Head of Finance and Risk

Information Pack

August 2026

Our mission

As the UK's national advisory body for international students and the professionals who work with them, our purpose is clear: to ensure that every international student has the best possible experience while studying in the UK.

This mission is more important than ever. International students currently studying across the UK make an invaluable contribution to our campuses, communities, and society. At the same time, the environment in which they live and study has become increasingly complex, shaped by shifting government policy, economic pressures, and evolving student expectations.

Our aims are to:

- increase support for international education and raise awareness of its values and benefits;
- reduce obstacles and barriers to greater student mobility;
- encourage best practice, professional development and the highest quality of institutional support for international students throughout the education sector.

Our Values

At UKCISA, our staff, members, and international students are at the heart of everything we do. These values guide us and keep us accountable in our work and services:

- **Quality**. We maintain the highest possible standards for our staff and our members who work directly with international students.
- **Collaboration**. We work collaboratively with our members, UK governments and partner organisations to provide a world class experience for international students.
- **Innovation**. We evaluate and refresh our services, to ensure we deliver maximum value for our members.
- **Trust**. We act with integrity and commitment to provide advice, guidance and training that international students and our members can depend on.

Role: Head of Finance and Risk	Working hours: 35 hours per week/full-time (other working patterns considered for right candidate)
Reporting to: Chief Executive	Salary: £ 55,000-65,000
Responsible for: Senior Finance Officer	Liaising with: Senior Leadership Team, Trustees, auditors and contracted partners

Main Function of role

To play a leadership role at UKCISA leading financial strategy, planning, budgeting, forecasting, reporting and risk management; as an advisor to our Board and Finance, Audit and Risk Committee providing clear insight and expertise and as a business partner, helping colleagues make informed commercial costing and pricing decisions to deliver our financial strategy.

Core Responsibilities

1) Leadership:

- As a member of the Senior Leadership team (SLT), contribute to the strategic direction and decision making of the charitable company
- Act as a key financial and risk advisor to the Board and Finance, Audit and Risk (FAR) Committee as well as acting as Secretariat to FAR
- Present effective monthly management accounts and risk register to the SLT, Board and Committees via agreed written protocols
- Ensure SLT, Board and Committees are briefed on changes to the regulatory landscape and advised of relevant risks
- Lead a team to achieve strategic and operational targets
- Develop team members' skills and experience to fully contribute to UKCISA's success
- Manage all expenditure and budgets within agreed targets

Core Responsibilities

2) Financial strategy

Working closely with the CEO:

- Evolve our financial strategy to encompass
  - 12 month detailed budget setting and forecasting, with 3 year projections
  - monthly management accounts demonstrating monthly revenue, direct and indirect expenditure, gross and net profit, statement of financial position and with charts demonstrating income modelling, debtor analysis and cash flow forecast
- Support the setting and analysis of growth targets as part of our strategy framework to lead to a sustainable financial position and financial contribution to rebuild reserves.
- Develop a profitability analysis tool for our products and services. This will enable us to make strategic decisions in our market to cost and price current and new products and to demonstrate how their pricing and growth can contribute to developing in year surplus and development funds.

3) Financial management and systems

- Lead, supervise and support the Senior Finance Officer to deliver accurate financial processes
- Maintain effective internal control including financial policies, month end practices, credit card and expense management, expenditure approval, reconciliations and oversight of key finance processes
- Drive improvement of financial processes, controls and systems including opportunities for digitisation and system integration
- Oversee financial systems, outsourced activity and data, ensuring fit for purpose tools, reliable data and appropriate access controls to support reporting and decision making
- Ensure all data systems and data stored complies with legislation and policy

4) Governance – Finance, Audit and Risk management

- Support the work of the Board and, as Secretary, provide the Finance Audit & Risk Committee with the relevant papers, information and guidance to enable them to carry out their responsibilities and provide adequate scrutiny for the Board of Trustees.
- Carry out horizon scanning, and advise SLT, Board and Committees on relevant developments that could impact the organisation
- Lead statutory reporting and audit, ensuring accurate year-end accounts, effective Board and committee reports and effective relationships with auditors
- Deliver the requirements of HMRC for VAT (partial exemption) and Corporate Tax returns
- Ensure effective financial governance including appropriate delegated authorities, procurement controls, contract management and value for money assurance

5) Risk Management

- Coordinate the risk management process ensuring input from risk owners, management of the register, regular review for SLT and preparation of accurate reports for FAR and the Board
- Notify the Chief Executive where any event, could have regulatory (Charity Commission, Immigration Advice Authority, Information Commissioner's Office) or legislative breach
- Manage the identification and monitoring of all Conflicts of interest (at SLT and Trustee level) and maintain an up to date record of all conflicts of interest
- Manage the Complaints handling policy and process, liaising with managers leading a complaint process to ensure all policy deadlines are met and ensuring root cause analysis is carried out and improvements made on an annual basis.
- Develop and oversee the Business Continuity Plan, ensuring annual updating in line with the policy review schedule

6) Finance business partner

- Work closely with other members of SLT and staff to help colleagues analyse financial information and make informed decisions about profitability, costing and pricing
- Use communication and commercial skills to translate financial information to influence decision making to achieve the organisation's strategy

Other Duties:

- To undertake other tasks and duties as may reasonably be required
- To represent UKCISA in external meetings as required

Qualities	Essential criteria
Qualifications and Experience	• Recognised accounting qualification (min Level 4 Diploma in Professional Accounting AAT or equivalent) or chartered accountant status • 3- 5 years finance experience in the charity sector producing year end/statutory accounts in accordance with the Charities SORP • Experience reporting to and advising Boards and/or committees • Experience in developing finance strategies to drive financial sustainability • Experience in digitisation and system integration for financial effectiveness and reporting • Experience in risk management
Skills and Capabilities	• An interest in and developing a commitment to UKCISA's vision and mission • Excellent interpersonal skills and ability to work as a business partner and advisor with team members and trustees • Excellent leadership skills to achieve strategic and operational goals • Excellent analytical and audit skills to lead on risk, business continuity planning and complaint management • High levels of personal and professional integrity • Attention to detail & excellent organisational skills • Ability to work using own initiative, and to work effectively as part of a team • A commitment to continuous improvement • A proactive, flexible and versatile approach showing drive and resilience • High level written and presenting skills • Committed to equality, diversity and inclusion

Main Terms and Conditions

Place of work: As part of UKCISA's hybrid working, the office located at Woburn House, 20-24 Tavistock Square, London, WC1H 9HQ, is regarded as the place of work for all in office activity. Staff can opt to work from the office, subject to desk availability via a booking system. Staff are also able to choose to work from home. Staff are required to attend monthly in person all day staff meetings in central London.

Salary: £55,000-£65,000 based on experience and the role is subject to UKCISA's pay award policy

Annual leave: Full-time equivalent of 25 days in the complete holiday year + Bank/public holidays + Christmas/New Year concessionary leave

Pension: UKCISA operates a pension scheme provided by the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS), currently the company contributes an amount equal to 14.5% of the employee's gross salary, and the employee contributes 6.1%.

Probation: The first six (6) months of your employment are served as a probationary period. During this period your work performance and general suitability will be assessed.

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How to apply

To apply for this role, please prepare your responses to the following questions:

1) Please outline one specific example of your use of technology to improve financial processing or reporting. How did it improve the outcome for the organisation? (350 words)

2) Please give one example of how you used management accounts, budgets or cash flow information to support a decision or address a financial risk (350 words)

3) Please give one example of how you fulfilled the role of a finance business partner to support an internal team to achieve their operational or strategic targets (350 words)

Please submit your maximum 1050 word response (as a PDF) and CV to Recruitment@ukcisa.org.uk by **Monday 14 September 9am**. No further covering letter is required. Please note that we will be unable to consider applications which are received after the closing date.

If you wish to speak with our CEO about this role, please contact ChiefExecutive@ukcisa.org.uk

Application queries, including reasonable adjustment requests, can be made by emailing Recruitment@ukcisa.org.uk.

In person interviews will take place at our office in central London on 24 September 2026

UKCISA UK Council for International Student Affairs

ukcisa.org.uk