

Recruitment vacancy for Head of Finance

News story

Details of a recruitment for the Head of Finance team.



This is an excellent opportunity to shape and develop the finance function with your own ideas, supported by a team of 10 finance staff.

Job Title

Head of Finance

Grade

Grade 6

Salary & Pension

£61,707 – £71,019 London per annum with Pension Scheme

Annual Leave entitlement

Commencing at 25 days

Role

The role is responsible for the delivery of all financial aspects of the VMD including financial policies, processes, procedures and statutory obligations.

The post holder will also take the lead on financial accounting, financial performance, customer facing financial reporting, staff performance, and financial governance.

How to apply

You must make your application via [Civil Service Jobs](#) where you will find a full job description including salary details.

Closing Date

20 February 2022

Published 1 February 2022

[Applications for the Landscape Recovery scheme now open](#)

Farmers and landowners will be able to apply for funding to support projects that will restore nature, reduce flood risks and boost biodiversity, as the first round of applications for the [Landscape Recovery](#) scheme opens today.

The scheme is the third under the UK Government's future farming policy, which outside of the Common Agricultural Policy will deliver a system that works in the best interests of British farmers, designed in partnership with the sector.

The Landscape Recovery scheme will support more radical and ambitious land-use change and habitat restoration, such as establishing new nature reserves, restoring floodplains to help reduce the risks from flooding, or creating woodland and wetlands.

The first round of Landscape Recovery is open to any individuals or groups who want to come together to deliver large (500 – 5000 ha) scale projects. The projects will focus on:

- recovering and restoring England's threatened native species. Projects under this theme will be administered by Natural England
- restoring England's streams and rivers: improving water quality, biodiversity and adapting to climate change. Projects under this theme will be administered by the Environment Agency

Projects could include restoring the natural courses and condition of rivers and streams, creating and improving woodlands or wetlands, or creating a mosaic of habitats for native species, and will support the Prime Minister's ambition to deliver at least 10 large scale areas devoted to landscape and ecosystem recovery by 2024.

Applications for this round of funding are open from 1 February 2022 and will

close on 24 May 2022. The application process will be competitive and Defra will assess applications against selection criteria focused on the projects' potential impact, feasibility and costs and will confirm the chosen round one pilot projects in the summer. Up to 15 projects will be taken forward within the total project development budget available of £7.5m.

Environment Secretary, George Eustice, said:

The focus of our Landscape Recovery scheme will be to restore threatened species and priority habitats – helping to protect our natural environment for generations to come and boost biodiversity.

While the types of projects we envisage won't be right for every farm business or farm holding, they will be right for some which is why this scheme will support a choice that some landowners may want to take, and put in place the right incentives to allow them to do so.

Farming in England is moving away from the arbitrary land-based subsidies and top-down bureaucracy of the EU's Common Agricultural Policy, towards schemes that recognise the work that farmers do as stewards of the natural environment alongside food production. Defra is working in partnership with farmers to design the new schemes and support the choices that they make for their own holdings. Landscape Recovery is one of three environmental land management schemes and taken together they are designed to provide farmers and landowners with a broad range of voluntary options from which they can choose the best for their business. The reforms are the biggest changes to farming and land management in 50 years with more than 3,000 farmers already testing the new schemes.

Emma Howard Boyd CBE, Chair of the Environment Agency, said:

The Landscape Recovery scheme will fund projects that will see waterbodies, rivers and floodplains restored to a more natural state helping to deliver the Government's ambition to reverse the decline in nature by 2030. Projects will also improve water quality and help reduce the risks from flooding helping us adapt to the changing climate.

Tony Juniper CBE, Chair of Natural England, said:

As we step up to meeting the climate change and nature emergencies it is clear that we will in future need to secure multiple benefits from how we use land. Taking coordinated action at scale is key, and Landscape Recovery represents a great opportunity for land managers to make huge contributions.

Through this scheme the ambition to create a Nature Recovery Network can take a leap forward, enabling those who manage land to help meet a range of different goals, including for carbon storage, cleaner rivers, reduced flood risk, thriving wildlife and beautiful landscapes for everyone to enjoy, as well as high-quality, sustainable food. Natural England looks forward to supporting farmers with science-led advice through these very exciting trials.

Sir William Worsley, Forestry Commission Chair, said:

I am delighted that the Landscape Recovery scheme pilot has opened today and fully welcome the approach for large-scale land-use change and habitat restoration. The scheme will work alongside the suite of support we already have available for woodland creation and management, and I believe this is a real opportunity for those with large estates, whether that's farmers, foresters or land managers, or those who are part of a collaborative group, to create and improve woodland.

- To read more about the Landscape Recovery scheme and how to apply, visit [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)
- As part of submitting a bid, applicants will need to confirm that tenants and those with rights of common within the Landscape Recovery area have been engaged prior to application and are supportive of the project moving forward into project development.
- The selected projects will initially be awarded project development funding. Over the course of the project development phase, which will last up to 2 years, they will have the opportunity to negotiate public and private funding for implementation. If a project meets Defra's requirements at the end of the development phase, they would be awarded long-term funding, allowing them to start delivering on the ground. Implementation agreements are expected to be long term (20 years plus) and we want to ensure the projects are safeguarded into the future.
- Over the next three years we are introducing three new environmental land management schemes in England: the Sustainable Farming Incentive, Local Nature Recovery and Landscape Recovery. Landscape Recovery is a crucial part of the suite of new schemes, which we are introducing following our departure from the EU and the Common Agricultural Policy.

[New agreement to ensure supplies of](#)

C02

News story

The carbon dioxide industry has come to an agreement to ensure UK businesses have access to a sustainable supply of C02.



The carbon dioxide (C02) industry has come to an agreement to ensure UK businesses have access to a sustainable supply of C02 – an essential component of the national economy.

The deal will enable CF Fertilisers' Billingham plant to continue to operate while global gas prices remain high. It means key sectors, including food processing and nuclear power, are ensured supplies of C02.

The government welcomes industry's agreement which is in the best interests of businesses.

In September 2021, the government [provided limited financial support](#) for CF Fertilisers' operating costs for 3 weeks. [Industry then came to an agreement](#) in October without taxpayer support to ensure CF Fertilisers on Teesside could continue to operate for 3 months.

In the longer term, the government would like to see the market take measures to improve resilience, and we are engaging on ways this could happen.

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[More than 10.2 million filed their](#)

Self Assessment by 31 January

More than 10.2 million customers filed their 2020 to 2021 tax returns by the 31 January 2022 deadline, HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) has revealed.

More than 630,000 customers filed on deadline day and the peak hour for filing was 16:00 to 16:59 when 52,475 completed their Self Assessment. There were 20,947 customers who completed their tax return between 23:00 and 23:59.

More than 12.2 million customers were expected to file a Self Assessment tax return this year. The remaining 2.3 million customers expected to file by 31 January now have until 28 February 2022 to submit their late 2020 to 2021 tax return and avoid a late filing penalty.

For any Self Assessment customer who is yet to pay their tax bill or set up a payment plan, interest will be applied to outstanding balances from 1 February. Customers have until 1 April to pay their tax in full, or set up a time to pay arrangement, to avoid a late payment penalty.

Those who are not yet able to file their tax return should pay an estimated amount as soon as possible, which will minimise any interest. Self-employed people can use [the calculator on GOV.UK to help estimate their tax bill](#).

Myrtle Lloyd, HMRC's Director General for Customer Services, said:

I'd like to thank the millions of customers and agents who sent us their tax return and paid in time for this week's deadline.

We're waiving penalties this year, to give those who missed the deadline an extra month. And customers can set up a monthly payment plan online if they're worried about paying their tax bill. Search 'Self Assessment' on GOV.UK to find out more.

The existing Time to Pay service allows customers, who are unable to pay their bill in full, [to spread their tax payments into manageable monthly instalments](#). Self Assessment customers with up to £30,000 of tax debt can do this online once they have filed their return.

If customers owe more than £30,000, or need longer to pay, they should call the Self Assessment Payment Helpline on 0300 200 3822.

A full list of the payment methods customers can use to [pay their Self Assessment tax bill](#) is available on GOV.UK.

The 2020 to 2021 tax return covers earnings and payments during the pandemic. Taxpayers will need to declare [if they received any grants or payments from the COVID-19 support schemes](#) up to 5 April 2021 on their Self Assessment, as these are taxable, including:

- Self-Employment Income Support Scheme
- Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme
- other COVID-19 grants and support payments such as self-isolation payments, local authority grants and those for the Eat Out to Help Out scheme

The £500 one-off payment for working households receiving tax credits should not be reported in Self Assessment.

It is important that customers [check and make any changes to their tax return](#) to make sure any SEISS or other COVID-19 support payments have been reported correctly in their Self Assessment.

HMRC urges everyone to be alert if they are contacted out of the blue by someone asking for money or personal information. Taxpayers should always type in the full online address www.gov.uk/hmrc to get the correct link for filing their Self Assessment return online securely and free of charge. HMRC sees high numbers of fraudsters emailing, calling or texting people claiming to be from the department. If in doubt, HMRC advises not to reply directly to anything suspicious, but to contact them straight away and to [search GOV.UK for 'HMRC scams'](#).

Self Assessment 2022 facts summary:

- 12.2 million Self Assessment returns due
- 10,290,965 returns received by 31 January. This includes expected returns, unsolicited returns and late registrations
- 9,892,965 expected returns received by 31 January (80.98% of returns expected)
- 398,000 unsolicited returns/late registrations (3.87%)
- 2,322,869 customers missed the deadline (19.02%)
- 9,838,336 returns were filed online (95.6% of total filed)
- 452,629 paper tax returns were filed (4.4% of total filed)

Unsolicited returns/late registrations are an estimate based on returns received by early January and previous filing behaviour.

Self Assessment timeline:

- 31 January – Self Assessment deadline (filing and payment)
- 1 February – interest accrues on any outstanding tax bills
- 28 February – last date to file any late online tax returns to avoid a late filing penalty
- 1 April – last date to pay any outstanding tax or make a Time to Pay arrangement, to avoid a late payment penalty
- 1 April – last date to set up a self-serve Time to Pay arrangement online

There is no change to the filing or payment deadline and other obligations are not affected. This means that:

- interest will be charged on late payment. The late payment interest rate is 2.75%

- a return received online in February will be treated as a return received late, with a valid reasonable excuse for the lateness. This means that:
 1. there will be an extended enquiry window
 2. for returns filed after 28 February the other late filing penalties (daily penalties from 3 months, 6 and 12 month penalties) will operate as usual;
 3. a 5% late payment penalty will be charged if tax remains outstanding, and a payment plan has not been set up, by midnight on 1 April 2022. Further late payment penalties will be charged at the usual 6 and 12 month points (August 2022 and February 2023 respectively) on tax outstanding where a payment plan has not been set up.
 - we will not charge late filing penalties for SA700s and SA970s received in February. These returns can only be filed on paper
 - for SA800s and SA900s we will not charge a late filing penalty if taxpayers file online by the end of February. The deadline for filing SA800s and SA900s on paper was 31 October. Taxpayers who file late on paper will be charged a late filing penalty in the normal way. They can appeal against this penalty if they have a reasonable excuse for filing their paper return late
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[US research director appointed first chief executive of Advanced Research and Invention Agency](#)

The Business Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng has today (1 February 2022) appointed Dr Peter Highnam as Chief Executive of the UK's new Advanced Research and Invention Agency (ARIA), to lead the formation of the agency and direct its initial funding of high-risk programmes.

ARIA forms a critical part of the UK government's science and research agenda. Backed by £800 million, it will empower exceptional scientists to focus on high-risk projects at the frontier of discovery and innovation that could transform people's lives for the better, maintaining the UK's position on the international stage as a science superpower.

Born in the UK, Dr Peter Highnam brings a wealth of experience making him uniquely capable to step into the role, as he joins ARIA from the USA's research agency DARPA where he has served as Deputy Director since February 2018. He will take up his post as ARIA's first CEO on 3 May 2022, for a fixed term of 5 years.

ARIA is based on models that have proved successful in other countries, in

particular the influential US Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA) model. This was instrumental in creating transformational technologies such as the internet and GPS, changing the way people live and work, while increasing productivity and economic growth.

More recently, ARPA's successor, DARPA, was a vital pre-pandemic funder of mRNA vaccines and antibody therapies, leading to critical COVID-19 therapies.

Business Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng said:

Dr Peter Highnam's appointment is a major triumph for the UK. His expert direction will lead the agency's formation, ensuring the funding of high-risk programmes that will continue to push the boundaries of science and technology.

Under Dr Highnam's leadership, ARIA will ensure the benefits of research and development will be felt in our society and economy over the course of generations, and that the technologies, discoveries, products, and ideas the agency invests in are supported to create the industries of tomorrow.

The government has committed to increase public investment in R&D to £20 billion in 2024-2025, and ARIA will be an integral and invaluable addition to the UK's flourishing R&D ecosystem.

Operating with flexibility and speed, avoiding unnecessary bureaucracy, and experimenting with different funding models, ARIA will ensure the UK remains on the front line of experimental research.

Science Minister George Freeman said:

The UK's scientific community has a proud history of discovery, and the imagination and creativity of our discovery scientists and innovators – from Isaac Newton to Ada Lovelace, Frank Whittle, Alan Turing and Dame Sarah Gilbert's team developing the COVID-19 vaccine – continue to transform our world.

Dr Peter Highnam's appointment as ARIA's first CEO will enable our ground-breaking new agency to push the boundaries of high-risk science in the 21st century. His impressive wealth of experience puts him in a unique position to lead the direction of funding for the most ground-breaking projects in the UK and maintain our status as a leading innovation nation.

UK Research and Innovation Chief Executive Professor Dame Ottoline Leyser said:

Dr Peter Highnam's breadth of experience in leading the development

and translation of transformational ideas will be a huge asset to ARIA and to the UK's research and innovation system.

ARIA has a unique role to play in the ecosystem, enhancing the UK's ability to experiment with novel approaches to finding and supporting people and ideas at the frontiers of discovery and innovation.

On behalf of UKRI I'd like to welcome Dr Highnam to his new role. I am looking forward to working alongside him to unleash the full potential of researchers and innovators across the UK to change people's lives for the better.

With the appointment Dr Highnam as chief executive, the search for ARIA's first Chair has also recommenced today.

This is an unprecedented opportunity to help to design and build ARIA from the ground up, as the Chair will support Dr Peter Highnam to deliver ARIA's goals and ground-breaking ambitions. The Chair will also be a key counsel to the CEO, and ensure the agency's effective governance.

All applications will be reviewed by an Advisory Assessment Panel comprised of the Government's Chief Scientific Adviser, Sir Patrick Vallance; BEIS' Director General for Science, Innovation and Growth, Jo Shanmugalingam; CEO and co-founder of DeepMind, Demis Hassabis CBE, former Chairman of the Vaccine Taskforce, and Managing Partner at SV Health Investors, Kate Bingham DBE.

This appointment will be a fair and open process, overseen by the Executive Search agency Saxton Bampflyde. [More information about the role of ARIA Chair is available on the Saxton Bampflyde site.](#)

Dr Peter Highnam joined DARPA in February 2018 as Deputy Director and served as acting Director on 2 occasions.

He has previously held positions as the Director of Research at National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, and as Director of the Intelligence Advanced Research Projects Activity.

He worked at the US Department for Health and Human Services from 2003 to 2009, serving as senior advisor in the National Institute of Health.

Born in the UK, he obtained his undergraduate degree from the University of Manchester, his master's degree at the University of Bristol and has a PhD in Computer Science from Carnegie Mellon University.