



Downe House



CANDIDATE INFORMATION PACK

FINANCE ASSISTANT – ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

Message from the Headmistress

Thank you for the interest that you have shown in joining us at Downe House. I hope that this information pack will give you a good overview of the position and working at our School, but if you have any queries then please do contact us, we are more than happy to help. I would recommend that you also take a look at our website where you will find a wealth of information about us.

Downe House is a very special place where we all work together with one common purpose of supporting our pupils to reach their full potential. There is a strong community spirit here, and all of our staff, whatever their role, play an important part in our success.

We seek to recruit the best staff at Downe House, and I could not be more proud of our committed team. We have high expectations, but in return we provide a supportive and friendly working environment, generous benefits, wide CPD opportunities and the chance to really make a difference.

I hope that you are interested in applying and we look forward to hearing from you.

With all good wishes

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading 'Emma Mckendrick'.

EMMA MCKENDRICK



About the School

Downe House is one of the UK's leading boarding and day schools for girls aged 11 to 18. With a charm and character of its own, the School is set on a beautiful 110-acre site in the village of Cold Ash situated 3 miles from the market town of Newbury. The School is passionate about creating a strong learning and inspirational environment and community, where every individual matters.

Downe House was founded by Olive Willis in 1907, who held a strong belief that a school should meet the needs of young women by prizing the individual and creating a strong community. With over 550 pupils, Downe House lives out the message that "each individual matters", an ethos as strong today as it was over 100 years ago, alongside the core values of kindness and respect for others. The aim is also to prepare girls to play a full and positive role as citizens of a global community and to become outstanding women of the future.

Our immersive education gives girls the freedom and space to nurture their talents at their own pace. Inspirational teaching, enriching co-curricular opportunities and personalised curricula bring out the best in each girl, with holistic pastoral support. The lifelong friendships formed here create an unrivalled network of talented alumnae helping each other succeed beyond Downe House.

The School has a strong reputation for academic excellence as well as outstanding pastoral care. We offer a flexible approach to suit the individual needs of our pupils and their parents, and girls have the choice of joining us as full boarders, flexi boarders or day girls. Many of the girls are boarders and they live in one of the twelve on-site boarding houses. The emphasis is very much on creating a 'home from home' environment and each house is staffed by a committed and caring team of staff – some of whom are residential.

Our international focus reflects our commitment and ambition to share our education management expertise on a global scale and to provide genuine opportunities for staff and young people all over the world. Academic staff have the opportunity to participate in a global teacher exchange program, with our partner school in Australia. Selected pupils can also attend an international school for a short term or gain global internships for work experience. We are committed to creating a diverse and global community within our founding School in Berkshire, alongside our international schools in Oman and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as well as our pioneering online DH Academy.



The Finance Department

The Finance department supports over 450 staff working in a wide range of roles in the school including Academic, Boarding, Operational, Catering, Estates and the Leadership Team. We also support the parents of approximately 560 pupils, 35% of whom are abroad.

The department plays a pivotal role in supporting the smooth financial operation of the school and wider group activities. Responsible for managing all aspects of financial planning, account, reporting, and control, the team ensures the effective stewardship of Charity resources to support the school's strategic goals.

Key functions include Accounts payable, Accounts receivable, Planning & Control, payroll, and compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements.

The team works closely with other departments, parents, and external stakeholders to deliver a professional and efficient service, upholding the school's commitment to excellence. With a focus on accuracy, transparency, and collaboration, the Finance Team underpins the school's ability to provide an outstanding immersive education for all students.

“The School acknowledges the importance of nurturing its teachers by providing regular CPD opportunities throughout each term, in areas as diverse as neurodiversity and the integration of technology into classrooms.”



The Position

TEMPORARY FINANCE ASSISTANT – ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

Start Date: ASAP

Contract Type: Temporary – Part time 3 days per week, with flexibility on which days worked

Salary: £26,000 - £28,000 FTE dependant on qualifications / experience.

Hours: 24 hours per week

Reporting to: Head of Financial Operations

Interview Process: An initial online screening call. Shortlisted candidates will be invited to an on-site interview and an opportunity to meet the team.

Benefits:

- Generous employer pension contributions
- Delicious free meals daily
- Free onsite parking
- CPD opportunities
- A variety of social occasions through the year including a Christmas and Summer Party for employee + 1, held in the grounds, plus other termly events

JOB PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW

This is an excellent opportunity to join a friendly team working in a lovely environment.

This role is to specifically take day to day responsibility for the Purchase Ledger, under guidance of the Head of Financial Operations and the Director of Finance.

To work as part of the wider Finance team and assist colleagues within the department as required.

MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Manage the accounts inbox, forwarding invoices and statements to Lightyear and ensure timely, efficient responses to any queries.
- Provide excellent service to internal colleagues and external stakeholders.
- Register and manage invoices through the Lightyear invoice processing system, entering accurate budget codes and descriptions and obtaining budget holder approval.
- Export approved invoices and staff expenses from Lightyear and importing into the Accounting System.
- Accurately reconcile supplier statements, requesting any missing invoices and raising any queries with suppliers.
- Verify new supplier details and enter onto Lightyear and the Accounting System.
- Monitor and verify all changes to supplier details, including bank accounts and contact details, ensuring vigilance against erroneous or fraudulent changes.
- Process staff expenses through the Lightyear system in a timely manner, assisting staff with any queries.
- Raise timely weekly BACS payment runs for authorization using the Accounting system.
- Access supplier portals to download invoices and statements for processing, such as utility providers.
- Ensure accurate (soft and/or hard copy) filing invoices and other supplier documentation.
- Follow month-end and year-end processes to facilitate period-end close on time.

- Support key academic and support departments with purchasing, ensuring documentation is received and approved on time.
- Keep the Head of Financial Operations and the Director of Finance and Business Enterprise updated on areas of concern and risk (financial and reputational).
- Undertake any other reasonable tasks as directed by the Head of Financial Operations and Director of Finance and Operations.

ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS

- Previous experience of working in a similar role within a busy Finance Department
- Competence in using Excel and general IT skills
- Excellent communication skills via email, phone and face to face
- Good data entry accuracy and speed
- Ability to work well as part of a team
- Ability to meet deadlines, follow processes and seek assistance if required

DESIRABLE REQUIREMENTS

- Previous experience of using Lightyear or WCBS PASS an advantage

Downe House is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students and expects all staff to share this commitment and adhere to, and comply with, the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and procedures at all times. Appointed candidates will be subject to an enhanced DBS check and an online social media check.

We promote equality of opportunity and support an environment that values and promotes diversity and inclusion



Inspiring girls



Downe House

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www.downehouse.net



The Downe House Podcast is available
on all major podcast platforms