

Commercial Assurance Manager

Department for Education

Closing date: 6 Dec 2018



Department
for Education

Reference number

1609216

Salary

£35,497 - £39,114

Grade

Senior Executive Officer

Contract type

Permanent

Business area

Operations Directorate - Commercial

Type of role

Business Management and Improvement
Commercial

Risk Management
Strategy

Working pattern

Flexible working, Full-time, Job share, Part-time

Hours

37

Number of posts

2

Location

Darlington, North East : Sheffield, Yorkshire and the Humber

About the job

Job description

Who we are

The Department for Education is responsible for education, children's services, higher and further education policy, apprenticeships and wider skills in England, and equalities. We work to achieve a highly educated society in which opportunity is equal for all, no matter what their background or family circumstances.

Operations Group is responsible for the main corporate functions of the department including: analysis, commercial, data, estates and security, finance, human resources, international education, Operations and Delivery Unit, technology and the governance and relationship standards with the DfE's public bodies. Its role is to support the business to deliver ministerial priorities by ensuring that:

- The department is sufficiently resourced (people, data / information, finance, IT) and organised right to deliver its business objectives; and
- efficient and effective systems and processes, driven by customer needs,

underpin our services.

Commercial Directorate

- The purpose of the commercial function within the Department for Education is to ensure that all commercial and procurement activity supports the Department's priorities and delivers outstanding value for money. It also exists to proactively develop commercial solutions for the wider education sector that reduce waste in procurement and release funds for the front line.
- The commercial function manages a large and diverse set of activities across the Department with many high profile and complex contracts and grants as well as running a highly successful Risk Protection Arrangement for academies and a schools buying strategy
- Commercial Group is currently engaged in an exciting growth and transformation programme and has investment commitment to become a world class public sector Commercial Organisation by 2021.
- The Commercial Policy and Assurance Team sits within the Commercial Operations Directorate and is responsible for Commercial Policy; Scrutiny and Assurance activity. We work closely with colleagues both within Commercial and the wider Business Areas of the Department as well as across Government.

The Role:

The Commercial Division is undergoing a four-year transformation programme to substantially develop its commercial capability. You will lead the commercial assurance team and play a key role in refreshing the Department's commercial assurance function during this period of Transformation. This is to enable the Department to deliver its priorities securing quality and value for money across its procurement and grant activity.

Reporting to the Head of Commercial Assurance you will work as part of a wider team led by the Head of Commercial Policy and Assurance. This will provide you with the opportunity to work across the wider function and become involved in areas such as developing commercial policy, identifying commercial risks and improving commercial capability. You will also work closely with colleagues from across the wider Commercial Division, Finance, Policy Areas and across Government.

The Assurance Team is an enabling function with responsibility to lead on

setting standards for: processes and behaviours; building awareness and skills, ensuring that these are deployed appropriately to make sound decisions. You will be expected to provide challenge in a positive way while working collaboratively with all stakeholders to reduce risk. Also working with colleagues in HMT and Cabinet Office in setting the control framework and negotiating adaptations, delegations and exemptions to support the efficient operation of DfE commercial activity.

Key Responsibilities:

Development and maintenance of the Commercial Assurance Function

- Supporting on identified aspects of the transformation programme through development and refreshing of the Department's approach to commercial assurance, scrutiny and accountability.
- Working closely with the wider commercial division to ensure supporting policies, tools and templates enable informed decision making within appropriate delegation levels.
- Developing capability within delivery and other teams across the Department through knowledge sharing and training sessions
- Embedding knowledge and good practice within delivery teams and elsewhere
- Represent DfE on any relevant cross-government working groups as agreed with the Head of Commercial Assurance.

Providing support, advice and challenge to delivery teams on commercial matters.

- Acting as a "critical friend" providing scrutiny and challenge on the commercial business case, Invitation to Tender, Evaluations Reports and other commercial processes.
- Alongside Commercial Policy engage with delivery colleagues to ensure they are knowledgeable about public procurement regulations, Government policy, departmental commercial policy and effective practice.
- Supporting senior leaders where required to develop effective mitigations for commercial risks, supporting negotiations and avoiding disputes.
- Provide commercial assurance input to key-holder reports for Investment Committee and the Performance, Risk and Resourcing Committee (PRRC) as and when required.

Ensure compliance with Cabinet Office Standards and External Controls

- Develop and maintain effective working relationships with Cabinet Office and across Government to ensure ongoing awareness of, and input to, updates to any external controls.
- Keep colleagues informed as to changes in external rules and guidance – most notably cabinet office efficiency controls, programme management of Major Projects and business case guidance.
- Conduct compliance checks to ensure adherence to all control measures.
- Maintain dialogue with Cabinet Office to ensure compliance with the controls remains proportionate to the requirement, re-negotiating compliance measures where appropriate.

Support development, implementation and management of an annual programme of commercial assurance/scrutiny activity.

- Work with the Head of Commercial Assurance to develop a programme of commercial scrutiny activity to ensure compliance with internal and external controls, legislation and best practice.
- Produce a detailed outcome report, identifying both best practice and areas for improvement.
- Provide input to the Head of Commercial Policy and Assurance to support the Commercial Senior Leadership to develop improvement initiatives across commercial delivery teams.
- Work closely with Internal Audit and the Government Internal Audit Agency (GIAA) to ensure unnecessary duplication of audit/scrutiny activity and build on findings following any external audit of the commercial function.

Essential Skills:

- Minimum 2 years relevant experience ('relevant' in this context is a commercial assurance, policy or delivery role);
- Detailed knowledge of procurement law and process;
- Experience acting for public sector organisations;
- Experience acting on complex commercial transactions;
- Client-side experience is an advantage.

Preferred Skills/Qualifications

- Should hold or be willing to work towards MCIPS qualification.

Knowledge and best practice sharing

- Attend local and national team, programme and project meetings
- Share lessons learned across programmes and promote best practice in procurement
- Present at external events

Additional Info:

This is an exciting time to join the Department for Education, with lots of great opportunities for staff at all levels to develop and grow. This role forms part of a large recruitment drive to transform the delivery of commercial activity. If you want a new challenge and to be part of a busy and innovative team, we want to hear from you.

To find out more about our ambition and the opportunities we are creating, please download the candidate pack.

The role will involve regular travel to other DfE sites.

Competencies

We'll assess you against these competencies during the selection process:

- Leading and communicating
- Seeing the big picture
- Changing and improving
- Managing a quality service
- Collaborating and partnering

[Civil Service Competency Framework](#)

Benefits

Pensions

[Civil Service pension schemes](#) may be available for successful candidates.

Benefits

As a member of the DfE, you will be entitled to join the highly competitive Civil Service Pension Scheme, which many experts agree is one of the most

generous in the UK.

You will have 25 days leave, increasing by 1 day every year to a maximum of 30 days after five years' service. In addition, all staff receive the Queen's Birthday privilege holiday and 8 days' bank and public holidays.

We offer flexible working arrangements, such as job sharing, term-time working, flexi-time and compressed hours, along with excellent childcare benefits.

As an organisation that exists to support education and lifelong learning, we offer our staff excellent professional development opportunities.

Applicants currently holding a permanent post in the Civil Service should note that, if successful, their salary on appointment would be determined by the Department's transfer / promotion policies.

To find out more, download the candidate pack attached to this advert.

Allowances

This post may attract a procurement allowance of £1,500 per annum for successful applicants holding the CIPS foundation qualification OR £4,000 per annum for successful applicants holding the full MCIPS qualification.

Successful candidates will need to supply evidence of CIPS qualifications in order to receive the allowance once in post.

Alternatively, the successful candidate will need to complete their study to achieve the qualification within an agreed reasonable timeframe. On achievement of the qualification, the procurement allowance will be paid at the above rates.

Things you need to know

Security

Successful candidates must pass a disclosure and barring security check.

Successful candidates must pass basic security checks.

Nationality statement

Candidates will be subject to UK immigration requirements as well as Civil Service nationality rules.

If you're applying for a role requiring security clearance please be aware that foreign or dual nationality is not an automatic bar. However certain posts may have restrictions which could affect those who do not have sole British nationality or who have personal connections with certain countries outside the UK.

Selection process details

This vacancy is using the Civil Service Competency Framework. Guidance on writing competency examples is available: A brief guide to competencies

As part of your application, you will be asked to complete a CV and a personal statement (maximum 1,000 words) which will be assessed against the role description and person specification detailed in the job advert.

If a large number of applicants apply, we will undertake an initial sift on the essential criteria, as outlined above.

Candidates that successfully pass the sift will be invited to a competency-based interview. At interview, you will be asked to provide examples to demonstrate how you meet the following Civil Service competences:

- Leading and Communicating
- Seeing the Bigger Picture
- Changing and Improving
- Managing a Quality Service
- Collaborating and Partnering

For more information on how to develop a CV and personal statement please refer to the candidate pack.

Feedback will only be provided if you attend an interview or assessment.

Nationality requirements

Open to UK, Commonwealth and European Economic Area (EEA) and certain non EEA nationals. Further information on whether you are able to apply is available here.

Eligibility

Candidates in their probationary period are eligible to apply for vacancies within this department.

Working for the Civil Service

The Civil Service Code sets out the standards of behaviour expected of civil servants.

We recruit by merit on the basis of fair and open competition, as outlined in the Civil Service Commission's recruitment principles.

The Civil Service embraces diversity and promotes equality of opportunity. There is a guaranteed interview scheme (GIS) for candidates with disabilities who meet the minimum selection criteria.

Terms & Conditions

Please see attachment below for the DfE's terms & conditions.

Apply and further information

Contact point for applicants

For further information on this vacancy please email dfc@penna.com or call 0800 049 6798.

Sift/interview dates and location

Sift and interview dates to be confirmed. Interview Location to be confirmed.

If successful and transferring from another Government Department a criminal record check maybe carried out.

Those candidates invited to assessment will be provided with sufficient notice of confirmed dates.

Further information

A reserve list may be held for a period of 12 months from which further appointments can be made.

New entrants are expected to join on the minimum of the pay band.

Applicants who are successful at interview will be, as part of pre-employment screening subject to a check on the Internal Fraud Database (IFD). This check will provide information about employees who have been dismissed for fraud or dishonesty offences. This check also applies to employees who resign or otherwise leave before being dismissed for fraud or dishonesty had their employment continued. Any applicant's details held on the IFD will be refused employment.

Terms and conditions of candidates transferring from ALBs and NDPBs.

1. Bodies that are not accredited by the Civil Service Commission and are not able to advertise at Across Government on Civil Service jobs will be treated as external new starters and will come into DfE on modernised terms and conditions with a salary at the band minimum.
2. Bodies that are accredited by the Civil Service Commission but do not have civil service status will be offered modernised terms and will not have continuous service recognised for leave or sickness benefits. Salaries should be offered at band minimum, but there is some flexibility where this would cause a detriment to the individual.
3. Bodies that are accredited by the Civil Service Commission and do have Civil Service status will be treated as OGD transfers. Staff appointed on lateral transfer will move on to pre-modernised DfE terms (unless they were on modernised terms in their previous organisation). Staff appointed on promotion will move on to modernised DfE terms. Staff will transfer over on their existing salary (on lateral transfer) and any pay above the DfE pay band maximum will be paid as a mark time allowance. Staff moving on promotion will have their salaries calculated using the principles set out in the attached OGD transfer supplementary information.

Reasonable Adjustment

If a person with disabilities is put at a substantial disadvantage compared to a non-disabled person, we have a duty to make reasonable changes to our processes. If you need a change to be made so that you can make your application, you should:

- Contact Government Recruitment Service via dferecruitment.grs@cabinetoffice.gov.uk soon as possible before the closing

date to discuss your needs.

- Complete the “Assistance required” section in the “Additional requirements” page of your application form to tell us what changes or help you might need further on in the recruitment process. For instance, you may need wheelchair access at interview, or if you’re deaf, a Language Service Professional.

The Department for Education’s recruitment processes are underpinned by the Civil Service Commissioners Recruitment Principles, which outlines that selection for appointment is made on merit based on fair and open competition.

If you feel your application has not been treated in accordance with the values in the Civil Service Code and/or if you feel the recruitment has been conducted in such a way that conflicts with the Civil Service Commissioners Recruitment Principles, you may make a complaint, by contacting the Central Recruitment Team at the following address
CentralRecruitment.Operations@education.gov.uk

If you are not content with the outcome of your complaint you have the right to complain to the Civil Service Commissioners.

Department for Education do not cover the cost of travel to your interview/assessment unless otherwise stated.

For more information on our roles, please visit our website at www.makeyourimpactDfE.co.uk

Follow link to apply

<https://bit.ly/2JYPqGj>

