



Interim Chief Financial Officer



www.quantockedtrust.co.uk

A Message from Chrysta Garnett, CEO of Quantock Education Trust

Thank you for your interest in the role of Interim Chief Financial Officer at Quantock Education Trust (QET). This is an incredibly exciting time for our Trust as we continue to grow and evolve, and I am looking for a talented individual to join our executive leadership team to help shape the future of our organisation. This interim opportunity offers the chance to make a real impact from day one, with the potential to grow into a longer-term role as the Trust continues its ambitious development journey.

Quantock Education Trust is currently a small but ambitious Trust committed to championing the needs of all children in our school communities, with a clear focus on achievement and character. Close relationships, a focus on standards, and meaningful collaboration provide our member schools with a tangible sense of belonging, where mutual support and high expectations helps us to maintain a 'family' and 'one team' culture. QET was founded in 2019 and in just five years grew to be a Trust of eight schools. At QET we value and celebrate the diversity and distinctiveness of our schools, given the different age range from early years to sixth form; church and non-church status, which also includes state boarding provision.

As CEO, my priority is ensuring that our Trust remains unwavering in its commitment to delivering a high-quality educational experience for every child across our schools. The Interim CFO will play a vital role in supporting our vision by ensuring we operate with financial probity, sustainability and integrity.

We are looking for someone who can be more than just a financial expert; we need a team player who shares our passion for education and understands the importance of aligning financial strategies with the QET's mission and aims. You'll need to bring robust financial expertise, strategic thinking, and the ability to navigate the complexities of a growing multi-academy trust. Together with our colleagues in the executive team, we'll ensure the Quantock Education Trust continues to thrive and deliver outstanding outcomes as well as flourishing communities.

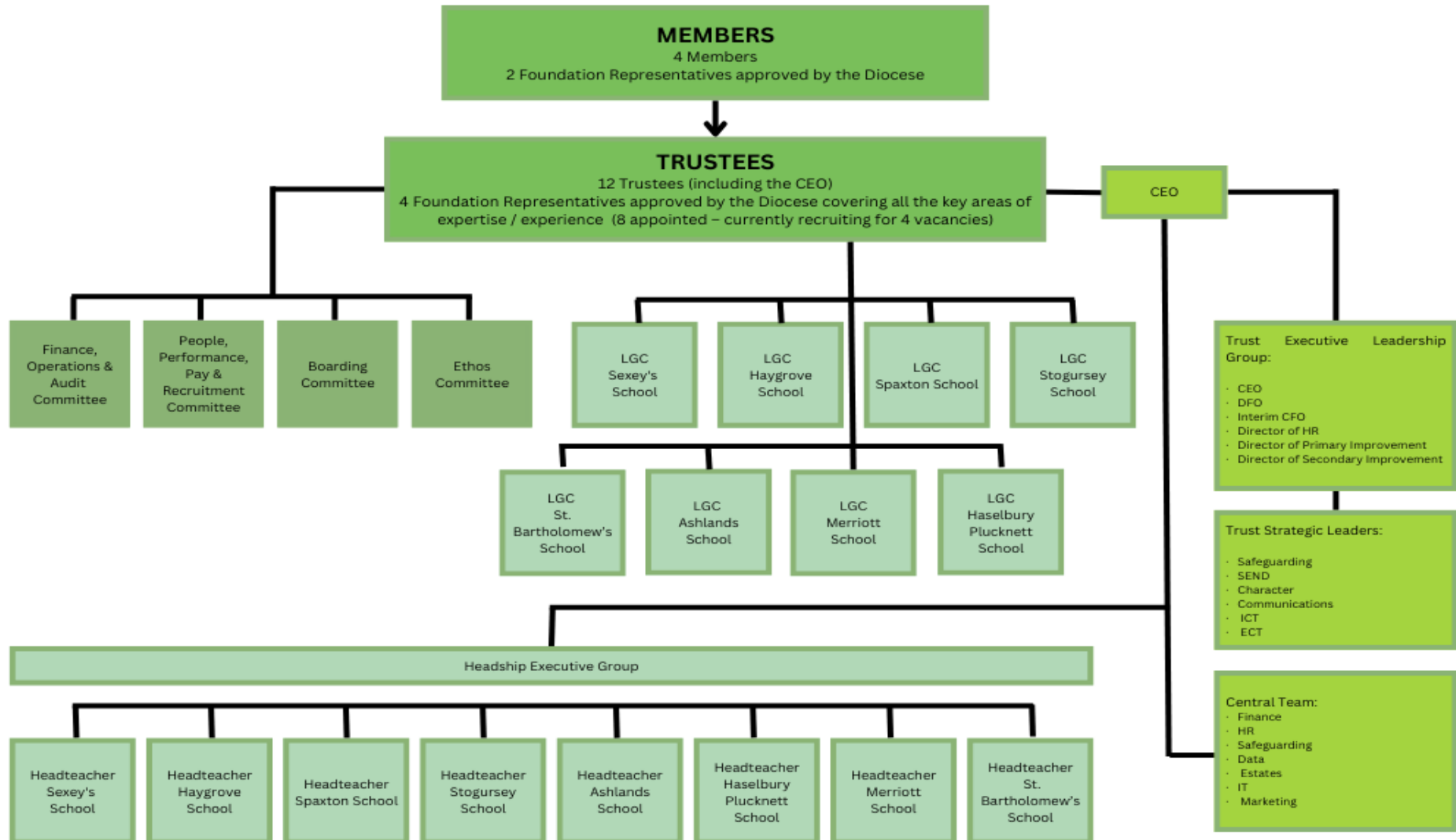
You'll have a strong eye for detail, an ability to balance the big picture with operational needs, and a mindset that embraces innovation and continuous improvement. Our Trust believes in system leadership, partnership and collaboration, and we are looking for an Interim CFO who can communicate complex financial matters clearly, build strong relationships with our schools and Trustees, and lead a high-performing finance team that shares these values.

This is a significant role, and we want to encourage applicants who aren't afraid to challenge, innovate, and lead with confidence. You'll work closely with myself, Trustees, Headteachers, Governors and other senior leaders to shape our strategy and deliver on our ambitions. The interim nature of the role does not lessen its importance—you will be a key voice at the leadership table from the outset. As we expand as a Trust, we will look to you to provide the financial insights and risk management expertise needed to ensure every decision is grounded in sustainability and impact and facilitates the educational experience our children deserve.

If you are excited by the prospect of making a tangible difference, working collaboratively with a passionate team, and bringing vision and financial stewardship to an ambitious and growing trust, I'd love to hear from you.

Warm regards,
Chrysta Garnett
CEO, Quantock Education Trust

Governance Leadership Structure





Interim Chief Financial Officer

Job Description

Job Title
Interim Chief Financial Officer
Location
QET Central Offices within Haygrove School, Bridgwater, TA6 7HW
Salary
£71,557 - £77,419 per annum
Hours
The post is full-time for 37 Hours per week, all year round
Contract type
Temporary for 12 months, in the first instance. Hybrid Remote with a minimum of 3 days per week on site in the QET Central Offices or in Trust Schools
Responsible to
Chief Executive Officer

Job Purpose
<p>The Interim Chief Finance Officer (CFO) is responsible for ensuring the financial health of the Quantock Education Trust (QET).</p> <p>The Interim CFO will develop and implement the financial strategy, planning, and analysis, ensuring effective management and control of financial resources, and fulfilling the statutory and regulatory duties regarding financial governance and accountability.</p> <p>The Interim CFO will work collaboratively with the QET senior leadership to deliver the QET's goals and objectives, maintaining transparency, integrity, and value for money.</p> <p>To support the CEO in their responsibilities as the Trust's Accounting Officer.</p>

Main responsibilities and duties
<p>Strategic Leadership and Financial Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead the development and delivery of the QET's financial strategy, aligned with its objectives and long-term plans as the trust expands. Provide high-level financial advice to the CEO, Trustees, and senior leadership team to ensure alignment between financial strategies and organisational priorities. Contribute to the overall strategy and direction of the QET by providing financial insights that enable effective resource allocation and risk management. Streamline and optimise financial operations and champion innovative processes that reduce unnecessary workload for staff. Participate in the development of key performance indicators (KPIs) for financial performance, ensuring a transparent and consistent approach to measuring success. Shape and enhance the Trust's financial structures, operating processes, and long-term financial strategy as we expand.

Financial Management

- Oversee the development and implementation of budgets, forecasting, and financial plans ensuring alignment with strategic priorities while maintaining financial sustainability.
- Monitor and report on financial performance, ensuring the timely preparation of management accounts, financial statements, and budget updates to support decision making at all levels.
- Develop the QET's central finance services, ensuring these are fit for purpose and provide a high-quality service to individual schools, helping the Trust achieve continuous improvement
- To work closely with Trustees, each local governing body, school leadership teams, Heads of School in particular, at each of the schools within the trust providing the necessary advice and support;
- Monitor and report on financial performance against budgets, making necessary adjustments to ensure the QET stays on track.
- Ensure the implementation of robust financial control systems, managing risks effectively, and safeguarding assets.
- Oversee the preparation of financial statements and annual accounts in compliance with regulatory requirements
- Ensure the QET's financial management complies with all relevant statutory, regulatory, and governance frameworks including the DfE Academies handbook, Education and Skills funding agency, Charities Commission and Companies House
- Lead and maintain strong relationships with auditors, ensuring the external and internal audit processes runs smoothly and that findings are addressed in a timely manner.
- Maintain the trust's accounts in line with the funding agreement and the Academy Trust Handbook
- Liaise with the Director of HR to monitor developments to legislation around payroll, pensions and benefits, implementing changes and adapting processes as required
- Develop and maintain financial policies, procedures, and controls to ensure the integrity and transparency of financial reporting.
- Work with the Chief Operating Officer (COO) to ensure effective procurement procedures in order to achieve financial efficiencies including tendering procedures.
- Work with the CEO and COO to develop, implement and monitor the trust's business plan (including strategy for growth and trust development), using effective financial and budget modelling and benchmarking to support strong decision-making
- Conduct financial due diligence on schools applying to join the trust, and report to the Trust board and other trust leaders with recommendations
- To support the chief executive in generating continual streams of new income through effective bid-writing, partnerships, joint ventures and business development including potential funding opportunities to allow expansion and/or development of existing buildings to maximise income generation;

Risk Management:

- Lead the QET's approach to financial risk management, identifying key financial risks and developing mitigation strategies.
- Ensure effective management of financial risks, including those related to investments, debt, and cash flow.
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Leadership and Team Management:

- Lead and develop a high-performing finance team, fostering a culture of continuous improvement, professional development, and collaboration.
- Ensure that the finance team has the appropriate skills, tools, and resources to deliver excellent financial support across the QET.
- Champion financial literacy and raise awareness of financial issues at all levels of the QET.
- Work with the COO and HR Director to support the effective delivery of payroll services for the trust

External Relations and Communication:

- Build and maintain effective relationships with external stakeholders, including government agencies, regulators, and funding bodies.
- Represent the QET's financial interests in negotiations and discussions with external partners, ensuring alignment with strategic objectives.
- Provide transparent and clear communication regarding the QET's financial status to stakeholders.

Performance Management and Improvement:

- Use financial data to inform decision-making and identify opportunities for cost efficiencies and revenue generation.
- Lead the drive for continuous improvement in financial processes, systems, and performance, aligning them with the evolving needs of the trust.
- Work collaboratively with all schools to improve effectiveness and service delivery through financial management practices.

Special notes of conditions

Employees will be expected to comply with any reasonable requests from a manager to undertake work of a similar level that is not specified in this job description.

To take responsibility for upholding and complying with the Trust's Equality and Diversity policies and for behaving in ways that are consistent with fair and equal treatment for all.

To comply with General Data Protection Regulations and maintain awareness of Trust policies and procedures in this area.

The post-holder must at all times carry out their responsibilities with due regard to Trust policy, organisation and arrangements for Health and Safety at work.

To participate in the performance and development review process, taking personal responsibility for identification of learning, development and training opportunities in discussion with line manager.

Uphold the principles of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and be aware that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

To undertake such duties as are reasonably expected by the Chief Executive Officer.

Review

This job description is current at the date shown, but, in consultation with you, may be changed to reflect or anticipate changes in the job commensurate with the grade and job title.



Interim Chief Financial Officer Person Specification

Key Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualified Accountant ((CIPFA, ACA, ACCA, CIMA, or equivalent) with significant experience in financial management at a senior level. • Leadership and Management qualification or equivalent level of experience 	
Knowledge, skills and experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proven track record of financial leadership • Strong understanding of financial regulations and statutory funding mechanisms • Extensive experience in financial planning and budgeting, with a focus on both strategic and operational financial management • Demonstrated ability to manage complex financial processes and deliver on financial targets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of working in a school or academy financial management role or equivalent • In depth knowledge of statutory requirements, procedures and regulatory requirements relating to academies including experience with the Academies Financial Handbook and ESFA reporting
Interpersonal and communication skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to promoting the ethos and values of the Trust and getting the best outcomes for all pupils • Commitment to acting with integrity, honesty, loyalty and fairness to safeguard the assets, financial probity and reputation of the Trust • Highly developed interpersonal skills • Ability to work independently and under own initiative when required • Excellent organisational, planning and prioritisation skills • Willingness to constructively analyse the work of self and others in order to refine and improve systems and procedures • Ability to meet deadlines and work well when under pressure without compromising accuracy • Positive, pro-active and solution focused • Openness to learning and change • High integrity and openness with a commitment to sound governance 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal effectiveness: operates with resilience and integrity 	
Personal Skills and Professional Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build strong working relationships with trustee, other senior managers and the QETs stakeholders based on mutual trust and a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities. • Clear analytical skills to allow the exploration, evaluation and interpretation of information and opinions and utilisation of management information systems. • Role model, energetic, determined, positive, robust and resilient leadership, able to inspire confidence and respect, and exemplify high standards of conduct and personal behaviour. • Support collective ownership of strategy, risks and delivery. • Balance conflicting pressures and needs, including short- and longer-term trade-offs. • Demonstrate strong commitment to innovation and performance improvement. • Comply with ethical standards⁷ and with the seven principles for the conduct of people in public life. Impartiality is a further fundamental requirement of those operating in the public services. 	
Additional requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be eligible to work in the UK • An Enhanced DBS check • 2 professional references • Driving licence and own transport 	

WORKING for The Quantock Education Trust (QET)

Conditions of Service

This post is subject to the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document. Full details of conditions of employment will be set out in a Statement of Main Terms and Conditions of Employment, which will be issued to the successful candidate on appointment.

Fitness for Employment

The successful candidate will be required to complete a medical questionnaire which may result in a check by the Occupational Health Physician. Satisfactory clearance with police records will also be necessary (please see Disclosure procedure).

Remuneration/working hours/annual leave

Teachers' pay, working hours and annual leave are all set within the national framework of the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document.

Flexibility

As a condition of employment, the post holder may be required to undertake such other duties as may reasonably be required, in addition to the major tasks outlined in the job description.

Smoking Policy

All sites within the QET is a non-smoking site and all prospective employees are expected to accept this as a condition of working within the Trust.

Equal Opportunities

The Trust is committed to the promotion of equal opportunities and is dedicated to pursuing non-discriminatory policies and practices and to eliminate unfair discrimination on any basis. This means that we are striving to ensure that no job applicant will receive less favourable treatment than another on grounds of gender, marital status, age, racial origin, disability, sexual orientation or political or religious beliefs.

Health and Safety

All employees have a responsibility to promote and maintain a safe and healthy working environment, by taking reasonable care of their own health and safety at work and the well-being of colleagues and students. Line managers have specific responsibility for the health and safety of the team for which they have general management responsibility.

Safeguarding and Criminal Record Check via the Disclosure Procedure

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 gives individuals the right not to disclose details of certain old offences when asked about their criminal record as they may be defined as 'spent'. There are exemptions to this if the individual is offered a post which involves contact with children or regular work at an establishment exclusively or mainly for children. The post you have applied for falls into one of these categories and, therefore, requires a criminal background check.

If a job offer is made you will be asked to apply for a Disclosure Certificate from the Criminal Records Bureau. This certificate will contain details of all convictions held on the Police National Computer including current and 'spent' convictions as well as details of any cautions, reprimands or final warnings. It will also indicate whether information is held on government department lists held by the Department for Education and Skills (List 99) and the Department of Health, or those individuals who are barred from working with children. The information provided on the certificate will be considered by the local authority to ensure that children remain adequately protected. A criminal record is not necessarily a bar to obtaining a position. Further information about Disclosure can be found at www.disclosure.gov.uk

Safe Recruitment

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

Professional Development

The Trust values professional development highly. All members of the Central Team are encouraged to take an active role in planning their own CPD through the school's performance management procedures.

Shortlisting

Only those candidates meeting the right criteria will be taken forward from application.

Interview

1. Those shortlisted will take part in an in-depth selection process which will include formal interviews and other relevant activities
2. Candidates will be asked to address any discrepancies, anomalies or gaps in their application form.

Reference Checking

References from the previous and current employer will be taken up for shortlisted candidates and where necessary, employers may be contacted to gather further information.

Online Searches

Shortlisted candidates may be subject to online searches.

Probation

All new staff will be subject to a probation period of six months (which may, in certain circumstances, be extended by up to 10 weeks). The probation period is a trial period, to enable the assessment of an employee's suitability for the job for which they have been employed. It provides the school with the opportunity to monitor and review the performance of new staff in relation to various areas, but also in terms of their commitment to safeguarding and relationships with students.

Working Within the Quantock Education Trust

This job needs to be considered in the context of a changing and evolving Multi Academy Trust and therefore the duties detailed here will need to be adjusted to meet the needs of the Trust. Whilst this post will be based in the Trust's Central Offices at Haygrove School, this is a Trust wide post and there will be a requirement for regular travel across the Trust Schools.



APPLICATION


To apply, please download an application from our website

<https://www.quantockedtrust.co.uk/vacancies>

Should you require further information or wish to discuss the role in more details, please contact the QET HR Department, details below

Completed application forms should be sent, together with a supporting letter, by email or post to:

 getrecruitment@quantockedtrust.co.uk

 HR Department
The Quantock Education Trust
Durleigh Road
Bridgwater
Somerset
TA6 7HW

Please ensure your application form has your email address and also the e-mail addresses of your referees.

Closing Date: noon on 19 May 2025
Interview date: week commencing 2 June 2025

