

Role Title

Accountant

Role Information

| Role Type | Pay Band | Location | Duration | Reports to: |
|-----------|----------|----------|---|-------------------|
| Finance | 5 | Beijing | Fixed term contract until end of January 2019 | Senior Accountant |

Role Purpose

This role delivers the financial accounting transactions for China, one of 14 countries in the East Asia region division of the British Council.

The role ensures that the financial process and internal control deliver the end to end accounting requirements reporting in line with accounting practices, corporate policies, and local statutory, accounting and tax compliance regulations.

This role reports to the Senior Accountant for the China financial control cluster which supports the Country management team in Finance related functions and business matters.

About Us

Founded in 1934, the British Council is the UK's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. We create friendly knowledge and understanding between the people of the UK and other countries. We do this by making a positive contribution to the UK and the countries we work with – changing lives by creating opportunities, building connections and engendering trust.

We work with over 100 countries across the world in the fields of arts and culture, English language, education and civil society. Last year we reached over 65 million people directly and 731 million people overall including online, broadcasts and publications.

The British Council has had a presence in China since 1943, and since 1979 we have been operating as the Cultural and Education Section of the British Embassy in Beijing and the Cultural and Education Section of the Consulate-Generals in Shanghai, Guangzhou, Chongqing, and Wuhan. In 2017 we opened our first English centre in Mainland China, based in Nanjing.

Our work in China is of great importance to the global British Council operation, both politically and commercially. With more than 750 staff across our offices in China, we operate a wide range of programmes in English, exams, arts, and education in partnership with local authorities and partners.

We achieve significant impact and reach through our programmes which have engaged

millions of young people and thousands of professionals and policy makers across China, including:

- 900,000 people who have taken an exam with us within the past year, be it an English language exam, such as the IELTS exam, or a professional exam, such as the ACCA qualification.
- 10,000 English teachers and one million students who have benefitted from our English language teacher training programmes in the past two years.
- Nearly 155,000 Chinese students who are currently studying in the UK, many of whom have engaged with our work encouraging and supporting student mobility.
- One billion people reached and influenced through our 2015 Year of Cultural Exchange, which comprised of more than 200 events across 14 Chinese cities, and our Shakespeare Lives campaign in 2016 achieved similar levels of impact.

Function Overview:

The Finance function is structured along functional lines with the aim of embedding the 'three lines of defence' model at its heart, clearly separating the financial control (first line) and risk and assurance (second line) functions, ensuring the integrity of our results and the strength of our controls. The Accountant reports to the Senior Accountant operating within the East Asia Financial Control function.

This will allow the organisation to focus more easily on business decision making, strategic planning, budgeting and forecasting on the basis of accurate monthly results.

Main Opportunities/Challenges for this role:

- This role offers excellent opportunity to gain expertise and experience at an accountant level in the country
- The candidate will operate in an environment which demands knowledge and expertise in local accounting standards and requirements within a structured and integrated corporate framework
- The candidate will acquire and apply communication skills with peers and colleagues in the cluster, in the regional and global finance team
- The candidate will be called upon by senior management staff to support financial risk assessment and provide business support services

Main Accountabilities:

The post-holder will:

Financial Ledgers and reporting

- Ensure the accounting transactions (systems generated and manual) are accurate and reliable and properly recorded in the country's accounting books (General Ledger, Fixed Assets Register, registers and schedules)
- Validate the General Account balances in the Trial balance of the entities
- Complete all financial tasks required for the financial month end process, for the pre-closing and month end closing steps, including maintenance of accounting records.
- Complete all accounting transactions and adjustments (accruals, deferrals and provisions), including Intercompany accounting in line with accounting rules.
- Complete all financial tasks required for the financial year-end process in compliance with corporate and regional control procedures and deadlines.
- Co-ordinate with the Financial Planning & Analysis colleagues and Noida SSC to complete month/year-end preparations and journaling.

Accounting functions and processes

- Analyse General Ledger control accounts for reconciliation and house-keeping purposes to ensure accuracy of each account in compliance to corporate policies
- Prepare and book manual journals and off-system payments requests ensuring accuracy and compliance with relevant policies.
- Support the grant income reconciliation process by extracting relevant reports.
- Create billing documents from approved supporting documentation. Ensure proper documentation is filed for record retention.
- Support integrity of customers refund process.
- Support travellers and claimants in submitting claims accurately and promptly in the Travel systems (T&E, Procurement card or Concur) policy in compliance with corporate and local travel policy
- Maintain financial records as per corporate policy, document retention processes and internal audit.
- Administer internal control processes to ensure the integrity of cash collection and custody of financial instruments.
- Assist Senior Accountant with preparation of local Tax submissions and the other statutory returns
- Assist Senior Accountant / Financial Controller with provision of information to internal and external auditors.
- Assist in the preparation of audits and implementation of audit recommendations.
- Complete Travel & Expenses audits as per policy addressing issues in a promptly manner.
- Manage the fixed assets accounting process to ensure Balance Sheet accounts are reconciled with the Fixed Assets Register (FAR).
- Complete daily cash reconciliations.
- Submit relevant documents to local bank as requested including bank mandates updates.

Other Office Administrative processes

- Back-up role for payroll services in managing the payroll application system and processing services

Regional and Functional Team Working:

- Contribute to ensuring the policies, procedures and systems are delivered with integrity.
- Work closely and effectively as part of the regional and global finance teams.
- Actively support equality and diversity and work to the British Council's EDI policy at all times.

Key Relationships:

- Regional Financial Accounting team
- Shared Services Centre
- Country Director and Programme Managers
- Corporate Finance
- Bank relationship manager

Role Requirements:

Threshold requirements:

Assessment stage

| | | |
|--|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Passport requirements/ Right to work in country | Right to work in China | Shortlisting |
| Direct contact or managing staff working with children? | No | N/A |
| Notes | | |
| Person Specification: | | Assessment stage |
| Language requirements (DELETE IF NOT APPROPRIATE) | | |
| <i>Essential</i> | <i>Desirable</i> | <i>Assessment Stage</i> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fluency in written and spoken English Shortlisted candidates will either demonstrate they have met the required standard through presentation of an agreed English language certificate, or will be required demonstrate a B1 level of English proficiency. | | Shortlisting |
| Qualifications | | |
| <i>Essential</i> | <i>Desirable</i> | <i>Assessment Stage</i> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree in Accounting, Finance or related field | | Shortlisting |
| Role Specific Knowledge & Experience | | |
| <i>Essential</i> | <i>Desirable</i> | <i>Assessment Stage</i> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 to 2 years of accounting experience. | Experience working with SAP | Shortlisting |
| British Council Core Skills | | <i>Assessment Stage</i> |
| <p>Financial Reporting and Compliance Level 1: Understand and apply general compliance standards. Understand core elements of financial statements and reports.</p> <p>Professional Accounting Standards Level 1: Apply accounting principles to accurately record financial transactions and maintain appropriate supporting documentation.</p> <p>Transactional Accounting and Closing Level 1: Understand and apply the British Council's accounting practices. Understand and apply account reconciliations.</p> <p>Managing risks Level 1: Follows good practices – Demonstrates understanding of</p> | | Shortlisting AND Interview |

risk management policies and procedures and record of following them.

Analyzing Data and Problems Level 1: Is systematic – Breaks down problems into a list of tasks to be done and decides on appropriate action.

Communicating and Influencing Level 2: Relates communications to circumstances – Displays good listening, writing and speaking skills, setting out logical arguments clearly and adapting language and form of communication to meet the needs of different people/audiences.

Planning and Organizing

Level 1: Is methodical – Able to plan own work over short timescales for routine or familiar tasks and processes.

Highly organized and deadline oriented.

High level of accuracy and attention to detail.

British Council Behaviours

Assessment Stage

Being Accountable (MORE DEMANDING): Delivering my best in order to meet my commitments.

Interview

Connecting with Others (ESSENTIAL): Making regular opportunities to understand others better.

Making it Happen (ESSENTIAL): Delivering clear results for the British Council.

Working Together (ESSENTIAL): Establishing a genuinely common goal with others.

Creating Shared Purpose (ESSENTIAL): Communicating and engaging picture of how we can work together.

Required for the role but not assessed during the application stage

Shaping the Future (ESSENTIAL): Looking for ways in which we can do things better

Prepared by:

Date:

Senior Financial Controller

May 2018