

# ACET CFO Recruitment Pack

Striving for excellence. Empowering achievement.



ACET House, 66 Holderness Drive, Aston, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S26 2BH



## LETTER FROM THE CEO

September 2023

Dear prospective candidate,

Welcome to ACET!

We are delighted you have shown an interest in our trust and what we endeavour to achieve. We hope that the ACET Strategic Plan provides you with the background information you need to know about our Trust and that as you read through, you will be able to see how everything we aspire to achieve is centred around our vision – what we want for our learners, staff and the local communities in which our academies are located.

Initially, ACET was formed in 2011 as a Single Academy Trust, and we are very proud to now be a Multi Academy Trust consisting of 12 academies with 5,572 students/pupils ranging from nursery to post-16. ACET is currently a strengthening Trust, and we are looking for an experienced finance professional, who will lead our Finance Team and act as the Trust's Chief Finance Officer (CFO), providing leadership and management on all aspects of finance and playing a pivotal role in providing clear financial and commercial strategy and direction for the Trust. Full details of what we are looking for are in the external advert, job description and person profile.

If you are confident that you have the skills, experience and qualifications to lead our Finance function, we sincerely hope that you will apply for this post.

Yours faithfully,

**Rebecca Scutt**

Chief Executive Officer

# EXTERNAL ADVERTISEMENT



<b>Post Title:</b>	<b>Head of Finance (Chief Finance Officer/CFO)</b>
<b>Place of Employment:</b>	<b>Aston Community Education Trust</b>
<b>Hours of Work:</b>	<b>37 hours per week</b> (flexible and/or hybrid working welcome)
<b>Salary:</b>	<b>£60,321 – £64,417</b> (PO18, NJC scale points 52 – 55)* <i>*pay award pending - in national negotiation, due April 2023</i>
<b>Appointment:</b>	<b>Permanent</b>
<b>Closing Date:</b>	<b>9.00am on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2023</b>

We are seeking to appoint an experienced finance professional, who will provide leadership and management on all aspects of finance and will play a pivotal role in providing clear financial and commercial strategy and direction for the Trust, acting as the CFO in line with the Academy Trust Handbook. The successful candidate will be a qualified accountant, with a proven track record of senior leadership, strategic financial capability and team leadership. Based at the central office in Swallownest, Sheffield, the successful candidate will work as part of ACET's central team, reporting to the CEO and Board of Trustees, in a collaborative and supportive working environment.

Benefits include hybrid and/or flexible working, 29 days annual leave rising to 32 days after five years' service (plus Bank Holidays), additional concessionary days at Christmas, free onsite parking and ability to join the local government pension scheme.

The ideal candidate will be commercially astute and have excellent communication and negotiation skills. Knowledge and/or experience of the education sector is essential, and ideally, the successful candidate will have a track record of improvement of school/academy budgets. ACET is a strengthening trust and this is a challenging role, so we are looking for someone who is adept at building strong, positive relationships with a variety of stakeholders and can foster respect and trust easily. Future growth of the trust could lead to further career development for the post-holder.

If you would like an informal chat about the role before applying, please email [vacancies@astoncetrust.org](mailto:vacancies@astoncetrust.org) with your contact details and we will be in touch.

## Application Details

Please complete an application form and return by email to [vacancies@astoncetrust.org](mailto:vacancies@astoncetrust.org) by the specified closing date to apply for the post. Early applications are encouraged, as we may close the advertisement earlier than the planned date if sufficient high-quality applications are received.

## Safeguarding

ACET is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

All applicants should read our safeguarding Policy and Safer Recruitment Policy, which are available on the 'policy' section of our academy websites.

***It is an offence to seek employment in regulated activity if you are barred from working with children.*** This post will involve regular contact with children, and therefore is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Applicants are therefore not entitled to withhold information about convictions, cautions or bind-over orders which for any other purposes are “spent” under the provisions of the Act. Any information that is “protected” under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 will not appear on a DBS certificate and does not need to be declared. Guidance on this can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/new-guidance-on-the-rehabilitation-of-offenders-act-1974>

Successful candidates will be subject to a DBS check at the appropriate level. Shortlisted candidates will be asked to complete a self-declaration related to their criminal record or any information that would make them unsuitable to work with children. Additional checks in relation to the Childcare Disqualification Regulations will be undertaken for successful candidates to junior academies. If you have lived or worked outside of the UK, additional information may be required from you to satisfy safer recruitment checks.

### **Equality**

ACET is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity throughout the recruitment process. We welcome and encourage applications from people of all backgrounds, and your application will be assessed purely on your ability to do the job.

We undertake to make any ‘reasonable adjustments’ to a job or workplace to counteract any disadvantages a disabled person may face. Where required, we will make reasonable adjustments to the selection process for an applicant with a disability.

*Please note if you have not received a reply within three weeks, your application has been unsuccessful.*

# JOB DESCRIPTION



## POST TITLE: Head of Finance (Chief Finance Officer/CFO)

### OVERALL PURPOSE OF THE POST

The post-holder will provide leadership and management on all aspects of finance, and will play a pivotal role in providing clear financial and commercial strategy and direction for the Trust, acting as the CFO in line with the Academy Trust Handbook. The post-holder will be fully aware of all funding and legislative changes that apply to the education sector and advise the Trust Board on strategic financial information to enable them to make informed decisions. S/he will be responsible for managing all budgeting and accounting activity, the line management of the finance function, ensuring all systems are updated and reporting is timely and in line with required annual returns. In addition, you will coordinate the work of the external auditor and prepare and submit audited, statutory, consolidated accounts.

As a key member of the central team, the CFO will play an important part in setting and achieving the ACET strategy. S/he will report to the Chief Executive Officer and Board of Trustees, and will work closely with the Chief Operating Officer, Chief People Officer, Chief Safeguarding Officer and Chief Academic Officer, along with other members of ACET's central team, to ensure effective Trust leadership that best serves the children and young people in our communities.

### MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Monitor financial performance and drive change within the finance operation of the trust, striving to ensure maximum efficiency for the trust
- Ensure that the trust is compliant with all requirements from the DfE, ESFA and the Academy Trust Handbook
- To ensure all statutory returns are completed and submitted in agreed timescales, to include annual statements and academy budget forecast returns.
- Be aware of and keep ahead of funding and legislative changes that apply to the education sector and provide the Board of Trustees with strategic financial information and reports to enable them to make informed financial decisions
- Ensure accrual-based monthly management accounts are produced and shared with the CEO
- Lead and line manage the finance function (including the central finance team and academy-based staff), including managing all the financial accounting and transactional finance for the Trust
- Lead the budget planning/forecasting process (1 – 5 years), at individual academy and trust level
- Ensuring all finance-related systems are up-to-date and reporting is timely and in line with required annual financial returns
- Co-ordinate the work of the external auditor to prepare and submit audited statutory consolidated accounts
- Ensure most efficient use of all income streams to maximise resources available for the trust, including GAG funding, SCA, SEND funding and DFC
- Ensure robust systems, processes and controls are implemented and a fixed asset register and risk register maintained
- Work closely with the COO and other colleagues to maximise income generation will be an important part of the role
- Develop and mentor colleagues undertaking relevant CPD, for example, AAT, ACCA, ACA, CIMA etc.

- Regularly visit ACET academies to develop a good working knowledge of each academy and how they serve their communities, to ensure effective budget management that will best serve the needs of the students/pupils
- Ensure an effective Risk Register, Asset Register and Scheme of Delegation is in place and kept up-to-date
- Lead on financial aspects of any academy conversion, to include due diligence and managing the effective introduction of financial systems and processes for new academies joining the trust

## **GENERAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

All ACET staff are expected to:

- Promote and support the aims, ethos and vision of the academy/trust;
- Conduct themselves in line with the ACET values, treating others with dignity and respect;
- Develop and maintain effective working relationships with staff, students and others, as appropriate for the role;
- Remember that their prime responsibility is to the children, families and communities that the Trust serves, and ensure all decisions and actions taken during their work is with this in mind;
- Attend appropriate CPD and actively seek to broaden knowledge and skills;
- Appropriately maintain the confidentiality of the working environment;
- Comply with all ACET policies and procedures;
- Comply with all statutory guidance as relevant for their role, including the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974;
- Work in a flexible manner, undertaking any reasonable duties commensurate with the salary and grade of the post;
- Hold a full and valid driving licence, and be willing to travel as required for the role;
- Work in other ACET academies, as required (with travel payment if appropriate).

*The purpose of this job description is to provide an overview of the duties and responsibilities involved in this role, however, it is not intended to be exhaustive. In consultation with the post holder, this may be reviewed and could be subject to change during the course of employment.*

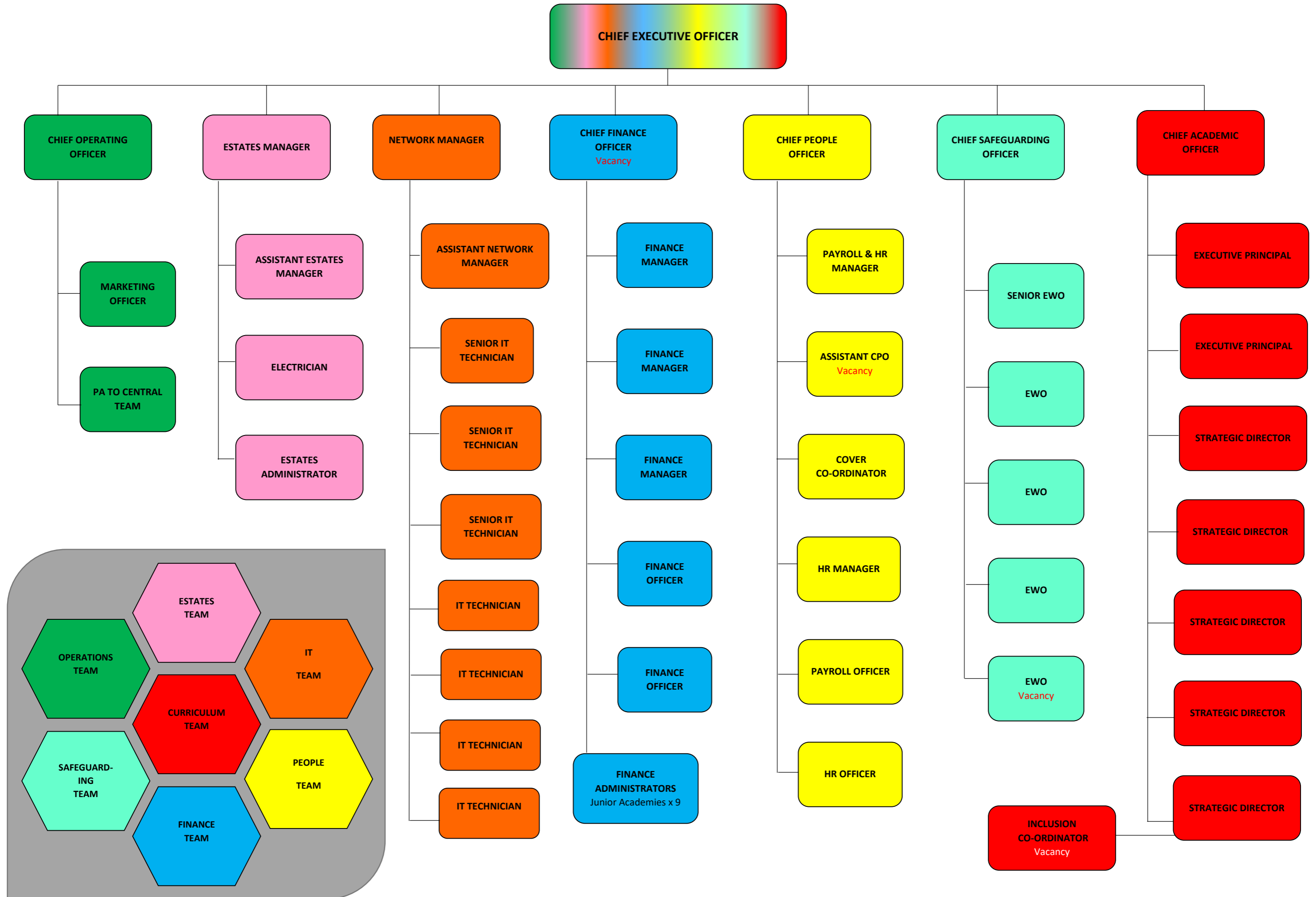
# PERSON PROFILE



POST TITLE: Head of Finance (Chief Finance Officer / CFO)	Essential	Desirable
<b>General Qualifications &amp; Training</b>		
5 GCSE grades A-C and 2 A levels or equivalent	✓	
Fully qualified accountant (ACCA, ACA, CIMA)	✓	
Commitment to attend appropriate training and development, taking ownership of personal development and being willing to pursue development opportunities	✓	
<b>Experience</b>		
Relevant post qualification experience in both financial management and accounting at a senior level	✓	
Demonstrable business acumen and commercial experience	✓	
Experience of working in a multi-academy trust environment, with an understanding of the all aspects of school finance, including that of secondary education	✓	
Extensive prior experience of producing budgets, management accounts and statutory accounts	✓	
<b>Skills, Knowledge &amp; Aptitudes</b>		
In depth knowledge of financial regulations, legislation and the implications of non-compliance	✓	
Solid knowledge of financial analysis and forecasting	✓	
A basic knowledge of employment law and GDPR		✓
Strategic planning, management and business process skills	✓	
The ability to explain complex accounting concepts in simple terms to non-finance colleagues	✓	
The ability to provide advice and guidance, offering business focused solutions	✓	
Proven track record of developing and implementing financial policies	✓	
Able to remain calm under pressure	✓	
Excellent IT software skills, including Microsoft packages and bespoke finance/budgeting packages	✓	

Commitment to the promotion of positive values, attitudes and behaviour	✓	
<b>Personal Attributes</b>		
Confident operating at Board level	✓	
Highly effective in multi-tasking and personal organisation	✓	
An analytical mind with strategic ability	✓	
Outstanding communication and interpersonal skills	✓	
Excellent leadership and management skills	✓	
A team player	✓	
Discrete when dealing with sensitive and / or confidential matters	✓	
<b>Other Requirements</b>		
A pragmatic 'can-do' and flexible approach to tasks with an ability to ensure work is completed to the appropriate standards required	✓	
Good sickness/attendance record in current/previous employment (not including absences resulting from disability)	✓	
No serious health problem which is likely to impact upon job performance (which cannot be accommodated by reasonable adjustments)	✓	
Full driving licence and own transport, with willingness to attend different ACET sites	✓	
Appointment of the successful applicant will be subject to satisfactory DBS disclosure at an enhanced level (further information can be found at <a href="http://www.disclosure.gov.uk">www.disclosure.gov.uk</a> ).	✓	

ACET CENTRAL STRUCTURE – SEPTEMBER 2023





**ACET**

**Aston Community Education Trust**

(Company number: 07577113)

Registered Office Address:

ACET House, 66 Holderness Drive, Aston, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S26 2BH