

Role Title

Senior Accountant – Zambia and Zimbabwe

Role Information

Role Type	Pay Band	Location	Duration	Reports to:
Advisory, Policy and Expertise	PB7 – F	Southern Africa (Flexible Location)	Indefinite	Financial Controller – Southern Africa

Role purpose

This role is responsible for the end to end accounting process in Zambia and Zimbabwe, 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 supporting role in the Financial Controlling and Accounting process which is a key function in the new organisational structure emerging from the Financial Transparency recommendations.

The role will manage a team of accountants which may be 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.

In some countries/regions the Senior Accountant role will be at PB7 – F. This is determined by a number of factors including turnover, complexity of financial environment, risk profile, size of the Accounting function or number of countries managed by the role.

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 Zambia and Zimbabwe):

- Complete all financial tasks required for the financial month end process, being accountable to the 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 carrying out all accounting transactions and adjustments (accruals, deferrals and provisions), including Intercompany accounting, ensuring appropriate use of these in line with accounting rules.
- Assist with manual journals and off-system payments requests ensuring accuracy and compliance with relevant policies.
- Assist with reconciliation of all relevant accounts and ensure that this is completed to corporate standards.
- Ensure that local external accounting requirements are adhered to.
- Preparation of local Tax submissions and other statutory returns to Financial Controller for approval.
- Support in identifying issues and resolution in relation to financial accounting matters.
- Produce periodic reports relating to financial accounting for the operation as requested by

Financial Controller.

- Complete Travel & Expenses audits as per policy addressing issues in a promptly manner.
- Supports Financial Controller with the creation of billing documents once the process has been initiated by the countries operations.
- Support the process of Income in kind submissions including maintenance of supporting documentation.
- Responsible for provision of information to internal / external auditors.
- Assist in the implementation of audit recommendations.
- Responsible for ensuring integrity of cash collection process.
- Responsible for ensuring integrity of customers refund process.
- Ensure compliance with treasury policy.
- Manage fixed assets registrar (FAR) and reconciliation.

Regional and Functional Team Working:

- Ensure Performance Management process in undertaken to meet corporate requirements.
- 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:

Internal

- *Regional Financial Accounting team*
- *Regional FP&A team*
- *Regional Risk and Compliance team*
- *Regional Commercial Finance Team*
- *Shared Services Centre*
- *Corporate Finance*
- *Country admin team*
- *Country Customer Services team*

External

- *Bank relationship manager*
- *Tax authorities*

Role Requirements:

Threshold requirements:		Assessment stage
Passport requirements/ Right to work in country	<i>Right to live and work in any of the following countries: Zambia, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Namibia, Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique or Mauritius</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>
Fluency in written and spoken English <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 and interview
Qualifications		
<i>Minimum / essential</i>	<i>Desirable</i>	<i>Assessment Stage</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualified accountant 		Shortlisting
Role Specific Knowledge & Experience		
<i>Minimum / essential</i>	<i>Desirable</i>	<i>Assessment Stage</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highly organised and deadline oriented. High level of accuracy and attention to detail. Minimum of 2 years' experience in a similar accounting role. Experience in working with a diverse team. Experience of an ERP system. 	Experience working with SAP	Shortlisting and/or Interview
British Council Core Skills		<i>Assessment Stage</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysing Data and Problems (Level 2): Uses data – Reviews available data and identifies cause and effect, and then chooses the best solution from a range of known alternatives. 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. Managing risks (Level 2): Supports a risk management culture – Has track record of identifying and highlighting risks and suggesting mitigating actions. 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. 		Shortlisting AND Interview

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Managing People (Level 2): Supervises a small team – Supervises a small team of people doing similar jobs to deliver short term tasks to agreed quality and time standards. ▪ Financial Reporting and Compliance (Level 1): Use accounting and analysis skills to interrogate data and financial reports to support the business in taking appropriate action. ▪ Professional Accounting Standards (Level 2): Use analysis skills to analyse and interrogate data, ensuring accuracy and validity of recorded financial transactions and related reports. ▪ Transactional Accounting and Closing (Level 1): Understand month and year-end close activities and provide accurate and timely financial submissions. ▪ Business Partnering (Level 1): Engage with others to understand needs and support the business by providing relevant, accurate and consistent financial information on a timely basis. 	
British Council Behaviours	Assessment Stage
<p>Being Accountable (MORE DEMANDING): Putting the needs of the team or British Council ahead of my own.</p> <p>Connecting with Others (ESSENTIAL): Making regular opportunities to understand others better.</p> <p>Making it Happen (MORE DEMANDING): Challenging myself and others to deliver and measure better results.</p> <p>Working Together (MORE DEMANDING): Ensuring that others benefit as well as me.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Creating Shared Purpose (MORE DEMANDING): Creating energy and clarity so that people want to work purposely together.</p> <p>Shaping the Future (ESSENTIAL): Looking for ways in which we can do things better.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Interview</p> <p style="text-align: center;">-----</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Required for the role but not assessed during the application stage</p>
Prepared by:	Date:
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