opportunities annex from the rest of the application ahead of any shortlisting.

## ANNEX A

### GUIDANCE NOTES ON COMPLETING YOUR APPLICATION FORM

#### Read the job profile and person specification carefully

Before completing your application form you should carefully read through all the literature sent to you in the application pack as it will let you know what requirements we want the person to have for that particular job.

Both the Job Description and Person Specification list the key responsibilities, knowledge, skills and abilities and commitment you should possess.

#### Prepare a rough draft first

You can avoid making errors in your application form by writing a rough draft before you complete your final version.

#### Personal details – section 1

You should complete fully the personal details in section 1 of the application form.

#### Person Specification – section 2

##### Your experience, strengths and skills

You need to tell us how you demonstrate the skills, knowledge, experience and commitment set out in the Person Specification. You should consider how you can apply (present and past) experience, strengths and skills to the job. Examples can be drawn from any relevant experience gained from career, home, social leisure, voluntary, interests etc. You should ensure you write clearly and concisely and address how you match the requirements of the headings set out in Section 2.

Please note we do not accept CVs unless accompanied by a completed application form. It is therefore very important that you complete all the relevant sections of the application form to describe how you meet the requirements for the job in relation to the Job Description and Person Specification as they will be used to determine who is selected for interview assessment.

#### Other information – section 3

You have the opportunity to add any further information in Section 3 if you have not covered key issues in Section 2.

## **Why are you applying for this job?**

In your application you need to state why you are interested in applying for this job in Section 3.

## **Qualifications**

Please list qualifications obtained from age 16 onwards. For the avoidance of doubt, this should include GCSE level qualifications

## **Continuous professional development**

Please state what activities you have undertaken in the last five years that have contributed to your continuous professional development.

## **Other relevant information – section 4**

### **Integrity**

You need to complete Section 4 by ticking the appropriate box. If you have answered yes to any question, you should provide details on a separate sheet.

## **Declaration & signature – section 5**

You need to complete Section 5. If you complete the form and send it by email, you will be asked to sign it at the interview.

## **Submitting your application**

You must ensure that your application can be clearly read. If you choose to hand write your application you must use black ink, as the form will be photocopied.

It is your responsibility to ensure your completed application form arrives before the advertised closing date as late applications will not be considered. You should ideally keep a copy of your completed application for your own reference.

**ANNEX B**

**APPLICATION FORM**

All sections of this application form should be completed accurately and returned by email to [recruitment@valuationtribunal.gov.uk](mailto:recruitment@valuationtribunal.gov.uk). Alternatively, hard copies can be sent to Steve Watts, Head of HR & Training, Valuation Tribunal Service, Second Floor, 120 Leaman Street, London E1 8EU

Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary for any part of your application.

The closing date for applications is **23:55 on Friday 2 October 2020**. Late applications will not be accepted. CVs are not accepted.

**SECTION 1 - PERSONAL DETAILS**

**Title**

**Surname**

**First Name(s)**

**Address**

**Telephone numbers:**

**Day**

**Home**

**Mobile**

**Home e-mail address (if applicable)**

## SECTION 2 - PERSON SPECIFICATION

Please tell us how you demonstrate the skills set out in the person specification (and job description where appropriate). You may wish to use examples from your career, voluntary, community or unpaid work.

**Personal statement**



**Personal statement (continued 1)**

**Personal statement (continued 2)**

**Please continue on separate sheet(s) as necessary**

## **SECTION 3 - OTHER INFORMATION**

**Please provide details of any additional understanding or experience you would bring to the organisation and the role.**

**Please include here why you are interested in applying for the role and what attracts you to the position (see separate heading within this section below).**

**Other interests?**

**What attracts you to the post?**

**Please give details of training you have received or continuous professional development you have undertaken in the last 3 years. Include any outside interests or memberships/voluntary work etc. which might be relevant to your application:**

**Education**

*Please list any academic or professional qualifications which you hold from age 15/16 onwards i.e. GCSE level and beyond.*

Subject(s)	Date Obtained	Institution/Awarding Body	Level (e.g. GCSE, A/AS level, degree)	Pass/Fail & Grade

**Continue on separate sheet as necessary.**

**Please note it is our policy always to check relevant qualifications**

**Employment History**  
*(Please detail any gaps in employment history)*

Employer – name and address	Dates	Role & key responsibilities	Reason for leaving

***Continue on separate sheet(s) as required***

**Notice period required by current employer .....**

**Salary expectation .....**

## SECTION 4 – OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION

Any employee could find that matters or incidents, which previously attracted no attention, could become matters of public interest once the person concerned holds such a post.

Please answer the following questions by ticking the appropriate box.

**Have you:**

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
(1) been convicted of any offences (other than minor motoring offences) which are not spent in accordance with the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 in the UK or abroad?;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(2) been charged with any offence which is still pending?;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(3) become bankrupt over the past 10 years?;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(4) been dismissed from any office or employment over the past 10 years?;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(5) ever been disqualified from either acting as a Company Director or in the management of a Company?;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(6) ever been a Director, Partner or Manager of a Company which has gone into liquidation, receivership or administration?;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(7) any other information which you would consider relevant to an assessment of your suitability for this post; for example, business interests or personal relationships, which may lead to an allegation of conflict of interest?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please provide details on a separate sheet, if you answer “yes” to any of the above questions. Please note: a “yes” answer to any of the questions (1) to (7) above will not necessarily disqualify a candidate for this position. Each case will be treated on its merits. However, failure to disclose relevant information may result in the appointment being summarily terminated.

## SECTION 5 – DECLARATION & SIGNATURE

I declare that the information I have provided is true and accurate. I understand that false or misleading statements or deliberate omissions may be regarded as grounds for withdrawal of any offer or, after I have started employment with the VTS, possible dismissal without notice. I agree that the information given on this form may be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998/GDPR for the purposes of recruitment and selection and any subsequent appointment process.

Signed:

Name (in block letters):

Date:

**APPLICATION FORM CHECKLIST**

*Please use this checklist to ensure you have completed every section and included everything to allow your application to be assessed.*

<b><u>Section</u></b>	<b><u>Completed</u></b> – please tick
Personal Detail - section 1 <i>Your basic personal details</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Person Specification - section 2 <i>Your personal statement based on your skills, experience and how you meet the job requirements</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other information - section 3 <i>Anything relevant to your application that you've not included under section 2, what attracts you to the role, relevant training/CPD in last 3 years, your qualifications post-16.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other relevant information - section 4 <i>Integrity section detailing criminal convictions, solvency etc.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Declaration and signature – section 5	<input type="checkbox"/>

## ANNEX C

# Diversity Monitoring Questionnaire

The VTS has a policy of equal opportunity. Everyone who is eligible to join the VTS regardless of ethnicity, religion or belief, gender, marital status, disability, age, or sexuality, will receive equal treatment when applying for jobs.

As an organisation, we want to ensure that working in the VTS is a rewarding opportunity, which promotes the diverse talent that we have. To do this, we need to collect data on the composition of our workforce so that we can check whether our HR policies and systems (such as promotion, pay, access to learning and development, etc.) are operating fairly for all groups of staff. In addition, it will help us develop appropriate diversity and equal opportunities policies.

We would like to reassure you that the information you provide will be treated in the strictest confidence. Data will be held on the VTS's Human Resource databases, to which only a small number of authorised people have access. When the data is used, it will be for anonymous statistical and research purposes only. Data will **not** be used for selection purposes.

We would like to thank you in advance for your co-operation.

1 Name

Post: Financial Controller

2. What is your ethnic group?

Choose ONE section from A to E, then tick the appropriate box to indicate your cultural background.

### A White

- British
- Irish
- Any other White background -  
Please tick and state below:

### B Mixed

- White and Black Caribbean
- White and Black African
- White and Asian
- Any other Mixed background -  
Please tick and state below:

Annex C continued

**C Asian or Asian British**

- Indian
- Pakistani
- Bangladeshi
- Any other Asian background -  
Please tick and state below:

**D Black or Black British**

- Caribbean
- African
- Any other Black background -  
Please tick and state below:

**E Chinese or other ethnic group**

- Chinese
- Any other ethnic group, please tick and state below:

**3. Disability**

The Equality Act 2010 defines disability as ‘a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on [the person’s] ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities’. Case law has established that the disability could be physical, sensory or mental and must be expected to last at least 12 months.

Do you consider yourself to have a disability?      Yes       No

If ‘Yes’ please specify nature of disability.

Do you need any special arrangements/facilities if you attend an interview?      Yes       No

Please state requirements in box below if you ticked ‘yes’

**4. Gender**

Male     Female

**5. Age (at last birthday)**

**6. Marital Status**

**Please tick as appropriate**

Single     Cohabiting     Married     Widowed     Divorced