



Group Accountant Application Pack 2024

Please email your application to recruitment@methodistschools.org.uk

Deadline for applications **5pm Friday 3 May 2024**

Online interviews **10th and 13th May 2024**

Panel interviews **16th May 2024**



About MIST



The Methodist Church is engaged in education as part of its Christian mission in the world. Methodist Schools are inclusive and welcoming communities where individuals are valued, relationships cherished, and where excellence in its widest sense (academic, extra-curricular, lifestyle) is pursued. Methodist Schools aim to maintain high educational standards in all academic, cultural and sporting activities and provide excellent pastoral care, stimulating excitement in learning and the required discipline in study for all pupils so that, whatever their ability, they thrive and develop to their full potential.

Today, Methodist Independent Schools Trust (MIST) has oversight of ten independent schools. In addition, the Trust liaises with three associated Methodist independent schools and three affiliated schools and supports one of its own schools in their oversight of schools in Dubai and in West Cairo.

MIST encourages the implementation of the agreed Methodist Ethos Statement in its own workings and in each of its schools. The Trust is working on a new strategic plan to be launched in September 2024.

MIST does not act in educational isolation but is part of a wider Methodist Schools and Education network working with the Methodist Academies and Schools Trust (MAST), the Epworth Education Trust (EET) and The Inspiring Lives Education Trust (ILET). Methodist Education comes together in the Methodist Schools Committee to fulfil the Methodist Church's 'Transforming Lives' agenda.

The Trust has a turnover in the order of £100m and is constituted as an incorporated charity. Financial information is prepared and published on a consolidated basis. The head office is based in London and in addition to servicing the needs of the Trust itself, the office provides opportunities for the sharing of good practice and for schools to work more closely together.

MIST is supported by a group of dedicated Trustees who are drawn from various professions and offer the Trust considerable experience and commitment. MIST's primary guidance and reference document for Trustees, Governors and School Leaders is the Governance Manual.

The MIST Head Office team comprises 7 posts: CEO, Business Director, Group Accountant, Head of Governance and Compliance, Information and Communications Manager, Finance Manager, Pastoral Visitor (part time) and Administration Executive.



Overview

Job title	Group Accountant
Salary Range	£75,000 - £85,000 depending on experience
Line Manager	Business Director
Direct Reports	Finance Manager
Hours	Permanent; Full time; Partly remote (3 dpw in office)
Place of work	27 Tavistock Square, London
Post commences	Monday 17 June 2024 or ASAP thereafter

Role summary

As the most senior finance professional within the organisation, the Group Accountant has overall responsibility for the quality of the consolidated financial reporting, and for supporting the Business Director with managing financial risk, setting financial strategy, and ensuring that Trustees are appropriately informed of the financial position of the charity.

The Group Accountant is expected to coordinate the preparation of high quality consolidated financial reporting. He or she will set high standards for school finance teams, support them in their work, provide advice, develop constructive working relationships and facilitate the sharing of best practice.

MIST is proud of being one of the larger charities in the UK by turnover. Our ethos and values are at the heart of all that we do, and the Group Accountant is expected to reflect these in the quality and manner of his or her work.

Role description



Financial Management and Reporting

To advise on and lead by example in best accounting practice; responsibility for the quality and relevance of financial reporting across the group

To oversee preparation and consolidation of the annual budgets, management accounts and statutory accounts for the Group for presentation to the Trust and its Audit and Finance Committees

To prepare reports that describe and analyse key trends, group and school performance and that consider performance against group KPIs and sector benchmarks

To maintain the Group's iFinance (AIQ) Accounting software, improve and enhance functionality and reporting, and review and update Group procedures

Financial Strategy and Risk Management

To work with the Business Director to identify and to mitigate financial risks and opportunities for the Group

In conjunction with the fund managers, to monitor the performance of investments, and assess the health of the treasury functions at MIST and MAST in order to obtain the best returns at an appropriate level of risk – taking advice as required

Compliance and Control

To make financial reporting returns required by Companies House and the Charity Commission, and monitor group-wide schemes/levies and ad-hoc statutory reporting

To oversee and co-ordinate the internal audit function across the organisation and to maintain the financial control environment at the MIST Head Office

To ensure that all arrangements are in place to facilitate external audit which secures the financial integrity of the Trust and meets requirements for probity

To advise schools on VAT, tax and trading companies, and review and submit the quarterly VAT return (with outsourced support)

To ensure, with the Business Director, that all property transactions as may be authorised fulfil all due legal and other requirements on behalf of MSPC

Build and maintain key partnerships

To engage regularly with the finance teams in schools, facilitating their provision of high-quality school financial information for consolidation, advising on matters of principle, building the network of finance professionals and facilitating the sharing of good practice

To manage the audit relationship for the Group

To maintain a strong working relationship with MIST's bankers, reviewing their performance across the Group's accounts, identifying opportunities, monitoring covenants and ensuring timely reporting to the Bank in line with requirements

To oversee the finances of the Methodist Academies and Schools Trust (MAST); to provide appropriate financial and related information for MAST to the relevant bodies



Person Specification



This role requires a professional accountancy qualification and experience in the leadership of an organisation's finance function. Applicants must be able to set standards and offer support and challenge to colleagues across the organisation based on their own experience.



Education

Educated to degree level or equivalent

Professional accounting qualification

Knowledge and experience

Experience in leadership of financial management and control

Experience in the co-ordination, quality assurance and analysis of financial reporting

Experience and/or understanding of the requirements of an organisation structured as a group and as a charitable company

Experience in using accounting software to generate high quality, meaningful reporting

Experience of reporting to and advising senior leadership and Board/Committees

Personal qualities

A commitment to the ethos of MIST and a passion for the role

Collaborative working style, able to quickly form positive relationships with emotional intelligence and diplomacy

Able to balance numerous responsibilities and prioritise effectively

Intellectually strong and quick to learn



How to apply

All applicants must **complete the application form** available at MIST's website here: www.methodistschools.org.uk/vacancies

No CVs please.

Please use the relevant section in the form to explain why you are applying and describe how your skills and experience are relevant to the post, with reference to the information provided above in the job description and person specification.

Application forms must be emailed to recruitment@methodistschools.org.uk

You will receive an automated notification of receipt.

The deadline for applications is **5pm on Friday 3 May 2024**

Interviews will be held in two rounds:

- First round **online** interviews on **10th and 13th May 2024**
- Final round panel interviews on **16th May 2024** in London

MIST's Privacy Notice: <https://www.methodistschools.org.uk/main/privacy-policy>