

Role Title

Financial Controller Cluster / Country

Role Information

Role Type	Pay Band	Location	Duration	Reports to:
Finance	7	Beijing	Indefinite	Senior Financial Controller

This position will be employed by BC Education Consulting (Beijing) Co Ltd (WFOE which is a Wholly Foreign Owned Enterprise under the British Council.)

Role Purpose

This role is accountable and responsible for the financial controllership for a cluster of countries or country in the East Asia region which includes branches, diplomatic entities, foundations and subsidiaries in that cluster/country. The role provides the management and leadership for financial process, control and compliance.

This role manages the end to end accounting process across the operation on behalf of the Regional Finance Director, including month and year end close, and ensures consistent, accurate and robust financial accounting processes and reporting in line with accounting practices and corporate policies, and local statutory, accounting and tax compliance regulations. This role supports the Country Directors and the subsidiaries' local Board of Directors in finance related functions and business matters. This is a key role in the new organisational structure emerging from the Financial Transparency recommendations.

The role will manage a team (size will vary by region) of finance managers and accountants which may be based in multiple locations.

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.

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 Accountabilities:

The post-holder will:

Financial Ledgers and Reporting

- Responsible for the accuracy and reliability of the country's accounting books (General Ledger, Fixed Assets Register, registers and schedules)
- Ensure that the country financial reporting statements reflect a true and accurate view of the companies and subsidiaries. This include the Trial Balance, Balance Sheet, Income & Expenditure statements or Profit & Loss Account, Cash flow.
- Manage the financial month end process, 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.
- Manage the financial year-end process in compliance with corporate and regional control procedures and deadlines. This role will also be required to co-ordinate closely with the Financial Planning & Analysis colleagues and Noida SSC to complete year-end preparations and journaling.
- Responsible for providing assurance that all accounting statements in subsidiaries

and companies are fully in line with local legal and fiscal regimes. Where local accounting practices differ from the BC reporting standards, the differences are escalated to the Regional FC to ensure the BC accounting and reporting standards stands in all cases and create mechanisms to enable off-system adjustments avoiding distortions or inconsistencies in corporate reporting

- Responsible for compliance reporting of financial statements for projects required by Funders &/or Sponsorship contracts

Accounting functions and processes

- Ensure that all General Ledger control accounts are reconciled, and house-keeping completed to maintain the integrity and reliability of the status of each account in compliance to corporate policies
- Review and approve all manual journals and off-system payments to ensure accuracy and compliance with relevant policies.
- Manage the creation of billing documents once the process has been initiated by the cluster/country operations
- Manage the aged debt internal control process and guide operations in aged debt recovery/treatment in compliance with the corporate aged debt policy
- Manage the Travel & Expenses internal control processes and guide travellers and claimants in submitting claims accurately and promptly in compliance with corporate and local travel policy
- Provide guidance and support to operations staff in reporting Income in kind
- Manage the Delegated Authorities in line with corporate policy and regional guidelines
- Provide directions to operations on technical accounting issues
- Provide advisory function in liaison with Regional Finance leadership and other specialist finance functions such as Tax, Treasury and Inter-company accounting as needed.
- Ensure that requests for new Master Data items (Chart of accounts, General Ledger accounts, Management report mapping, material groups, etc.) are compliant and maintain financial reporting integrity

Statutory accounting and local tax compliance

- Ensure compliance with local external accounting standards and tax requirements. This include managing local service providers such as accounting and tax accountants, submission of accurate and compliant local Tax and other statutory returns to local authorities in accordance with statutory deadlines.
- Prepare business status reports and working capital statements to the Board of Directors as required by the Board

Financial Risk and Compliance

- Take on the co-ordinator and lead role of Financial Control and Compliance Framework (FCCF) on behalf of the country director in compliance with the standards and assessment requirements in the policy
- Co-ordinate management responses and communication with the Country Director

and the Regional Risk and Compliance Director

Audit

- Take on the role of country lead for internal audit.
- Conduct internal audit of operations in the offices/branches in Chongqing, Nanjing, Shanghai and Guangzhou
- Co-ordinate preparations and organizing management responses to audit findings in consultation with the Regional Financial Risk and Compliance Director
- Country lead to ensure prompt response to support the National Audit Office (NAO) audit samples queries and to organize evidence to be submitted.
- Manage the external audit process of the subsidiary(ies) in accordance to local statutory requirements
- Manage the external audit process of projects required under Funders or Sponsorship contracts

Projects

- Support countries on corporate global finance change projects and programmes
- Support countries going through a Tax and Status change project including post-stabilization implementation phase
- Responsible for country management of:
 - Banking relationship
 - Capital assets additions, disposals and depreciation
 - Compliance with treasury policy
 - Financial risk management

Business Performance

- Support in developing critical business continuity response plan in line with country overall strategy

Team Leadership and Management

- Demonstrate effective leadership of the cluster / country 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:

- Country Directors & Cluster Leads

- Regional Finance Director
- Regional Finance Controller
- FP&A Leads
- Risk and Compliance Lead
- Shared Services Centre
- Corporate Finance
- Bank relationship manager
- Tax authorities

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 & Chinese ▪ 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. 		Shortlisting
Qualifications		
<i>Essential</i>	<i>Desirable</i>	<i>Assessment Stage</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Qualified accountant – ACCA or CICPA – with at least 3 years of experience post-qualification 		Shortlisting
Role Specific Knowledge & Experience		
<i>Essential</i>	<i>Desirable</i>	<i>Assessment Stage</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Minimum of 3 years of qualified 	Experience working with	Short listing

<p>experience in a relevant managerial post.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Experience of managing a diverse team or group of stakeholders in multiple locations. ▪ Experience of an ERP system. 	SAP	and/or Interview
British Council Core Skills		Assessment Stage
<p>Analysing Data and Problems Level 3: Analyses patterns – Seeks out and examines a range of information to identify patterns, trends and options, to solve multifaceted and complex problems.</p> <p>Communicating and Influencing Level 3: 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.</p> <p>Managing risks Level 2: Supports a risk management culture – Has track record of identifying and highlighting risks and suggesting mitigating actions.</p> <p>Planning and Organising Level 2: Plans ahead – Organises own work over weeks and months, or plans ahead for others, taking account of priorities and the impact on other people.</p> <p>Managing People Level 3: Manages a team – Provides full line management to a team where all members are working in a similar area of expertise or business. Scope includes planning, setting objectives, role modelling an inclusive culture, recruitment, development and performance management.</p> <p>Financial Reporting and Compliance Level 2: Ensure integrity, accuracy and completeness of financial statements and reports, and identify appropriate disclosures.</p> <p>Professional Accounting Standards Level 2: Manage and implement change to accounting and reporting requirements and promote compliance, in accordance with professional accounting standards.</p> <p>Transactional Accounting and Closing Level 2: Manage and validate month and year-end close processes and activities, ensuring action as necessary.</p> <p>Business Partnering Level 2: Partner with the business to provide sound advise based on transparent, meaningful and comprehensive management information to inform, influence and achieve positive business outcomes.</p> <p>Excellent leadership and communication skills</p>		Shortlisting AND Interview

