

## Role Title

Financial Controller - West Africa

## Role Information

| Role Type                            | Pay Band | Location   | Duration   | Reports to:                         |
|--------------------------------------|----------|--|------------|-------------------------------------|
| ADVISORY,<br>POLICY AND<br>EXPERTISE | PB7 – F  | Flexible – Nigeria,<br>Ghana, Senegal or<br>Sierra Leone | Indefinite | Regional Financial Controller - SSA |

## Role purpose

This role supports the Regional Financial Controller with the end to end accounting process across the operation; including month and year end close, and ensures consistent, accurate and robust financial accounting processes in line with accounting practices and corporate policies. This is a key role in the new organisational structure emerging from the Financial Transparency recommendations.

The role will manage a team of accountants based in multiple locations.

## About us

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. Each year we reach over 20 million people face-to-face and more than 500 million people online, via broadcasts and publications. Founded in 1934, we are a UK charity governed by Royal Charter and a UK public body.

## Function and Geopolitical 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.

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.

The SSA Business Plan sets out ambitious growth targets for both the number of people we will work with and the income that we will generate. Turnover by 2020 is expected to be over to £90 million in SSA, driven predominately by growth in Contract income as well as Exams and Teaching centres, despite a declining grant funding from centre. We also expect to be more profitable, reinforcing financial sustainability. At the same time we aim to achieve a step-change in the quality and performance of the British Council's Finance function by April 2018. This will be achieved through more consistent standard of financial reporting enabling more informed decision making and satisfy the standards demanded by external stakeholders.

The organisation will achieve this by becoming increasingly efficient and commercial in its approach whilst maintaining its public service ethos and charitable purpose. This will be done through the implementation of a

number of change programmes, which will result in more efficient and simpler processes. The post holder will play a key leadership role in driving the timely delivery of these key projects as the organisation transitions to a more efficient operating model.

## Internal Operating Context – Regional:

By 2050 the population of Sub Saharan Africa will be 2 billion people, with the majority living in an urban environment. The region will have a middle class the size of Europe. 70% of the population is under the age of 25, and this demographic will grow at 15% year on year for the next 10 years. Generally the region is becoming more politically stable. There are on average 50 elections each year, many of which are more open and transparent than before. The majority of countries in SSA are developing economies. Gender inequality remains and life for women and girls on the continent remains challenging.

While economic growth is significant, it comes from a low base. Income per capita has doubled and foreign debt levels have halved since 2000. Aspirations to become middle income countries as written in national development plans in the next 10 years are optimistic. The World Bank longer view forecasts that ‘almost all’ African countries will be middle income by 2050. Across the region government priorities focus on economic growth, education and skills, and youth employment. The opportunity and challenge for prosperity and security is the population explosion, meeting aspirations of a youthful continent. Critical to this is improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the English and Exams businesses across the region. Two major global change initiatives to increase the effectiveness of these operations will be implemented in SSA over the next 2-3 years.

## Main Accountabilities:

### The post-holder will (across operations in Ghana, Cameroon, Senegal and Sierra Leone):

- Manage the financial month end process, being accountable to the Regional Financial Controller for the pre-closing and month end closing steps, including maintenance of accounting records. As part of this the role will also be responsible for review and monitoring all accounting transactions and adjustments (accruals, deferrals and provisions), including Intercompany accounting, ensuring appropriate use of these in line with accounting rules.
- Review all manual journals and off-system payments to ensure accuracy and compliance with relevant policies.
- Perform reconciliation of all relevant accounts and ensure that this is completed to corporate standards.
- Ensure that local external accounting requirements are adhered to. This may include managing local providers such as tax accountants or auditors.
- Submission of local Tax and other statutory returns to Regional Financial Controller for approval.
- Provide an advisory function to cluster operations on technical accounting issues, and liaise with other specialist finance functions such as Tax and Treasury as needed.
- Identify issues and resolution in relation to financial accounting matters.
- Ensure that requests for new Master Data items (Profit Centre, Cost Centre, WBS, etc.) are compliant and that the integrity of finances is maintained.
- Produce periodic reports relating to financial accounting for cluster as requested by Regional Financial Controller.
- Monitor the cost allocation ratios for the cluster operations to ensure that they are based in accurate accounting rationale
- Ensure that the cluster operation fully complies with Travel & Expenses policy and that claims are submitted promptly and accurately with relevant documentation.
- Manage the creation of billing documents once the process has been initiated by the cluster operation and monitors debt levels.
- Manage the process of Income in kind submissions.
- Manage with Regional Financial Controller the service level agreement(s) with SSC.
- Co-ordinate at cluster level provision of information to internal / external auditors.
- Implement audit recommendations at cluster level.
- Supporting cluster country going through a Tax and Status change project.

- Supporting subsidiaries in cluster on post-stabilisation phase.
- Responsible for cluster management of:
  - Banking relationship
  - Capital assets additions, disposals and depreciation
  - Compliance with treasury policy
  - Capital markets and funding
  - Financial risk management / FX management

#### Team Leadership and Management:

- Demonstrate effective leadership of the cluster Financial Controlling and Accounting team and ensure that line management of staff is to British Council standards.
- Coach and support individuals and teams.
- Ensure that capability and capacity in the Financial Controlling and Accounting team is fit-for-purpose and able to respond flexibly to changes in the portfolio and operating context.
- Ensure financial training for members of the team.
- Ensure Performance Management process is undertaken to meet corporate requirements.
- Actively support equality and diversity and work to the British Council's EDI policy at all times.

### Key Relationships:

#### Internal

- Country Directors & Cluster Leads
- Regional Finance Director
- FP&A Leads
- Risk and Compliance Lead
- Shared Services Centre
- Corporate Finance

#### External

- Bank relationship manager
- Tax authorities

### Role Requirements:

| Threshold requirements:   |  | Assessment stage                  |
|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| Passport requirements/<br>Right to work in country  | <i>Right to live and work in Nigeria, Ghana, Senegal or Sierra Leone</i> | Shortlisting                      |
| Direct contact or managing staff working with children?   | No   | N/A                               |
| Notes   | Some travel may be required but is not expected to be significant.       |                                   |
| Person Specification:   |  | Assessment stage                  |
| Language requirements   |  |                                   |
| <i>Minimum / essential</i>  | <i>Desirable</i>   | <i>Assessment Stage</i>           |
| <b>Fluency in written and spoken English</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Shortlisted candidates will either demonstrate they have met the required standard through presentation of an agreed English language certificate, or will be required to take the APTIS test and demonstrate a B2 level of English proficiency.</li> </ul> |  | Shortlisting <i>and interview</i> |

| Qualifications   |                             |                               |
|--|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <i>Minimum / essential</i>   | <i>Desirable</i>            | <i>Assessment Stage</i>       |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Qualified accountant – ACCA or CFA – with at least 3 years of experience post-qualification.</li> <li>▪ Graduate of Finance, Economics, Business Administration or other related fields.</li> </ul>   | <i>Masters' degree</i>      | Shortlisting                  |
| Role Specific Knowledge & Experience   |                             |                               |
| <i>Minimum / essential</i>   | <i>Desirable</i>            | <i>Assessment Stage</i>       |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Excellent leadership and communication skills: (<i>Managing People- Level 3</i>)</li> <li>▪ Able to relay complex financial information in an easy-to-understand way: (<i>Financial Reporting and Compliance -Level 2</i>)</li> <li>▪ Minimum of 3 years of qualified experience in a relevant managerial post.</li> <li>▪ Experience of managing a diverse team or group of stakeholders in multiple locations.</li> <li>▪ Experience of an ERP system: (<i>Professional Accounting Standards- Level 2</i>).</li> </ul>  | Experience working with SAP | Shortlisting and/or Interview |
| British Council Core Skills  |                             | <i>Assessment Stage</i>       |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Communicating and Influencing (Level 3):</b> <i>Is creative and adaptable in communications – Able to use a range of non-standard and creative approaches to inform, and persuade others, extending beyond logical argument to influence decisions and actions in a way which is inclusive and engaging.</i></li> <li>▪ <b>Managing projects (Level 3):</b> <i>Leads smaller projects- Analyses requirements with the sponsor/stakeholders, defining the specification with awareness of equality and diversity impact, planning, revising, implementing and evaluating on small-to-medium scale and/or low risk projects</i></li> <li>▪ <b>Planning and Organising (Level 2):</b> <i>Plans ahead – Organises own work over weeks and months, or plans ahead for others, taking account of priorities and the impact on other people.</i></li> <li>▪ <b>Analysing Data and Problems (Level 3):</b> <i>Analyses patterns – Seeks out and examines a range of information to identify patterns, trends and options, to solve multifaceted and complex problems.</i></li> <li>▪ <b>Managing risks (Level 2):</b> <i>Supports a risk management culture – Has track record of identifying and highlighting risks and suggesting mitigating actions.</i></li> </ul> |                             | Shortlisting AND Interview    |

| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Business Partnering (Level 2):</b> Partner with the business to provide sound advice based on transparent, meaningful and comprehensive management information to inform, influence and achieve positive business outcomes.</li> </ul>  |  |
|---|--|
| British Council Behaviours  | Assessment Stage   |
| <p><b>Creating Shared Purpose (MORE DEMANDING):</b> Creating energy and clarity so that people want to work purposely together.</p> <p><b>Connecting with Others (MORE DEMANDING):</b> Actively appreciating the needs and concerns of myself and others.</p> <p><b>Shaping the Future (MORE DEMANDING):</b> Exploring ways in which we can add more value.</p> <p><b>Being Accountable (MORE DEMANDING):</b> Putting the needs of the team or British Council ahead of my own.</p> <p>-----</p> <p><b>Working Together (MORE DEMANDING):</b> Ensuring that others benefit as well as me.</p> <p><b>Making it Happen (MORE DEMANDING):</b> Challenging myself and others to deliver and measure better results.</p> | <p>Interview</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Required for the role but not assessed during the application stage</p> |
| Prepared by:  | Date:  |
| Emmanuel Olatinwo   | August 2018  |