



**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION & YOUTH  
CENTRAL MINISTRY  
JOB DESCRIPTION AND SPECIFICATION**

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| <b>JOB TITLE:</b>       | Principal Finance Officer  |
| <b>JOB GRADE:</b>       | FMG/PA 5   |
| <b>POST NUMBER:</b>     |  |
| <b>DIVISION/BRANCH:</b> | Financial Management Services Division   |
| <b>REPORTS TO:</b>      | Permanent Secretary  |
| <b>MANAGES:</b>         | Director – Management Accounting Branch<br>Director – Project Accounts Branch<br>Director – Schools' Payroll Services Branch<br>Director – Accounts Payables & Payroll Branch<br>Director – Final Accounts & Reporting Branch<br>Manager - Financial Systems<br>Financial Analyst<br>Executive Secretary 1<br>Administrative Assistant |

This document will be used as a management tool and specifically will enable the classification of positions and the evaluation of the performance of the post incumbent.

This document is validated as an accurate and true description of the job as signified below:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Manager/Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Head of Department/Division

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date received in Human Resource Division

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Created/revised

## **Strategic Objectives Of The Division**

The Financial Management Division provides Financial and Accounting Services to support the Ministry and ensures that sector priorities are adequately resourced by:

- leading on the accounting, financial planning, budgeting and resourcing for the entire education portfolio
- providing financial management services for the Policy Ministry

## **Job Purpose**

Under the direction of the Permanent Secretary the position is responsible for: providing shrewd financial management advice to the Ministry and its portfolio entities; ensuring utilisation of Government of Jamaica (GoJ) funds; providing financial analysis and relevant reporting; implementing and administering efficient financial systems; managing the financial procedures; implementing sound financial policies in keeping with GoJ guidelines; ensuring good risk and budget management; ensuring an efficient system is established for the maintenance of the financial and accounting records; enforcing the provisions of the FAA Act and ensuring proper project accounting.

## **Key Outputs:**

- Corporate/Operational/Work plans prepared
- The Ministry's Annual Budget and estimate of expenditure
- Financial reports prepared
- Accounting Procedures instituted
- Recommendation/ Advice provided
- The Division's Annual Budget

## **Key Responsibility Areas:**

### **Technical / Professional Responsibilities**

#### **Planning:**

- Provides financial management information on a timely basis through in-depth planning and forecasting strategies.
- Develops the Division's Corporate Plan and determines the financial requirements to support the Division's and the Ministry's Corporate Plan.
- Leads in the development of the annual budgets for the Ministry of Education

#### **Budgeting:**

- Manages the Budget for the Ministry and its portfolio;
- Ensures that proper budgeting systems are established and implemented in accordance with the Ministry of Finance and the Public Service directives by:
  1. reviewing budgetary requests to ascertain that they are in tandem with the approved programmes.

2. guiding senior managers in the preparation of their budgets to ensure that they are in keeping with the Corporate Plan,
3. preparing annual estimates of expenditure and specifying monthly cash flow targets,
4. co-ordinating and overseeing the compilation of the Ministry's budget on a timely basis, as well as developing justification for the budget proposals,
5. implementing an effective mechanism for managing expenditure with the warrant limits through planning, commitment and control processes.
6. allocating the monthly and quarterly warrants in accordance with agreed priorities of the divisions and agencies to ensure adequate provision for inescapable expenditure.
7. reviewing all bank accounts regularly to ensure that there are no large idle cash balances for the Ministry.

### **Project Accounting:**

- Assists with the evaluation of locally and internationally funded projects.
- Ensures that funding received from international organizations are consistent with the Joint Accounting and reporting requirements of the government and the lending agency.
- Monitors externally funded projects on a monthly basis, to ensure proper accounting of expenditure to facilitate prompt 'draw downs'
- Monitors closely inflows of internal receipts against budgetary targets.

### **Cash Management:**

- Authorizes payments and signs cheques.
- Determines the cash requirements of the Ministry on a continuous basis, as well as reviewing the cash requirements for the Regional Office, Agencies and Educational Institutions.
- Receives, maintains in safe custody and disburses all cash on the behalf of the Ministry.
- Liaises with the Ministry of Finance and Planning in regards to cash management issues
- Manages the monitoring of the disbursement of cash from the Accountant General Department

### **Assets Management:**

- Monitors the system in place for adequate protection and efficient utilization of all assets on a quarterly basis.

### **Expenditure Control:**

- Directs and controls expenditure by reviewing financial statements/reports and apprising the Permanent Secretary continuously of the financial health of the Ministry.
- Ensures that goods and services are procured in accordance with the strict provisions of the Government's Contracts Manual and that contractual agreements are properly executed.
- Ensures that monthly expenditure statements are prepared within ten (10) working days.
- Ensures that the salary and deposit accounts are reconciled monthly.

### **Financial Accounting And Reporting:**

- Interprets government financial policies, analyzing them and advising top management on their implications for the Ministry's operations.
- Prepares responses to audit queries from the Auditor General's Department by;
  1. requesting reports on queries from the respective managers within the Ministry and its Regional Offices / Agencies and Educational Institutions.
  2. preparing draft responses and submitting them to the Permanent Secretary for review.
  3. preparing responses to the Annual Auditor Generals' Report after consulting with the relevant officers.
  4. Ensures that the Annual Appropriation Accounts for recurrent, capital A and B are prepared and submitted to the Ministry of Finance and the Auditor General, along with explanation of causes of variation between approved estimates and expenditure
  5. Ensures that a Financial Management Information System is being maintained.

### **Salary Administration:**

- Responsible for ensuring the payment of salaries to the following categories of workers:
  - The Central Ministry's staff
  - Division of Schools' Services staff
  - Projects staff
  - Educational Institutions
- Responsible for ensuring that statutory and personal deductions are forwarded to institutions

### **Management/Administrative Responsibilities**

Manages the work and staff of the Financial Management Division to enable it to function in an effective and efficient manner by:

- developing objectives, policies and work programmes and promoting a high level of management practices in the Division and the Ministry on a whole,
- ensuring that the accounting staff is effectively deployed within the division and the regional offices,
- identifying training and developmental needs for staff and collaborating with the HRM & A Division to ensure the necessary training.
- evaluating the performance of senior staff on an ongoing basis, and undertaking the annual performance appraisal.
- ensuring that the Division is adequately staffed with trained professionals and affording staff the necessary leave of absence for upgrading their skills.
- makes representation to ensure that staff is provided with the necessary tools, equipment, furniture and environment for productive work.
- motivating staff and promoting a high level of morale and team spirit.
- assisting in recruiting staff and making recommendations for appointment, promotion and disciplinary action.
- conducts quarterly divisional staff meetings..
- Represents the Ministry at national and international fora as directed by the Permanent Secretary.
- Conducts training courses/seminars/workshops for the Ministry and Educational Institutions

/Agencies re the public sector financial management system.

- Supports the Permanent Secretary at the Public Accounts and Standing Finance Committees of Parliament.
- Reviews statistical and comparative analysis reports prepared by the staff for submission to the Permanent Secretary.
- Reports all cases of loss or suspected irregularities to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance or the Auditor General and recommends appropriate action.
- Participates in the Senior Executive Management Committee Meetings to;
- provide advice to the Permanent Secretary and the Committee in the formulation of policy decisions, addressing staff matters relating to the delegation of functions; table monthly reports on accounting and financial matters and to assist in the development of the Ministry's Corporate Plan.

### **HR Responsibilities**

- Develops and manages the performance of the Division/Section/Unit and its staff, including transferring skills, motivating staff through coaching and mentoring, arranging for training, setting performance targets, monitoring performance, providing feedback to staff, and initiating corrective action where necessary to improve performance;
- Promotes the building of institutional knowledge for the Division/ Section//Unit by ensuring that established systems and procedures are documented and disseminated;
- Participates in the recruitment and selection of staff, and recommends movement when appropriate
- Recommends vacation leave and approves sick and departmental leave for staff in the Division/Section/Unit, and participates in the administration of staff benefits in keeping with established human resource policies;
- Recommends/ administers disciplinary action in keeping with established human resource policies;
- Conducts monthly and other ad hoc staff meetings as required
- Ensures staff adheres to the policies and procedures of the Ministry and the Division;
- Ensures that staff is provided with adequate and appropriate physical resources to enable them to undertake their duties effectively and efficiently;
- Collaborates with the Human Resource Management Branch in developing and implementing a succession planning programme to ensure continuity of skills and competencies in the Division/Section/Unit ,and personal development and career advancement of employees;
- Fosters teamwork, a harmonious working environment and promotes collaborative working relations
- Conducts performance appraisals of staff supervised for required purpose and at required intervals

### **Performance Standards:**

- Confidentiality and integrity are exercised in the performance of duties
- Risk assessment is conducted in accordance with government accounting procedures
- Financial recommendation leads to improved operations
- Audit plans and programmes are comprehensive, accurately prepared, submitted within the agreed time frame and budget in accordance with established policies and procedures
- Working papers and reports are accurate, clear and concise and prepared in accordance with established guidelines
- Operational plan is prepared within established format, time frame and supports the strategic objective

- of the Ministry
- Recommendations/Advice are sound and are in accordance with established guidelines
- Welfare of staff is clearly identified and addressed

**Internal And External Contacts (specify purpose of significant contacts:**

**Within the Ministry**

| <b>Contact (Title)</b>                       | <b>Purpose of Communication</b> |
|--|---------------------------------|
| Heads of Divisions/Units                     | To provide advice/ Consultation |
| The Chief Education Officer                  | To provide advice/ Consultation |
| Chief Internal Auditor                       | To provide advice/ Consultation |
| Principal Director, Corporate Services       | To provide advice/ Consultation |
| DCEO's DSS                                   | To provide advice/ Consultation |
| All Agencies within the Ministry's portfolio | To provide advice/ Consultation |

**Contacts external to the organisation required for the achievement of the position objectives**

| <b>Contact (Title)</b>                     | <b>Purpose of Communication</b> |
|--|---------------------------------|
| Ministry of Finance and The Public Service | To liaise/Consult               |
| The Auditor General                        | To collaborate/Consult          |
| The Accountant General                     | To collaborate/Consult          |
| Bank Managers                              | To collaborate/Consult          |
| PIOJ                                       | To collaborate/Consult          |
| All Educational Institutions               | To liaise/Consult               |
| Local & International Donor Agencies       |                                 |

**Required Competencies:**

**Core**

Ability to:

- plan, organize, strategize and forecast
- provide sound advice to all relevant personnel
- accurately apply the provisions of the relevant acts, rules and regulations
- interpret and analyse the policies and regulations governing the financial operations of the Ministry
- prepare, interpret and analyse financial statements/reports
- motivate and lead staff supervised
- demonstrate excellent inter-personal and human relations skills
- work under pressure and meet strict deadlines
- lead and work in team

**Technical**

Knowledge of:

- government financial and accounting systems
- the FAA Act and related regulations
- staff orders and relevant financial circulars
- management accounting systems, policies and procedures
- the Education Act
- principles and practices of management, as well as supervisory management
- contract and procurement administration
- working knowledge of relevant computer applications

### **Minimum Required Education And Experience**

- Masters degree from a recognized tertiary institution in Financial and Management Accounting; Business Administration/Management Studies majoring in Finance/Accounts, or other professional designation such as ACCA.
- Training in Government Financial and Accounting Systems required.
- Training in Cost Accounting would be an asset.
- Minimum of 10 years working experience in Financial Management/Accounting, 5 years of which should be at a senior management level in the public/private sector.

### **Authority:**

- Manages the Ministry's operating budget
- Sign financial reports
- Authorise the validation of any system revised or implemented
- Recommendations
  - Leave
  - disciplinary action of direct reports
  - promotion of direct reports

### **Specific Conditions Associated With The Job**

- Extended working hours
- Travelling locally and internationally
- Responding to various financial management queries
- Security risk high
- High level of stress