

Hansard Society

for Parliamentary Democracy

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Job Information Pack

Finance and Administration Officer

Deadline: 10am, Friday 11 August 2023



ABOUT YOU AND THE ROLE

The Hansard Society is looking for a part-time Finance and Administration Officer to support a range of key operational functions, particularly finance and membership administration.

The role is equivalent to one day per week initially, but with the possibility of increasing the hours over time. There is considerable flexibility about how the hours are worked each week.

If you are interested in politics and think what Parliament does matters, then this is a great opportunity to put your administrative and organisational skills to work for a Society focused on making Parliament a more effective institution.

This is an ideal role for someone who is highly motivated, has previously worked in an administrative capacity, ideally with some exposure to finance, and who possesses good organisational skills and attention to detail. Supporting our business-critical functions, you can make a big impact on the effectiveness and efficiency of our organisation.

As our Finance and Administration Officer, here's a taste of what you will do:

- **Financial administration:** Liaising with our accountants, you will oversee the processing of purchase and sales invoices, expense claims, and credit card reconciliation. You will also process Statutory Instrument Tracker® and training contracts, invoices and subscription renewals, and help keep our CRM system up to date.
- **Membership administration:** You will process membership applications and renewals, respond to queries and ensure that our membership records are updated.
- **Office administration:** You will liaise with our suppliers and our landlord, and generally help ensure the smooth running of the office. You will ensure our operational records, policies and procedures are kept up to date. Occasionally, we may need you to provide support for the Director and other staff, such as booking rooms and travel or ordering catering and supplies.
- **Database administration:** In addition to updating our CRM system, you will support colleagues in developing and updating our marketing database for our events and services (for example the Statutory Instrument Tracker® and procedural training programme).

To be successful in this role you will need to ensure prompt and accurate data input, be capable of investigating and resolving discrepancies, and meet crucial deadlines while also fostering positive working relationships both internally with colleagues and externally with customers and suppliers. The ability to multi-task and juggle priorities is essential.

Your skills and experience

You will be the right person for this job if:

- You have some experience of working in an administrative role, ideally with exposure to finance and/or membership related tasks.
- You are flexible and capable of working on your own initiative, with the ability to juggle priorities and work with minimal supervision.
- You have excellent organisational skills and an eye for detail.
- You have excellent verbal and written communication skills.
- You have exceptional people skills and are a collaborative team-player.
- You have excellent IT skills, being familiar with CRM systems and proficient in using Microsoft Office software, especially Excel. Experience of using Stripe, the online payment processing platform, would also be an advantage.
- You are a creative thinker and problem-solver with a 'can do' attitude.
- You appreciate our mission, have good political awareness, and can commit to the non-partisan values and ethos of the Hansard Society.

WHAT WE OFFER

Contract: This is a part-time post equivalent to one day per week (0.2 fte) but with flexibility about how the hours are worked. It is subject to a three-month probationary review. There may be scope over time to increase the number of hours/days.

Salary: £28,000 per annum pro-rated (so £5,600 for 0.2fte).

Pension: 7% contributory pension with a 2% minimum employee contribution.

Annual leave: 25 days pro-rated (so 5 days for 0.2fte), plus the days between Christmas and New Year.

After successful completion of the three-month probationary period, staff are eligible for an interest-free season ticket loan (paid back via monthly salary deductions) and can purchase a bike through the Cycle-to-work Scheme (at reduced cost and repaid via salary deductions).

The Society subscribes to an Employee Assistance Programme which offers advice and counselling via a confidential phone line and website, with advice provided on a wide range of subjects including personal financial and legal matters, and work-life balance.

Location: The post is based at our Westminster office (in Millbank Tower, 21-24 Millbank, London, SW1 P 4QP) but with the option of working from home for some of the time.

Please note that you must be entitled to work in the UK.

APPLICATION PROCESS AND DEADLINES

DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS: 10am, Friday 11 August 2023

The Society is using an anonymised online application process for the first stage of recruitment. To apply, [follow this link](#).

Online application

The application has four parts:

1. About you: Here we ask you to complete some personal details. This information will not be visible to those assessing your application.

2. Practical questions: There is just one question here. You are asked to confirm that you are entitled to work in the UK.

3. Multiple choice test: There are 12 questions and you will have up to 30 minutes to complete the test. They cover comprehension, judgement, numeracy and verbal reasoning. Please make sure you have a calculator and notebook to hand! Once you start the test, a timer will count down in the corner of the screen. You cannot exit and re-start the test once you begin. So, make sure you set time aside to complete it in full.

4. Short questions: Here we ask you to complete 6 questions. Each question has a 250-word limit. This section is not timed. You can save your answers and leave the system if you want to, and then return and amend or complete your answers before submitting your application.

The questions cover:

- your skills and experience for this role;
- your organisational skills;
- your drafting skills;
- your attention to detail;
- how you would prioritise different tasks;
- how you would address ethical issues.

Reviewing the applications

Each of your answers will be anonymised, randomised, and then reviewed by several different people. So, please do not refer in your answers to anything you have written

in response to another question (for example, do not write things like “as explained earlier”). Once all the applications have been reviewed anonymously, and the scores have been received from the different reviewers for each section, the resulting scores will be averaged. We will then compile a shortlist of candidates for interview. We are grateful to all candidates for taking the time to apply, and we think feedback is important. So, if you are not selected for interview, we will nonetheless contact you and let you know how you performed.

We will only ask you to provide us with a CV and contact details for references if you score well on blind review and so reach the interview stage.

Interviews

First interviews will take place online via Zoom. It is anticipated that these will take place in the week commencing 21 August 2021.

If you are selected for a second interview this will likely be held the following week. These will be held in person. Reasonable travel expenses will be reimbursed.

Start date

As soon as possible.

Enquiries

If you wish to discuss this post informally with the Director, Ruth Fox, please email recruitment@hansardsociety.org.uk and we will arrange a call at a mutually convenient time as soon as possible.

Your data

The personal data we collect from your application will be processed in accordance with our [Privacy Policy](#).

We are an equal opportunity employer

We welcome and encourage applicants from all backgrounds. We do not discriminate based on age, disability, LGBT or relationship status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex or social class. Currently, BME people are under-represented in our staff team, so we would particularly welcome applications from these communities.

ABOUT THE HANSARD SOCIETY

The Hansard Society is widely recognised as the Westminster Parliament's 'critical friend'. Through our research we develop ideas to improve the way Parliament works and through education, events and media engagement we strive to improve knowledge of and interest in the UK's parliamentary system.

The Society was founded by Stephen King-Hall MP in 1944 and our first members were Clement Attlee MP and Winston Churchill MP. Today, as in their day, we bring together parliamentarians and all those interested in parliamentary affairs in the UK and around the world.

A registered charity, the Society is a membership organisation which is governed by an independent Board of Trustees including representatives from across the political spectrum. The current chair is the Rt Hon the Baroness Taylor of Bolton. Other trustees include a former Minister in the Scottish and Northern Ireland Offices, the former Clerk of the Parliaments, the former Chair of the Commission on Devolution in Wales, and the former Head of Political Programmes for BBC News, as well as leading academics in the fields of political science and digital democracy.

Underpinning our commitment to non-partisanship, the Speakers of the two Houses – currently the Rt Hon Sir Lindsay Hoyle, Speaker of the House of Commons, and the Rt Hon the Lord McFall, the Lord Speaker – serve as honorary Co-Presidents of the Society.

The Society is funded through a mix of income streams. We have recently secured new project grants from the Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust (12 months), the Legal Education Foundation (24 months), and the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust (36 months).

We also generate core, unrestricted income from our journal [Parliamentary Affairs](#), our membership, our [Statutory Instrument Tracker®](#) and our legislative and procedural training programmes. This income is re-invested in our research and education projects and helps protect our independence and secure our future by ensuring we are not dependent on any single funder.

Future projects

This is a crucial time for our parliamentary democracy. There is growing concern about the constitutional balance of power between Parliament and the executive, standards in public life and worrying levels of public cynicism about politics and politicians.

As we approach the next general election our work will focus on four stands of activity

to improve the way Parliament works and to support the next generation of MPs in their role as legislators and scrutineers.

This Autumn we will be:

- publishing the final recommendations of our Delegated Legislation Review to develop a comprehensive plan to address the problems with the delegated legislation system. We will then be working with allies in Parliament and beyond to press the case for change and to persuade the major parties to commit to reform the system in their election manifestos.
- embarking on a new programme of work bringing together our proposals for parliamentary reform to provide MPs in the next Parliament with a wide-ranging agenda for change. This programme of work will include a new Taskforce to review the customs, language and rules of the House of Commons.
- launching a new training and development programme at the start of the new Parliament to support newly-elected MPs in their role as legislators and scrutineers. This will include sessions on the role of MPs in relation to the constitution, how to read and understand both primary and delegated legislation and scrutiny of the Budget and Estimates process. We will also be developing and piloting a training programme for future parliamentary candidates so that those seeking to become MPs have a basic understanding of the constitution, the legislative process and how the House of Commons works.
- planning an exciting new programme of events and activities to mark our 80th anniversary in 2024. Our trusted role as Parliament's 'critical friend' enables us to convene a diverse range of debates, lectures, seminars, and workshops to discuss topical political and constitutional issues. In recent times we have, for example, hosted the first-ever [online hustings for the election of the new Lord Speaker](#), the first ever public [speech on House of Lords reform by the new Lord Speaker](#), and a discussion with journalist [Michael Crick about party candidate selection](#) for the general election.

Further information about the Society can be found at: www.hansardsociety.org.uk