

Accountant, Central and Research Accounting Finance Division

Closing date: 31st October 2024
Job Reference: AG43154



Accountant, Central and Research Accounting

Salary:

£33,966– £44,263

Contract:

Fixed term—3 Years

Location:

West Cambridge

Department:

Central and Research
Accounting

Responsible to:

Senior Accountant—CRA

Working pattern:

Full-time

Role Overview

It is the responsibility of the Finance Division to manage the financial resources of the University. The Division is also responsible for maintaining the integrity of the accounting records, establishing best practice and for producing both statutory accounts and management information to assist in decision making at all levels in the institution.

The role holder is a member of the Central and Research Accounting Section (10 staff including the role holder), which is part of the Finance Division and carries out a variety of accounting and financial management tasks, whilst ensuring best-practice of processes and procedures are adhered to in order to support the production of the University's published statutory Financial Statements and management accounts.

The Central and Research Accounting Section has overall responsibility for the accounting operation of the University's General Ledger (GL) and central processing of UFS GL transactions, for the operation of the University's Fixed Assets, Inventory and General Ledger accounting modules. The section also has the accounting responsibility for the finances of several 100% owned University subsidiaries.

The role holder will prepare monthly management information and support the preparation the University's annual statutory financial statements and returns. Focusing in on the reporting of the Property, Plant and Equipment, Inventory and specific General Ledger balances, University Research income, Research Balance Sheet reconciliations, Fee reporting and collection.

The role holder has responsibility for the preparation and analysis of key financial information for accountability to its funding organisations such as the Office for Students and research sponsors, including Charity Support Funding. Also leads the section on subsidiary transaction processing making sure that invoices are processed and paid on time, making sure that the appropriate invoices are recharged to the University in a timely manner.

The role holder will have contact and collaborate with Finance Division Colleagues, Colleges, Research Office, CUDAR, School offices, Departments, Internal and External Auditors and be required to develop and maintain strong and effective working relationships and processes to ensure processes, reports, policies, systems developments and future planning are appropriately managed.'

The Central and Research Accounting Section consists of 10 members of staff of various grades.



Accountant, Central and Research Accounting

Purpose of the role

The role holder is responsible for maintaining the accounting records of Research activity, General Ledger, Fixed Assets Modules and Helpdesk within the University and provision of an effective and efficient accounting service.

The role holder prepares the monthly research related management accounts and the reconciliation of the UFS fixed asset modules to the General Ledger, maintains the integrity of the accounting records and analyses and explains key variances on a monthly basis. The management accounts (monthly, ad hoc) are the prime means by which the Finance Committee and senior officers monitor and control the financial performance of the University and ensure that it remains on financial track.

The role holder will have a responsibility of all the areas of the Central and Research Accounting Section (Grants, Fees, , Fixed Assets, Inventory and General Ledger including Balance Sheet and Statement of Comprehensive Income Transactions).

The role holder will also contribute in improvement of procedures, particularly concerning the maintenance of accounting records and production and development of effective management and financial information and reconciliations.

The role holder has responsibility for ensuring accounting processes and procedures are maintained within the Section and documented and is responsible for supervising of five direct line reports.



Accountant, Central and Research Accounting

Key responsibilities

- **Financial Accounts**

- Provide the Reporting section of the Finance Division with detailed financial accounts and information for inclusion in the University's Financial Statements, various University reports, and statutory and mandatory returns. Prepare essential supporting lead schedules for the Financial Statements, responsibility for the accuracy and completeness.
- Prepare Financial Management Information (FMI) for publication in the Reporter, responsibility that data is both accurate and presented in a manner that facilitates informed decision-making. Able to provide commentary to the users of variances.
- Responsibility that all financial reporting adheres to relevant regulatory standards and guidelines, maintaining compliance with local and international financial reporting standards. Using the knowledge of professional qualification to explain differences of opinion.
- Conduct detailed variance analysis on financial accounts to identify discrepancies and provide corrective actions. Prepare financial reports for grants and funding received, responsibility for accurate tracking and reporting of funds usage.

- **Analysis and interpretation**

- Prepare schedules for monthly University-level management accounts, with a particular focus on Fixed Assets, Inventory, and other General Ledger accounts.
- Review, interpret, and analyse financial data, providing insights and actionable recommendations to senior management and colleagues across the University.
- Perform analysis to compare the University's performance against peer institutions and industry standards.
- Perform scenario analysis to evaluate the financial impact of areas such as Fixed Assets, Grants, Fees.

- **Accounting & Reconciliation**

- Responsibility of the accuracy and substantiation of all balance sheet codes related to the role, maintaining validity of balances through thorough reconciliation and analysis. Delivering these on a monthly basis.
- Reconcile and resolve any unreconciled balances promptly. Providing technical and accounting solutions to deliver an accurate schedule and responsibility of the integrity of financial records.
- Maintain the integrity of control accounts, responsible for making them accurate and reflect financial transactions and balances.
- Reconcile between sub-ledgers and the general ledger, identifying and resolving discrepancies.
- Reconcile intercompany transactions, proper documentation to eliminate intercompany balances in consolidated financial statements.
- Responsibility to review and approve journal entries signing off accuracy and compliance with accounting policies and procedures.
- Allocate expenses to appropriate accounts and cost centres,
- Manage the process of accounting for accruals and provisions, ensuring they are accurately reflected in the financial statements.

- **Year End Audit**

- Prepare comprehensive information for external auditors and respond promptly to audit queries, ensuring a smooth and efficient audit process.
- Contribute to financial year-end procedures advising and instructing team members in various university departments and sections on audit requirements. Being a lead member of the University wide communication of the year end processes.
- Responsible for all financial activities comply with audit requirements and standards, mitigating risks of non-compliance.
- Responsible for all financial transactions have a clear and accurate audit trail, facilitating efficient audit processes.

Accountant, Central and Research Accounting

Key responsibilities continued

- **Systems development & support**

- Responsible for the operation of the General Ledger, Fixed Assets, Inventory, and Grants modules, ensuring they meet the University's operational needs. The helpdesk is accessed by all University users of the Finance System.
 - Manage the functional helpdesk, providing expert support and troubleshooting to ensure high-quality, responsive service.
 - Manage the University fees process, responsible for the timely and accurate processing aligned with organizational objectives.
 - Identify opportunities for system enhancements and work with IT teams to implement improvements that support financial operations.
- Develop and implement automated reporting solutions to streamline financial reporting processes and reduce manual effort.

- **Best Practice**

- Disseminate best practices and provide expert advice on technical accounting queries, promoting a culture of excellence and continuous improvement.
 - Identify and implement areas for improvement in processes, procedures, and the use of UFS and the chart of accounts within Central and Research Accounting and the wider University.
 - Address and resolve issues and queries from colleagues in the Finance Division and the wider University, with the key objectives of efficient and effective financial operations.
 - Maintain an excellent working knowledge of the UFS chart of accounts, transaction posting across all UFS modules, and the current range of reporting tools, staying updated with industry best practices and technological advancements.
 - Lead continuous improvement initiatives to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of financial processes.
 - Share knowledge to disseminate best practices and innovative solutions across the finance team.
- Provide technical guidance on complex accounting issues, ensuring compliance with current accounting standards and practices.

- **Section support**

- Provide cover for other areas of work within Central and Research Accounting, ensuring continuity and consistency in financial operations.
- Collaborate with team members to ensure a cohesive approach to financial management, sharing knowledge and best practices to enhance overall performance.
- Foster strong relationships with stakeholders across the University, facilitating effective communication and cooperation.
- Develop and implement contingency plans to ensure financial operations continue smoothly during unexpected events or crises.

Person specification

	Essential	Desirable
Experience		
• Substantial experience of working in a finance function for a large and complex organisation.	✓	
• Substantial experience of preparing complex accounts and financial and management reporting to a range of senior management	✓	
• Extensive experience of using computerised accounting systems, reporting tools to analyse and report upon large complex data sets.	✓	
• Experience in overseeing financial operations, ensuring compliance with internal and external financial regulations.	✓	
• Experience in preparing for and responding to internal and external audits, ensuring adherence to compliance standards and regulations.	✓	
• Experience in presenting financial information to a range of stakeholders, including board members, senior executives, and external auditors.		✓
Skills		
• CUFS Mastery: Attain and sustain an advanced understanding of the Cambridge University Financial System (CUFS), mastering transaction processing, data extraction, and reporting functionalities.	✓	
• Financial Regulation Compliance: Proficient in interpreting and applying complex financial regulations, ensuring all financial activities comply with legal and institutional standards.	✓	
• Advanced Data Analysis: Expertise in leveraging advanced reporting tools and techniques to analyse large, complex data sets and derive meaningful insights.	✓	
• Technical Proficiency in Accounting Standards: Capable of conducting in-depth research on and applying contemporary accounting standards and practices.	✓	
• Excel Proficiency: Advanced skills in Microsoft Excel, including complex formulae, pivot tables, and data visualization tools to support robust financial analysis.	✓	
• Leadership and Team Management: Proven experience in managing and leading financial teams, fostering a collaborative and high-performing work environment.	✓	
• Effective Communication: Excellent communication skills, both written and verbal, with the ability to clearly convey complex financial concepts to non-financial stakeholders.	✓	

Person specification continued

Essential Desirable

Skills Continued

- Report Writing: Ability to draft comprehensive and precise financial reports, tailored to meet the needs of various audiences, from technical staff to senior management. ✓
- Financial Systems Training: Formal training in financial systems and reporting tools, enhancing the ability to adapt to evolving technological advancements in finance. ✓
- Continuous Improvement: Commitment to continuous professional development and improvement of financial processes and systems, staying abreast of industry best practices and emerging trends. ✓

Qualifications

- Educated to degree level or equivalent. ✓
- Qualified accountant, or qualified by experience ✓

Additional Requirements

- Able to manage and prioritise heavy workloads and meet tight deadlines. ✓
- Able to keep knowledge of systems and accounting requirements up to date. ✓

Behavioural Attributes

This section summarises the behavioural attributes (or competencies) that we expect the role holder to be able to demonstrate, at what level and whether this is an essential or desirable requirement. Full definitions are at: [Behavioural Attributes | Human Resources \(cam.ac.uk\)](http://www.cam.ac.uk/human-resources/behavioural-attributes)

Please review these and provide specific examples in your application of how you have demonstrated these attributes in your work, education or other experience. It will assist your application if you explain the situation, what you did and what the outcomes were.

Attribute	Level
Valuing Diversity	A
Achieving Results	B
Communication	C
Innovation and Change	C
Negotiating and Influencing	C
People Development	C
Relationship Building	B
Strategic Focus	C

Professional Services Values

Developed by professional services staff, our values underpin everything we do. By living the values in the work we do, we hope to foster an environment where staff feel empowered. The values encourage staff to; work together and share skills to create a sense of community, act with integrity, take an inclusive and fair approach and develop honest and open relationships that are underpinned by our shared values. We encourage applicants to consider these values within their application.



The Finance Division



It is the responsibility of the Finance Division to manage the financial resources of the University.

The Finance Division promotes good practice in Accounting, Reporting, Planning, Procurement, Taxation, Insurance and Pensions and is also responsible for maintaining the integrity of the accounting records, facilitating financial transactions, establishing best practice and for producing both the statutory accounts and management information to assist in decision making at all levels of the institution.

Our staff promote the effective use of Cambridge's financial resources by providing professional advice across the University and Group entities when appropriate. We supply financial information to the Council and other bodies to enable them to make informed decisions.

We also ensure Cambridge's financial compliance with the Office for Students (OfS), UKRI, HMRC and other funding and regulatory bodies, in addition to preparing the University's annual statutory financial statements.

The Finance Division has 240 staff spread across three main sites in Cambridge. This role, in the Central Accounting and Research team is based in Greenwich House, Madingley Road. The University is supportive of hybrid working, where some work is undertaken on University premises and some in a remote working environment. The aim of our approach is to enable as many staff as possible to work in a hybrid way if they wish and where their role allows. This arrangement is subject to change and will not form a part of the contractual terms of the role.

Terms of appointment

Tenure and probation

Appointment will be made on a fixed-term basis of 3 years. Appointments will be subject to satisfactory completion of a probationary period which will be set dependant on the length of tenure.

Hours of Work and Working Pattern

The hours of work for the position are full-time, working Monday – Friday. We welcome applications from individuals who wish to be considered for flexible working arrangements.

Pension

You will automatically be enrolled to become a member of USS (Universities Superannuation Scheme) – a defined benefits pension scheme. For further information please visit:
www.pensions.admin.cam.ac.uk

Annual leave

Full time employees are entitled to annual paid leave of 41 days inclusive of public holidays. For new part-time employees, annual leave will be pro rata'd based on days worked.

General information

Pre-employment checks

Right to work in the UK

We have a legal responsibility to ensure that you have the right to work in the UK before you can start working for us. If you do not have the right to work in the

UK already, any offer of employment we make to you will be conditional upon you gaining it.

Health declaration

Once an offer of employment has been made the successful candidate will be required to complete a work health declaration form.

Qualifications

The person specification for this position lists qualifications that are essential and/or desirable. Please note that if you are offered the post you will be asked to provide your relevant original certificates of these qualifications.

References - offers of appointment will be subject to the receipt of satisfactory references.

Screening Checks:

This role requires a basic disclosure (DBS) check and a Agenda security check. Any offer of employment we make to you will be conditional upon the satisfactory completion of these checks. Whether an outcome is satisfactory will be determined by the University.

Information if you have a disability

The University welcomes applications from individuals with disabilities. We are committed to ensuring fair treatment throughout the

recruitment process. We will make adjustments to enable applicants to compete to the best of their ability wherever it is reasonable to do so and, if successful, to assist them during their employment. Information for disabled applicants is available at <http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/staff/disabled/>

We encourage you to declare any disability that you may have, and any reasonable adjustments that you may require, in the section provided for this purpose in the application form. This will enable us to accommodate your needs throughout the process as required. However, applicants and employees may declare a disability at any time.

If you prefer to discuss any special arrangements connected with a disability, please contact, the Department Administrator, who is responsible for recruitment to this position.

The University

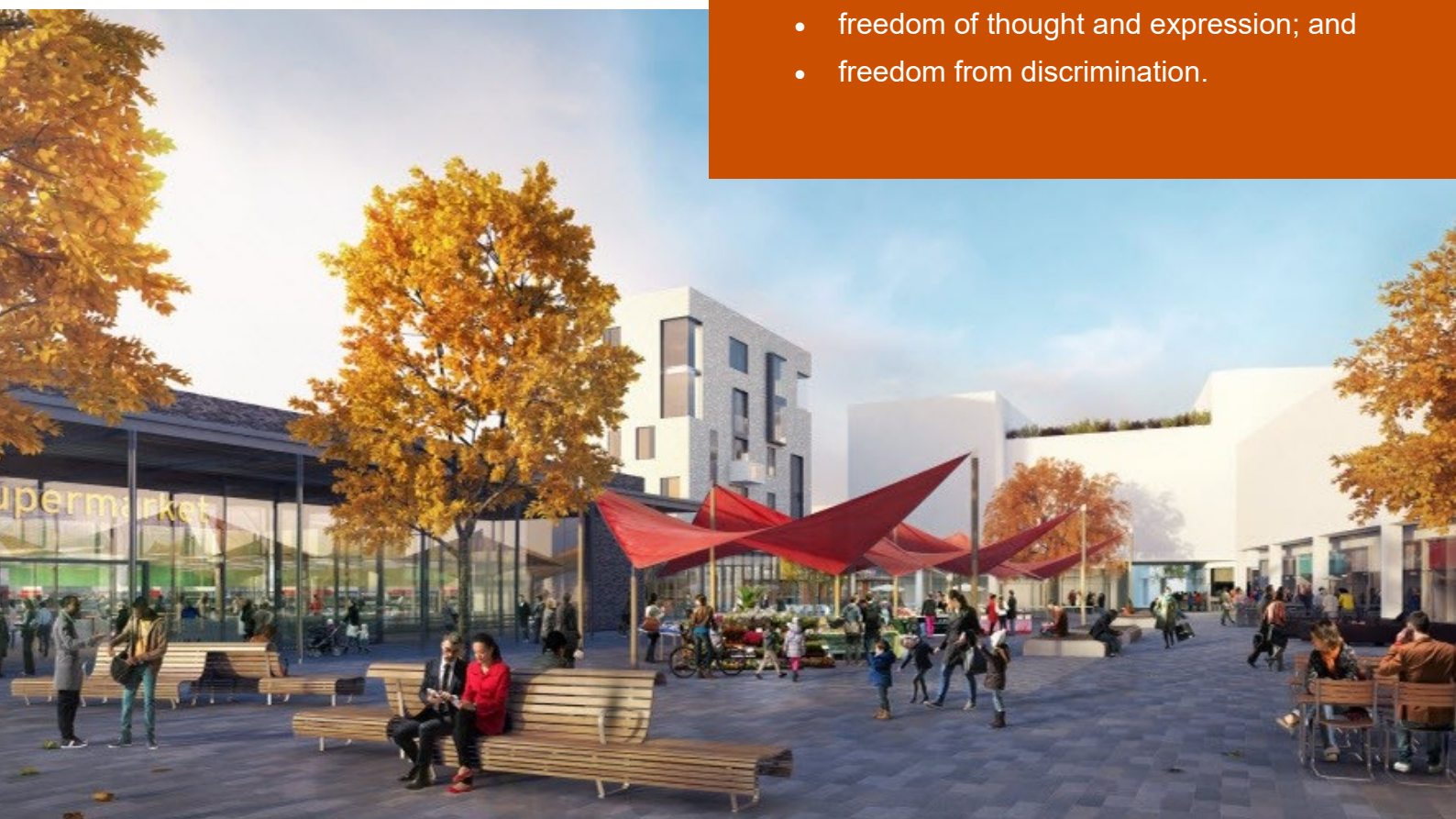
The University of Cambridge is one of the world's oldest and most successful universities. We are a renowned centre for research, education, and scholarship that makes a significant contribution to society. The University is consistently ranked amongst the top universities in the world. Our affiliates have won more Nobel Prizes than any other University.

Our sustained pursuit of academic excellence is built on a long history of world-leading teaching and research within a distinctive collegiate system. For eight centuries our ideas and innovations have shaped the world. Our principal goal is to remain one of the world's leading universities in an increasingly competitive global higher education sector. Today the University of Cambridge is at the centre of a cluster of over 4,300 businesses employing 58,000 people.

Our capital investment projects include academic and commercial growth at both the West Cambridge Innovation District, and the Biomedical Campus in the south of the city. Eddington, in North West Cambridge, is a mixed-use development including key worker housing for staff, a community centre and a new primary school, managed by the University. Through these projects, the University is deeply embedded in, and committed to serving, our local community. These are all conspicuous signs of a University that is not only adapting to new needs, but also anticipating the future.

Our mission is to contribute to society through the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence. Our core values are:

- freedom of thought and expression; and
- freedom from discrimination.



About us

The University is one of the world's leading academic centres. It comprises 150 faculties and departments, together with a central administration and other institutions. Our institutions, museums and collections are a world-class resource for researchers, students and members of the public representing one of the country's highest concentrations of internationally important collections.

The University has an annual income of £2 billion. Research income, won competitively from the UK Research Councils, the European Union (EU), major charities and industry, exceeds £500 million per annum and continues to grow.

The Colleges and the University remain committed to admitting the best students regardless of their background and to investing considerable resources both in widening access and financial support. The 31 Colleges are self-governing, separate legal entities which appoint their own staff. Many academic staff are invited to join a College as a Teaching Fellow, which provides a further social and intellectual dimension. The Colleges admit undergraduate students, provide student accommodation and pastoral support and deliver small group teaching for undergraduates.

The University awards degrees and its faculties and departments provide lectures and seminars for students and determine the syllabi for teaching.

Our instinct for seeking out excellence and setting up enduring and mutually beneficial collaborations has led us to establish strategic partnerships across the globe. Whether it is the successful Cambridge-Africa Programme involving universities in Ghana, Uganda and elsewhere on the African continent; or the close association with the government of India to pursue new research in crop science; or the creation, with Germany's Max Planck Institutes, of a Cambridge-based centre for the study of ethics, human economy and social change – international partnerships are now an inextricable part of the University's make-up.

“Cambridge graduates and researchers have made – and continue to make – a colossal contribution to human knowledge and the understanding of the world around us. Their work touches on the lives and livelihoods of everyone from patients diagnosed with life-threatening diseases, to residents of areas critically affected by climate change, to children growing up in conflict zones. It has a lasting impact on our society, our economy and our culture: the world is truly a better place thanks to their efforts.”

Stephen Toope, Vice Chancellor 2019



Working at the University

Working at Cambridge you will join a diverse, talented and innovative community, with more than 23,000 students and over 16,000 staff from all walks of life and corners of the world.

The University continually explores strategies to attract and retain the best people. It is committed to supporting its staff to achieve their best. We are a fair, diverse and inclusive society and we believe our staff are our greatest asset. There is strong commitment to developing institutional leadership and supporting and encouraging staff development at all levels.

We offer a variety of roles including academic, research, professional, managerial and support roles. We also offer extensive benefits and excellent learning opportunities within a stimulating working environment.

The University's estate is undergoing the most significant transformation in its history. Cambridge has been able to create a new science and technology campus to the west of the city centre, and is now expanding further to the north west of Cambridge including investing in affordable homes for University key workers and community facilities. Even with our continued development, the University remains within walking or cycling distance across the campus. The University is a major partner on the Cambridge Biomedical Campus and we continue to redevelop our historic city centre sites demonstrating our determination to ensure that we can offer the best facilities and opportunities for our staff and students.



Equality & diversity

The University has built its excellence on the diversity of its staff and student community. We aim to be a leader in fostering equality and inclusion, and in promoting respect and a sense of belonging for all. We encourage applications from all sections of society. All appointments are made on the basis of merit. We have an Equal Opportunities Policy, along with a range of diversity groups, including the Women's Staff Network, Race Equality Network and LGBT+ Staff Network. More details are available here: <http://www.equality.admin.cam.ac.uk/>

The University has a bronze Race Equality Charter award, with a framework for improving the representation, progression and success of minority ethnic staff and students within higher education. Furthermore, the University's silver Athena swan award recognises and celebrates good practice in recruiting, retaining and promoting gender equality.

Living in Cambridge

Cambridge is rich in cultural diversity. From beautiful University and College buildings, museums and art galleries, quaint gardens and punts on the River Cam, to a vibrant restaurant and café scene, our employees are surrounded by the wonderful features of this unique city.

You can find a wide-range of high street shops and 3 shopping centres, with independent alternatives at the historic market and nestled within the passageways in the city centre. You will find a cinema, bowling alley, a nightclub and various live performances at the Cambridge Leisure Park, with further entertainment options at the Corn Exchange, Arts Theatre and the ADC Theatre. Further information can be found on the [Visit Cambridge](#) website.

If you prefer the faster pace of life, London is a 45 minute train journey away. For those travelling from overseas, Stansted Airport is just 45 minutes away and Heathrow Airport under 2 hours away. The University is a short distance from a host of other attractions such as Ely Cathedral, Newmarket Races and various wildlife parks and stately homes. Cambridge is also within easy reach of the beautiful Broads and coastlines of Norfolk and Suffolk.



Relocation Support

The University recognises the importance of helping individuals to move and settle into a new area. We provide support and guidance to those relocating internationally or domestically to take up a post at the University of Cambridge, liaising with other University offices and selected partners to ensure comprehensive relocation support is available. This includes: accommodation, childcare, schools, banking, immigration and transport. If you would like further information, please visit <https://www.accommodation.cam.ac.uk/RelocationService/>. The Shared Equity Scheme and the Reimbursement of Relocation Expenses Scheme provide financial assistance to qualifying new members of staff with the costs of relocating to Cambridge. For staff who require a Skilled Worker Visa, Global Talent Visa or Settlement (known as indefinite leave to remain) to take up employment with the University, we offer an interest free [visa loan scheme](#) for current and prospective staff (and their dependants), to help meeting the cost of obtaining a visa.

Accommodation Service

The University Accommodation Service helps staff, students and visiting scholars who are affiliated to the University in their search for suitable accommodation in Cambridge. The dedicated accommodation team can provide access to a wide range of University-owned furnished and unfurnished properties, and has a database of private sector accommodation available for short and long-term lets. For further information and to register with this free service please visit <https://www.accommodation.cam.ac.uk/>

What Cambridge can offer

We offer a comprehensive reward package to attract, motivate and retain high performing staff at all levels and in all areas of work.

The University offers a wide range of competitive benefits, from family leave entitlement, to shopping and travel discount schemes. Our generous annual leave package contributes to the positive wellbeing of our University employees. Sabbatical leave enables academics to focus on research and scholarship, whilst still maintaining their full salary. The University also has a [career break scheme](#) for academic and academic-related staff, with additional flexible working policies for all other staff.

Pay and benefits

The University salary structure includes automatic service-related pay progression in many of its grades and an annual cost of living increase. In addition to this, employees are rewarded for outstanding contribution through a number of regular pay progression schemes. The University offers attractive pensions schemes for employees, with an additional benefit of a salary exchange arrangement providing tax and national insurance savings.



CAMbens employee benefits

The University offers employees a wide range of competitive benefits, known as CAMbens. CAMbens offers something for everyone across a range of categories, including:

- Financial Benefits, including shopping discounts (both local and national) and a Payroll Giving scheme;
- Relocation and Accommodation Benefits, including relocation assistance and interest-free Rental Deposit Loans;
- Travel Benefits, including Cycle to Work, discounts on train season tickets and interest-free Travel to Work loans;
- Family Friendly and Lifestyle Benefits, including support with childcare and family friendly policies;
- Health and Wellbeing Benefits, including a University Staff Counselling Service, discounts at the University Sports Centre, and other local gyms, and healthcare schemes.



What Cambridge can offer

Family-friendly policies

The University recognises the importance of supporting its staff. We have a range of family-friendly policies to aid employees' work-life balance including a generous maternity, adoption and shared parental leave entitlement of 18 weeks full pay, and paid emergency leave for parents and carers.

Other family-friendly support includes:

Our highly regarded workplace nurseries, a childcare salary exchange scheme and a high quality holiday Playscheme may be available to help support University employees with caring responsibilities (subject to demand and qualifying criteria). Further childcare information can be found here: <https://www.childcare.admin.cam.ac.uk/>

The [Newcomers and Visiting Scholars Group](#) is an organisation within the University run by volunteers whose aim is to help newly arrived wives, husbands, partners and families of Visiting Scholars and members of the University to settle in Cambridge and give them an opportunity to meet local people. The Postdoc Academy supports the postdoctoral community within Cambridge. Further details are available here: <https://www.postdocacademy.cam.ac.uk/>

Your wellbeing

The University's Sport Centre, Counselling Services and Occupational Health are just some of the support services available to University employees to promote their physical and mental wellbeing. The University delivers The Festival of Wellbeing annually, which is a programme of stimulating talks and activities, which aim to promote wellbeing and good mental and physical health. The University also hosts the [Cambridge Festival](#), which is a great opportunity to get your first taste of public engagement, through volunteering, supporting hands-on activities or proposing a talk.

Development opportunities

We support new employees to settle in through various activities as well as supporting their professional and career development on an ongoing basis. Our Personal and Professional Development (PPD) team provide development opportunities for all University employees, including face-to-face sessions, online learning modules and webinars. All employees also have unlimited access to LinkedIn Learning to support their development. Both new and existing employees can undertake funded Apprenticeships, which lead to a range of vocational and professional qualifications. We offer reduced staff fees for University of Cambridge graduate courses and the opportunity to attend lectures and seminars held by University departments and institutions. A range of University training providers also offer specialist learning and development in their own areas e.g. teaching and learning, digital literacy, finance, health and wellbeing, safety.



How to apply

Applications should be submitted online via the University of Cambridge jobs page www.jobs.cam.ac.uk by clicking “Apply online” in the job advert. You will need an email address to register for our online system.

Conversations about flexible working are encouraged at the University of Cambridge. Please feel free to discuss flexibility prior to applying (using the contact information below) or at interview if your application is successful.

Informal enquiries are welcomed and should be directed to:
Mike Sinclair, Head of Central Accounting
Email: Mike.Sinclair@admin.cam.ac.uk

If you have any queries regarding the application process please contact finhr_recruitment@admin.cam.ac.uk

The closing date for applications is: 31st October 2024

We reserve the right to close the vacancy once we fill the position.

