

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title:	Accounts Payable Assistant
Department /Division/Unit:	Finance
Faculty/Professional Service:	Professional Services
Location:	Keppel Street
Reports to:	Assistant Financial Accountant (Accounts Payable)
Full Time/Part Time/Casual:	Full time
Grade:	PSP4

GENERAL INFORMATION

The London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine

The London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine is a world-leading centre for research and postgraduate education in public and global health. Our mission is to improve health and health equity in the UK and worldwide; working in partnership to achieve excellence in public and global health research, education and translation of knowledge into policy and practice.

Founded in 1899, the School has expanded in recent years at its two main sites on Keppel Street and Tavistock Place. Our staff, students and alumni work in more than 150 countries in government, academia, international agencies and health services.

Research income has grown to more than £180 million per year from national and international funding sources including UK government and research councils, the European Union, the Wellcome Trust, Gates Foundation and other philanthropic sources.

Our diverse research talents, skills and experience, underpin our position as a leader in public and global health. These range from the molecular to the global, the theoretical to the applied, the analytical to the political. Our staff are conducting research in more than 100 countries.

We have 3,300 staff based all around the world with core hubs in London and at the MRC Units in The Gambia and Uganda, which joined LSHTM in February 2018. Our outstanding, diverse and committed staff make an impact where it is most needed - deploying research in real time in response to crises, developing innovative programmes for major health threats, or training the next generations of public and global health leaders and researchers.

Working in partnership is central to achieving our mission. Our strategic collaborations in the UK and across high-, middle- and low-income countries deliver health and socioeconomic benefits across the world, especially in the most disadvantaged communities.

LSHTM is also a member of the M8 Alliance of Academic Health Centers, Universities and National Academies, the Association of Schools of Public Health in the European Region, and the Consortium of Universities for Global Health.

We deliver research-led educational programmes to future health leaders, managers and researchers across the world. We have more than 1,200 face-to-face Master's and Doctoral students, 3,000 studying by distance learning, and 1,000 each year on short courses and continuous professional development. Our free online courses are studied by more than 70,000 participants globally.

LSHTM performs strongly in various global university league tables. In the 2019 CWTS Leiden Ranking LSHTM is ranked the UK's top university for the proportion of academic research with women listed as authors, first in Europe for publishing open access research, and first in Europe and eighth in the world for research impact in sciences (for the proportion of its total publications ranking in the top 10% of most cited research).

In the US News Best Global Universities Ranking 2019, we ranked ninth in the UK overall and 13th in the world in the fields of social sciences and public health. We ranked 27th for medicine in the 2019 QS World University Rankings.

In the 2019 Shanghai World Ranking we placed 201-300 overall, and ranked 4th in public health (1st in the UK), 17th in clinical medicine, and 76-100 in human biological sciences. In 2017, the inaugural Center for World University Rankings by Subject placed LSHTM first in the world for tropical medicine research, second for parasitology and seventh for infectious diseases, public, environment and occupational health, and social sciences and biomedical.

LSHTM was named University of the Year 2016 by Times Higher Education and awarded a Queen's Anniversary Prize for Higher and Further Education in 2017 in recognition of our response to the 2014 Ebola epidemic in West Africa. LSHTM does not appear in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings as universities are excluded if they do not teach undergraduates.

We seek to foster and sustain a creative and supportive working environment based upon an ethos of respect and rigorous scientific enquiry. We embrace and value the diversity of our staff and student population and seek to promote equality as an essential element in contribution to improving health worldwide.

LSHTM is one of around 20 specialist institutions that receive institution specific funding from the Office for Students (OfS). This funding recognises the additional costs that LSHTM incurs because of its unique range of teaching, specialist facilities, and the scale of its contributions to national and international agencies.

Overall Purpose of the job

The Accounts Payable Assistant is part of a team responsible for the day to day administration of the Accounts Payable service of UK and International Payments by providing administrative and clerical support using approved processes and procedures.

The role holder must maintain the integrity of personal and confidential information whilst supporting the processing of the UK and International Payment runs weekly and undertaking associated duties.

The role holder is also responsible for ensuring that all transactions relating to School spend are recorded in a timely and accurate manner to enable budget holders throughout the School to be able to monitor and successfully administer their budgets.

The role holder will be required to advise on correct financial procedures, ensuring that the School's Financial Regulations are adhered to, and that transactions are legally compliant.

Principal Duties and Responsibilities (Examples)

- Provide first line Service Desk support for all contact made through service desk, emails and phone calls to internal and external stakeholders at all levels, in a professional and customer focused manner.

- Ensure that service desk enquires, request and complaints are handled efficiently and according to agreed procedures and escalated to colleagues where necessary.
- Generate and report appropriate remittance advices for internal and external stakeholders.
- Deliver, collect, sort and re-direct private and confidential letters to internal and external stakeholders
- Sort incoming post, packages, newspapers, magazines and journals into the correct tray for a person or department.
- Ensure new Supplier accounts have been set-up accurately and documents meets the School's audit requirements.
- Ensure supplier bank detail are independently verified and make amendments and update bank details held on record in order to protect against fraud.
- To ensure supplier statements are reconciled and rectify discrepancy balances.
- To post manual payments and allocate against supplier's accounts
- Ensure that all invoices are coded, entered correctly and authorised by appropriate budget holders.
- Prepare payment runs proposal and confirmations.
- Process any correct journals and adjustments as required.
- Assist in other areas of the team where appropriate and any other ad-hoc task as assigned.
- Assist in maintaining a high level of service to all areas of the School, ensuring that all areas of the Accounts Payable function operate to the highest possible standard at all times, and providing cover for colleagues at times of holiday and sickness to achieve this.
- Contact supplies on a monthly bases requesting refund and posting the funds to the appropriate supplier account or to the projects
- Processing all collaborator invoices on a daily bases as a priority
- Helping with the posting of international payments
- On a monthly basis helping with the processing of re-charges and inter account transaction journals

Communications

- Establish and maintain effective daily communication on service desk, via email, telephone and in persons with colleagues, members of staff, stakeholders and suppliers of goods and services to progress the operational needs of the School. This includes the sharing of specialist information such as Accounts Payable policies or procedures and deal with issues which require high levels of tact, accounting knowledge and sensitivity to obtain confidential information.
- Liaise with suppliers, query age invoices pending approval, request credit notes, reconcile accounts, investigate anomalies and ensure the continued supply of goods and services to the School.
- Explain complex financial information that require careful interpretation to financial and none financial individual both verbally and written. Information such as VAT queries with supplier invoices, VAT exemption certificate requests, goods receipting complication on Agresso, payment of invoices/expense claims procedures, authorisation levels for payments
- Liaising with suppliers and debt collectors to investigate payments or register a case against missing payment, which will require the preparation and collating of detailed information for submission in a written format
- Excellent communications skills to external suppliers/stakeholders regarding payment terms and conditions, dealing with complex quires regarding credit and debit balances on the supplier account, supplier Bacs run, cheque run and international payment runs
- Proactively provide advice and assistance and respond to requests from colleagues, academics and students enquiring about LSHTM policies to ensure that financial regulation, and processes are adhered to
- Communicating with Assistant Financial Account, Head of Financial Services and the Deputy Financial Director before and during the preparation of the BACS payment

- Prepare and contribute as necessary to written materials such as AP processes, required UK and international banking information, re-charges, and Inter Account Transaction Journals on service desk and reviewing/writing finance procedural notes as and when required by the line manager

Teamwork and Motivation

- There are 35 team members within finance/procurement and the accounts payable team can only achieve its intended outcomes as a section if each individual works together in providing a service which is expected and the post holder will play its role in maintaining cohesion between the other team members within AP and the department as a whole to ensuring that all staff remain motivated and support one another
- Prioritising tasks so that KPIs, both for self and team are met in periods where team members are absent and also leading by example by following all LSHTM Financial regulations and processes
- The post holder will contribute pro-actively developing efficient & effective working practices in collaboration with LSHTM Central Services, the department and faculties and participate in department and faculty meetings
- Effective communication across the whole team, sharing ideas on how to improve service desk, bottlenecks on AP workflows, assisting team members with systems or procedures that are relevant to their tasks to create cohesiveness within the team by offering support and assistance where appropriate
- The post holder will provide support, information and guidance to academics and students across the School on all matters related to service desk queries, BACS payments, collaboration, DD, re-charges, IATJ's, UK and International payments

Liaison and Networking

- It is important for the post holder to liaise and network with people around the School and have a good working relationship with staff members within the departments and faculties so that accounts payable queries can be resolved without causing any delay to payment schedules.
- The post holder will proactively establish positive working relationships and maintain regular contact with service desk users and suppliers to meet the contractual agreements the School has with them and will deal with any enquires they may have on a regular basis
- The post holder will ensure that collaboration enquires are prioritized so that it does not have any impact on the research activities abroad and it continues without any disruptions.
- The post holder must liaise with Assistant Financial Accountant on a monthly bases to make sure invoices, service desk and all bank reconciliation and processed on time
- The post holder will liaise with Research Operations office to build a network of key internal contacts to allow research projects to be un-parked so that invoices and payments can be posted on agresso before the period closure
- Attend meetings with Assistant financial accountant on matters affecting service desk improvements and at faculty meetings.

Service delivery

- The post holder will act as the point of contact for the staff members and suppliers in respect of requests for information, effectively and promptly resolving any enquiries or problems raised by them

- The post holder will be pro-active in developing/strengthening systems to ensure effective service delivery and ensuring payment are made on time with the correct procedures to avoid possible delays to projects activities abroad
- On a monthly basis before the period closure the post holder will clear all service desk outstanding tickets, bank reconciliation and invoice processing in preparation for the
- month end reporting and reconciling the returned funds in the suspense account and journaling across the funds to the appropriate budgets
- The post holder has responsibility in helping staff, PI and students with urgent payments that are required to go on the weekly UK and International payment runs, by processing the payments on the system as a priority and monitoring and informing the users of the progress
- The post holder will prepare the report for BACS and Cheque payment run on instructions from the Assistant Financial Accountant, and liaising with Head of Financial Services and the Deputy Financial Director to process the payments

Decision making

- The post holder will cover colleagues and will have to register collaborator invoices to high risk place making sure a contract is in place and financial statements are attached before registration, these are high value payments and will require them to make considered and timely decisions, independently and collaboratively, and will be expected to advise on matters that have a significant risk to the School
- The post holder will regularly check, investigate for urgent payments and make decisions on which payments should be prioritized to be included in the payment runs, these decisions will have a detrimental consequence to the School if a large amount of sums are transferred to the wrong supplier or payments are duplicated, the post holder must be on high alert when entering the information on the accounting system
- The post holder will take ownership and responsibility for their own work, so that there is no conflict with other members of the team
- They will ensure all supplier accounts set up on "Pending Details" are chased for bank details weekly and take appropriate actions to update the supplier Masterfile and process the payments for BACS
- They will deal with all aspects of document archiving so that it has minimum disruption to the daily workload, and documents are accessible to staff and auditor as and when required

Planning and organising resources

- The post holder is responsible for planning their workload and will assist the Assistant Financial Accountant with the planning and organising the work of the team and own work to ensure that daily and weekly deadlines are met and that the section operates efficiently
- During financial year end the post holder must ensure tasks are completed before the deadlines. Allocated tasks need to be planned and organised around normal routine day to day tasks, and they will need to gauge the urgency of other incoming tasks and queries as appropriate and actioned them accordingly
- Post holder must make sure all manual form, expense claim, advance and sterling manual payment forms are processed within agreed KPIs of 5 working days on Agresso

Initiative and Problem Solving

- The post holder will Investigate any mis-postings on the AP ledger and correcting them by doing the correct and appropriate Journals

- They will assist the Assistant Financial Accountant in planning and investigating ways of increasing efficiency to enable the team to handle increased volumes of work by improving existing or developing new procedures/processes.
- They will identify and investigate system failures and work with the systems team to develop robust new approaches to prevent similar issues arising again, this may include problem solving and working alongside the normal duties for short term basis
- They will respond flexibly and positively to operational changes taking the initiative to find solutions and make recommendations to the Assistant Financial account in the monthly meetings
- The post holder will work with the Assistant Financial Accountant to monitor the risk of fraud and be aware of money laundering and recommend ways to strengthen controls in AP

Analysis and Research

- The post holder will analyse the BACS report on a weekly basis to identify and help the Assistant Financial Accountant so that duplicates, inadequate banking information and other problems can be investigated
- They will help to collate all supplier Masterfile information and analyse, sort and delete in preparation for system upgrades making sure all sensitive information are dealt with care
- The post holder will analyse and reconcile supplier statements on a monthly basis and investigate and resolve any discrepancies
- The post holder will analyse the re-charge spreadsheets to make sure all the data on the spreadsheet is correct and valid for uploading on agresso for posting and Investigate any anomalies

Additional Information

Any other duties as reasonably delegated by the Assistant Financial Accountant (Accounts Payable) and the Financial Controller

Generic duties and responsibilities of all LSHTM employees

This job description reflects the present requirements of the post but may be altered at any time in the future as duties and responsibilities change and/or develop providing there is full consultation with the post-holder.

The post-holder will carry out any other duties, tasks or responsibilities as reasonably requested by the line manager, Dean of Faculty, Head of Department or Director of Professional Service.

The post holder will be responsible and accountable for ensuring all School policies, procedures, Regulations and employment legislative requirements are adhered to including equality and diversity and health and safety.

This job description is not a definitive or exhaustive list of responsibilities but identifies the key responsibilities and tasks of the post holder. The specific objectives of the post holder will be subject to review as part of the individual performance review (appraisal) process.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

This form lists the essential and desirable requirements needed by the post holder to be able to perform the job effectively.

Applicants will be shortlisted solely on the extent to which they meet these requirements.

Education, Qualifications and Training

Essential

- GCSE Maths, English B or higher minimum, preferably A-Levels
- Bachelor's degree in accounting, finance, or have equivalent professional experience

Experience

Essential

- Experience of working within a previous financial environment or providing Accounts Payable services to deadlines, including dealing with a high volume of work whilst maintaining high levels of speed and accuracy
- Experience working in Service Desk/ Support environment system and knowledge of general accounting procedures
- Experience of dealing with a high volume of multi-currency invoices, emails.
- Experience of using Agresso
- Experience of dealing promptly and efficiently with Accounts payable queries from staff and Suppliers
- Experience of BACS, cheques and International payment runs, the post holder will provide cover and assist with the BACS run.
- Proven ability to manage large volume activities, across multiple work streams
- Experience of processing invoices, re-charges and Inter Account Transactional Journals

Technical knowledge/skills/aptitude

Essential

- Clear understanding of accounting standards and guidelines
- Strong knowledge of Microsoft Office including Outlook, SharePoint, Word and Excel skills data interpretation, V-look up and pivot tables are essential within Microsoft Excel

Personal Qualities

Essential

- Excellent troubleshooting skills, logical, Solid analytical and problem-solving skills
- Continuously identify, own and complete efficiency projects. Able to work accurately, quickly and independently, using initiative, as well as working as part of a team

- Able to ensure customer satisfaction within agreed timeline and comfortable engaging with stakeholders, either remotely or face-face.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills

Desirable

- Experience of working for a Higher Education Institution or charity
- Enthusiasm for continuous improvement