

Appointment brief

Interim Director of Finance

November 2023

Reference: IATALD



About the Royal Veterinary College

The Royal Veterinary College is the UK's largest and longest-established independent veterinary school and a Member Institution of the University of London.

Originally established in Camden, North West London, in 1791, the Royal Veterinary College (RVC) received its first Charter of Incorporation from Queen Victoria in 1875. The RVC became a full part of the University of London in 1949, whilst retaining its independence with its own Royal Charter, and in 1955 acquired a large estate in Hertfordshire which is today our modern and vibrant Hawkshead campus. Earlier this year, the RVC was awarded University Title.

Beside our two main academic campuses, our facilities include the Queen Mother Hospital for Animals, which today treats over 7,000 patients a year, the largest small animal referral hospital in Europe, two first opinion small animal practices, and both first opinion and referral equine services. The RVC is also home to the London BioScience Innovation Centre in Camden, a wholly-owned subsidiary and London's first centre for early-stage life science companies. This puts the RVC at the heart of biotechnology and other biomedical research in London and opens doors for research collaboration. There is also a charitable arm, the Animal Care Trust, which raises funds to support a wide range of RVC activities aimed at improving animal health and care.

The RVC offers an impressive range of undergraduate, postgraduate and CPD programmes, with a student population of around 2,500. Among our 1,000 employees, we have over 150 research-active academics, involved in programmes that address both basic and clinical problems in the biosciences, with applications across human and veterinary medicine. Our programmes have international appeal and attract students who go on to become practicing veterinarians, research scientists, veterinary nurses and leaders in industry and government.

As one of the world's leading specialist veterinary and biological science research institutions, the RVC brings together talented individuals, all of whom share a passion for human and animal health and welfare.

- The RVC is ranked as the top veterinary school in the world in line with the QS World University Rankings by subject, 2023.
- In 2023, the RVC received an overall Silver award from the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) with a Gold award for student outcomes.
- A research led institution with 88% of its research rated as internationally excellent or world class in the Research Excellence Framework 2021.
- The RVC is one of the few veterinary schools in the world whose veterinary medicine courses are accredited by RCVS in the UK (with reciprocal recognition from the AVBC for Australasia, the VCI for Ireland and the SAVC for South Africa), the EAEVE in the EU, and the AVMA in the USA and Canada. Our veterinary nursing courses are accredited by ACOVENE and RCVS, and biological sciences courses are accredited by the Royal Society of Biology.
- In 2020, RVC was also one of the first institutions in the UK to be awarded Association of University Administrators' Mark of Excellence for its commitment to Professional Services people development.

To read our latest strategy, please click on the link: [RVC Strategic Plan 2022-2026](#)

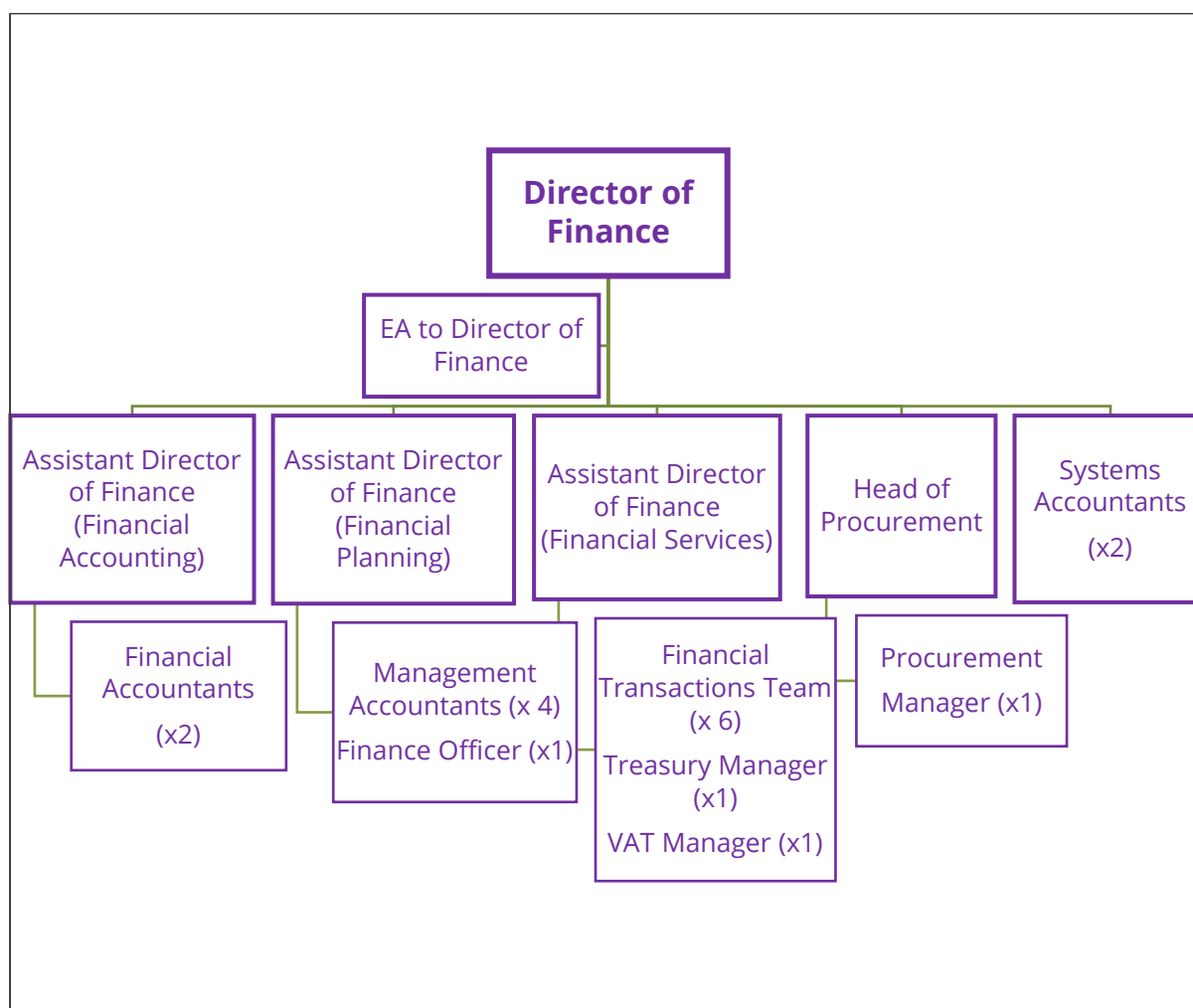
Our Mission

The mission of the Royal Veterinary College is to be a leading authority in education, clinical care, research, expert opinion and employment in veterinary and biomedical sciences.



Finance Department

The Finance Department is led by the Director of Finance and comprises around 20 staff, most of whom are based at the RVC's Camden campus. The Department is structured as follows:



The Department has a wide range of responsibilities and is structured into teams to deliver these, as set out below. In order to do this effectively, there is significant and regular interaction with other departments within the RVC as well as external stakeholders.

Financial Accounting

- Preparation of the annual financial statements for the RVC Group and its subsidiary entities
- Preparation of annual US GAAP accounts
- Administration of the RVC's endowment funds
- Cash-flow forecasting and placement of surplus funds

Financial Planning

- Provision of regular financial management information to budget holders and the RVC's senior governance committees

- Development of budgets and forward financial plans and forecasts
- Preparation of external returns as required by funders and regulators
- Undertaking costing and pricing exercises and preparation of business cases

Financial Services

- Payment of suppliers
- Invoicing of customers and debt collection
- Foreign exchange transactions, including administration of US student loans
- Development and enforcement of financial regulations, policies and procedures
- Ensuring the RVC is compliant with VAT, Corporation Tax and off-payroll working legislation, providing advice and training on these, and liaising with tax authorities.

Procurement

- Supporting staff across the College in their procurement activities and ensuring compliance with procurement regulations, including developing internal policies and procedures

Finance Systems

- Maintenance and development of the [Unit 4 ERP Finance system](#) including user training

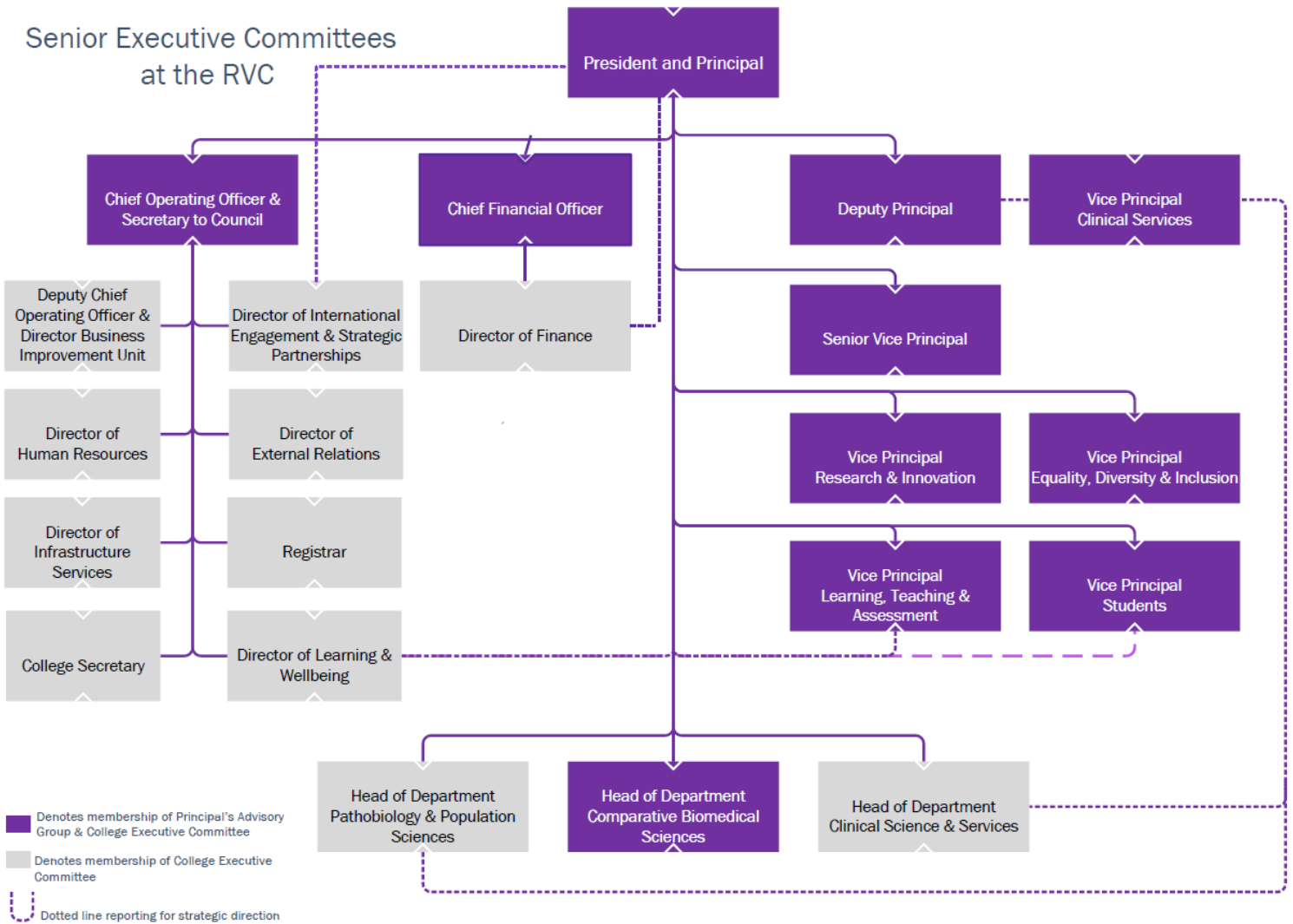
Insurance

- Administration of the RVC's [insurance policies](#)



The Role

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE



PURPOSE

The RVC has a proud reputation as the oldest and largest veterinary college in the English-speaking world and is unique in its autonomy and governance structure amongst UK schools. The RVC is committed to professionalism in all aspects of its business and aspires to the highest quality in delivering its core missions of education, research and clinical service. To ensure these objectives are achieved, the RVC strives to underpin all its activities with robust and efficient business structures, systems and processes, all within a modern and transparent governance framework.

The Director of Finance is responsible for ensuring that the Finance function delivers to these aspirations. The post holder reports to the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) with a dotted reporting line to the President and Principal and is responsible for the operational leadership of the Finance Department. The Director of Finance also supports the CFO in developing the RVC's finance strategy and forward financial plans to deliver the aims set out in the Strategic Plan 2022 – 2026.

The Director of Finance is a member of the RVC's Executive Committee.

KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES

Leadership and Management

- Contribute to the RVC's leadership and strategic planning as a member of the Executive Committee and keep the Committee informed on key financial matters
- Lead, manage and motivate Finance Department team to provide a high quality, professional and customer focussed service and have overall responsibility for their development and appraisal
- Promote a culture of financial awareness and compliance across the RVC
- Represent the RVC with external stakeholders including banks, investment fund managers, tax authorities, external advisors
- In conjunction with the CFO and Committee Chair, and as Secretary to the Committee, develop the agenda for Finance & General Purposes Committee, providing papers for, and attending the meetings
- Contribute papers and attend meetings of the Audit & Risk Committee and the RVC Council

Delivery of Financial Services

- Ensure the delivery of high-quality and professional financial services to staff and students through the effective operation of key transaction processing functions including Accounts Payable, Accounts Receivable, Cash and Banking
- Promote and enforce financial compliance across the RVC through clear policies and procedures and appropriate training
- Oversee the provision of VAT, corporation tax and off-payroll working advice, ensuring compliance with HMRC requirements
- Oversee the financial administration of US student loans funds
- Lead the Finance Systems staff in the management and development of the RVC's financial information system (Unit4ERP)
- Oversight of treasury management, including cash flow forecasting and the investment and performance monitoring of endowment funds and short-term cash reserves
- Provision of procurement advice and support

Financial Planning and Budgeting

- Ensure that budget holders are appropriately supported to meet their financial responsibilities including providing them with monthly management accounts and appropriate advice, guidance and training
- Oversee the annual budget planning process providing support to budget holders in developing their resourcing plans
- Support the CFO in developing and delivering the RVC's Finance Strategy and associated KPIs and in the preparation of rolling five-year financial forecasts
- Work with the CFO in progressing key strategic financial projects in support of the RVC's Strategic Plan 2022-2026
- Develop and maintain transparent and robust costing models to inform the allocation of resources and pricing strategies
- Provide regular reports to the Executive Committee and Governing Committees on financial performance against budget and on emerging financial developments
- Advising budget holders on the preparation of business cases

Statutory Reporting

- Ensure the RVC is compliant with all statutory and regulatory requirements and acts in strict accordance with the terms of funding bodies
- Ensure that all accounting records are in good order and oversee the preparation and audit of the RVC Group and subsidiary entity annual financial statements
- Oversee the preparation and audit of annual US GAAP accounts
- Ensure that all statutory financial returns are submitted in accordance with regulator deadlines and reporting criteria

Financial Governance

- Ensure the RVC follows best practice in terms of financial governance and delivery of value for money
- Ensure that financial regulations and underpinning policies are complete and fit-for-purpose
- Review, maintain and develop appropriate financial and risk management systems and procedures
- Maintain the Finance Department operational risk register and be the risk owner for the financial risks within the RVC's Strategic Risk Register
- Participate in the development of the annual internal audit programme for approval by the Audit & Risk Committee, act as audit sponsor for relevant audit reviews and lead the RVC's relationship with the internal auditors
- Ensure the RVC has appropriate insurance cover and oversee the annual renewal process and ongoing insurance administration
- Act as a signatory for higher value RVC contracts ensuring the terms and conditions do not put the RVC at risk

Person specification

Knowledge and Experience

Essential:

- A recognised professional accounting qualification with at least 10 years relevant post qualification experience
- Extensive experience of successfully leading a team of staff involved in the delivery of finance functions in an organisation of relevant scale and complexity
- Strong technical accounting skills with experience of the preparation and audit of financial statements
- An awareness of the financial governance obligations and responsibilities of a public body
- Sound commercial acumen with an appreciation of costing and pricing principles
- An understanding of, or interest in, the HE sector and an awareness of the issues and challenges it faces

Desirable:

- Higher Education experience

Leadership and Management

Essential:

- Excellent written and verbal communication skills
- A successful track record in staff management with the ability to motivate and develop a high functioning team
- Able to influence, advise and negotiate at all levels and to collaborate effectively with senior colleagues
- Experience of operating at Board level
- Able to deal confidently, and represent the RVC, with external parties e.g. auditors, banking institutions, regulators, advisors
- Evidence of drive, energy and a commitment to deliver continuous improvement

Planning and Organising Resources

Essential:

- A proven track record in meeting targets and deadlines
- Ability to operate at pace and balance competing demands, whilst maintaining a high degree of effectiveness and accuracy
- Delivery of change management projects and cross-functional working

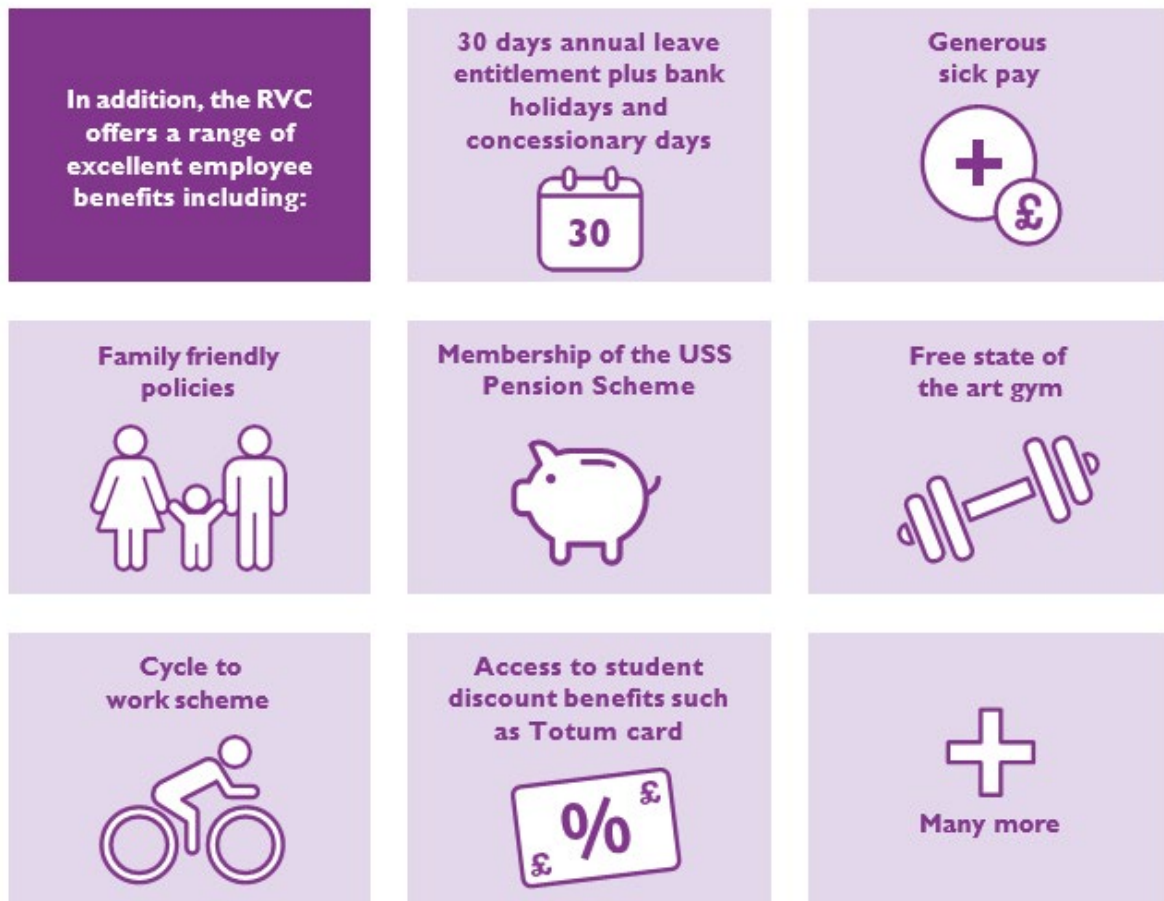
Terms of appointment

Interim – 12 months

Full-time

Hybrid working with at least 3 days a week in the office

Salary will be competitive and commensurate with experience and with the seniority of the post.



For comprehensive details on the range of benefits RVC employees enjoy, click [here](#).

The RVC values Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and therefore welcomes applicants from all backgrounds and communities. We particularly encourage and welcome female applicants, applicants with a disability, and applicants from a Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic (BAME) background as we are committed to increasing our representation within these groups who are currently under-represented at senior levels within the RVC. Balancing both the needs of the business with those of our staff, we will consider applications to work on a flexible basis where possible.

How to apply

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to the RVC on this appointment.

Candidates should apply for this role through our website at www.saxbam.com/appointments using code **IATALD**.

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis so early expressions of interest are encouraged, and to be received no later than noon on Friday 24th November 2023.

Click on the 'apply' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter, and complete the online equal opportunities monitoring form. The form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. Please complete as part of the application process.

GDPR personal data notice

According to GDPR guidelines, we are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent. You will be asked to complete a consent form when you apply and please do not include any Sensitive Personal Data within your CV (although this can be included in your covering letter if you wish to do so), remembering also not to include contact details for referees without their prior agreement.



Saxton Bampfylde

RVC | Interim Director of Finance

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