FE ASSOCIATES

RECRUITMENT PACK · INTERIM LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT

Salaried
Finance Consultant

Bring your FE finance leadership to colleges that need it most – **employed by us, placed with them,** and backed by a team that supports you to thrive.

CONTRACT

Permanent, salaried employment with FE Associates

LOCATION

Client colleges across England – typically on site, with four nights away from home in a working week

CLOSING DATE

Rolling applications – no fixed closing date

A MESSAGE FROM OUR MANAGING DIRECTOR

Dear **Colleague**

"Our people are what make us different."

Matt Atkinson
Managing Director, FE Associates

Thank you for your interest in joining FE Associates as a Salaried Finance Consultant.

Since 2004 we have served the further education sector with specialist support and expert insight, and the breadth of our services makes us unique in our field. The sector has changed hugely in that time, and the demands placed on providers have grown ever more challenging and complex. We have kept pace with that change, and we continue to evolve our services to meet the needs of the colleges and providers we work with.

Our interim service is the backbone of our business – and it is where we are genuinely different. Rather than solely relying on a list of associates, we employ a team of salaried consultants and place them in client organisations to do important work: covering vacancies, adding capacity at critical moments, or leading strategic projects.

We are now growing our team of experienced finance consultants. You will have worked in an FE college as a Head of Finance or Director of Finance, you will be a member of a Consultative Committee of Accountancy Bodies (CCAB) professional body, and you will relish the variety and impact that interim work brings.

In return you will receive a competitive salary, a bonus linked to your days in placement, a company pension, and all your travel, accommodation and evening meal costs covered while you are away from home. Just as importantly, you will have the personal support of our central leadership team, so you have everything you need to succeed in every placement.

The success of our business is founded on our networks, relationships and team. If you feel this could be the right next step for you, we would love to hear from you – Judith Richardson, our Director of Operations, would be delighted to have an initial conversation.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Matt Atkinson
Managing Director

ABOUT FE ASSOCIATES

We're all about **people**

FE Associates is a **sector insider**, not an outside consultancy. We are led and staffed by former college principals, HR directors, governors and inspectors.

We provide consultancy, quality improvement, interim management and recruitment for the further education and skills sector. Whether we are placing, recruiting, developing, advising or training, our network of sector experts shares one commitment: helping sector leaders drive positive change.

2004
Trusted by the FE and skills sector for over 20 years

80
Executive leadership appointments completed in 2025

4,777
Days of interim support delivered in 2025

3,000+
Sector leaders have completed an FEA development programme since 2018

WHAT WE DO

Interim Leadership & Management
Salaried consultants placed in colleges to cover vacancies, add capacity and lead change. This is where you'll sit.

FE Leadership Search & Recruitment
Executive search for principals, CEOs and senior post holders.

HE Search & Recruitment
Senior appointments in higher education through UL Associates.

Quality Improvement
Practical, hands-on support to raise standards and outcomes.

Leadership Development
Bespoke programmes built around each college's culture and priorities.

Strategic Consultancy
Sector-informed advice on strategy, structures and projects.

External Board Reviews
Robust, evidence-based governance reviews with Sixth Form Associates.

Senior Salary Benchmarking
Defensible pay advice for boards and remuneration committees.

Project Management
Experienced hands to deliver complex, time-critical change.

Why salaried?

Most interim providers work through associates. We employ ours. That means you get the security of a salary and benefits, our clients get consultants who know and live our standards, and everyone gets the backing of a central team that is invested in your success – not just the next booking.

THE OPPORTUNITY

Interim finance leadership, **where it counts**

As one of our Finance Consultants, you will step into colleges as their **interim finance leader** – often at a moment of vacancy, scrutiny or change.

One placement might see you as Director of Finance, steadying the ship through a difficult audit; the next as Financial Controller, rebuilding reconciliations and reporting. Each assignment is shaped around the host college's needs.

Placements are usually on site, anywhere in England, so you will need the flexibility to stay away from home for around four nights each week.

WHAT YOU'LL RECEIVE

- **Competitive annual salary**
  Permanent, salaried employment – the security of a role, with the variety of interim work.
- **Annual bonus**
  Linked to the number of days you spend in placement.
- **Company pension**
  Access to our company pension scheme.
- **Accommodation covered**
  A company credit card for accommodation while you are away from home.
- **Nightly meal allowance**
  An allowance for your evening meal on every night away.
- **Fuel card**
  Covering the cost of travelling to and from your placement.

You're not alone

Every consultant has the personal support of our central leadership team. We brief you before each placement, stay in touch throughout and are on hand when things get difficult – so you can focus on doing great work for the college.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Finance **Consultant**

You will act as Interim Leader/Manager for Finance at the host college. Every placement is different: the college specifies the exact requirements, and your duties will reflect the level of the role. What follows is an outline, not an exhaustive list.

Typical levels: Vice Principal · Director of Finance · Financial Controller · Head of Finance

ROLE PURPOSE

To work to the financial, operational and organisational priorities of the host college, in the area agreed at the outset of each assignment.

EXAMPLE

Financial Controller / Head of Finance

- Advising senior and line managers so they can make informed decisions about their budgets
- Ensuring fundamental financial reconciliations are completed accurately and on time
- Producing monthly budgetary control statements and management information for budget holders
- Preparing annual budgets, monthly management accounts and year-end accounts and returns
- Monitoring departmental spend and viability in close liaison with budget holders
- Monitoring contracts with external agencies to secure income and viability
- Compiling annual accounts, VAT returns and other statutory returns
- Reconciling payroll control accounts monthly
- Undertaking project work as directed by the host college
- Line managing a team of finance staff

EXAMPLE

Director of Finance

- Acting as lead executive for the Finance and Resources Committee, and attending Corporation meetings and governor training
- Leading strategic financial planning, budget setting and the college's short, medium and long-term financial plans
- Managing cash flow, treasury and lending arrangements, including bank covenants and relationships with bankers and auditors
- Leading financial governance, risk management and audit, with robust systems that satisfy external bodies
- Leading production of the annual statutory accounts in line with accounting and reporting standards
- Managing funding contracts and ensuring accurate, timely returns to the Department for Education (DfE), the Office for Students (OfS) and other funders
- Overseeing procurement, contract compliance and commercial strategy
- Line managing finance, corporate services, commercial and data teams, including appraisals
- Acting as Data Protection and Freedom of Information Officer where required

PERSON SPECIFICATION

What we look for in our **Finance Consultants**

YOUR BACKGROUND

Direct experience as a Head of Finance or Director of Finance in an FE college

YOUR QUALIFICATION

A professional accountancy qualification and membership of a CCAB body

YOUR FLEXIBILITY

Able to work on site anywhere in England, staying away from home around four nights a week

01 Qualifications

- Qualifications at an appropriate level
- Professional accountancy qualification
- Managerial and/or professional qualifications
- Evidence of commitment to ongoing professional development

02 Experience

- Leading and managing a finance function in organisations of a similar size to our clients
- A track record of good financial outcomes in challenging circumstances
- Turnaround, change and business improvement
- Leading staff teams to deliver high standards
- Experience at an appropriate leadership or management level in a relevant environment

03 Skills

- Devising and implementing financial improvement plans and strategies
- Leading people in challenging circumstances
- Identifying solutions to problems and implementing them quickly
- Leading with sensitivity to political and organisational context
- Working on your own initiative while meeting organisational priorities
- Adapting your style and approach to each setting
- A skilled leader of people, with students' interests at heart

04 Qualities

- Commercially astute, with a focus on improving performance
- Empathetic – you relate easily to a client's challenges
- Self-motivated, without needing close supervision
- Emotionally intelligent and intuitive
- Adaptable and flexible in approach
- Able to build relationships quickly
- Professionally credible and convincing

HOW TO APPLY

Start with a **conversation**

We encourage everyone to talk to us before applying. It's a chance to ask about the kind of placements we offer, how the role fits around your life, and what working for FEA is really like.

01

Talk to Judith Richardson

An informal, confidential call about the role and your experience.

02

Send your application

Email your CV, covering letter and referee details.

03

Meet the team

Shortlisted candidates are invited to interview with our leadership team.

04

Your first placement

We'll brief you fully and support you into your first college.

Your application should include

- **An up-to-date CV**, including your contact details
- **A covering letter** (up to two sides of A4) explaining your motivation and responding to the experience and skills in the person specification – please don't repeat your CV
- **Two referees**, ideally your current employer, with telephone numbers and email addresses. We will always contact you before taking up references

FEA
FE ASSOCIATES

We look forward to **hearing from you**

ROLLING APPLICATIONS · NO FIXED CLOSING DATE

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