



CHRIST CHURCH

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD



Appointment of

Chief Financial Officer

September 2024 Ref Code FBQFA

Saxton Bampfylde

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Welcome

Thank you for your interest in the position of Chief Financial Officer at Christ Church in the University of Oxford. This role provides a fantastic opportunity to join one of Oxford's largest and oldest Colleges, and to play a key role at a significant juncture in our long history.

This is a very exciting time for Christ Church. We are currently working through the recommendations of a governance review which proposes changes in the working relationship between the College and Cathedral and in the ways that the College will govern itself in the future. These represent significant decisions for an organisation which was founded in 1546 and will lay the foundations for the next centuries.

Our academic mission has priority in all that we do, but our commercial operations are also of great importance to us; these bring in welcome revenue enabling us to maintain our high standards and offer generous support to our student body. We are extremely fortunate to have a large endowment, managed by our Investment Director, but we also have significant outgoings, including the costs of maintaining our buildings and the Cathedral and the upkeep of the Meadow. The successful candidate will play a key role in helping to ensure that we spend our money wisely and for the long term good of Christ Church and all those associated with us.

The Foundation has a large, diverse workforce, employing colleagues from all over the world. Specifically, in the Treasury team there are a number of long-standing, knowledgeable staff who will offer experience, support and information in the first weeks and months of the new appointment. The Chief Financial Officer will report to the Christ Church Governing Body, through the Finance Committee; they will be part of a team, including the Head of House and other college officers, that serves to ensure that all parts of Christ Church work harmoniously together.

We look forward to reading your application.

The Very Rev'd Professor Sarah Foot
Dean





About us

Christ Church (Aedes Christi or simply 'the House') is a Royal Foundation dating from 1546. Its history goes back, however, not only to Wolsey's Cardinal College in the early sixteenth century but to an Augustinian Priory that preceded it, and further to the seventh-century figure of St Frideswide, whose restored shrine has become once again a place of pilgrimage in the Cathedral's Latin Chapel today. Cathedral, College, and School together make up a complex and unique institution committed to education, learning and religion. The Dean is The Very Revd Professor Sarah Foot. The Visitor is His Majesty the King.

Christ Church has approximately 470 undergraduate and 270 graduate students. Its junior members study almost all the major academic disciplines in the Humanities, Social Sciences and Sciences, as do its senior academic staff (60). It aims at high academic achievement and individual fulfilment in a friendly, tolerant and mutually supportive environment. Undergraduate teaching at Christ Church is organised and provided by around 45 Tutors (nearly all of whom also hold University posts), assisted by a large body of Stipendiary Lecturers (college tutors employed on a fixed-term basis). Christ Church is also home to a significant community of statutory Professors (including four residentiary Canon Professors), Senior Academic Research Fellows, Junior Research Fellows and other visiting researchers.

A review of Christ Church's governance is currently underway and is likely to lead to consensual reforms of the governance of the joint foundation and consequential changes to its statutes, with changes to the current governance arrangements affecting the Chapter, the Governing Body, and the Cathedral School. Christ Church's governance review was initiated following a report commissioned from the Rt Hon Dominic Grieve KC which was published in May 2023.



The role

Following the retirement of the current post holder, Christ Church seeks to appoint a Chief Financial Officer, who will take the lead in the continued development of financial strategy and the management and care of assets, for a unique institution that is both a college of the University of Oxford and a Cathedral.

The Chief Financial Officer is the Officer responsible to the Governing Body for:

- Oversight and management of the finances of Christ Church
- Provision of financial information and advice to colleagues across Christ Church
- The preparation and presentation of the annual accounts, including budgets
- Oversight of the maintenance and repair of buildings and houses and maintenance of the gardens and the Meadow
- Health and safety at work (in conjunction with the Steward).

The successful candidate will be expected to take office as soon as possible.

Administration

The Governing Body is sovereign. It consists of Canons and Students and is chaired by the Dean, who is the Head of House.

Academic matters are dealt with by the Senior Censor, assisted by the Junior Censor, the Tutor for Graduates and the Tutor for Admissions. The Chief Financial Officer maintains an overall view of the finances, the general accounts, buildings and grounds, reporting most immediately to the Finance Committee and ultimately to the Governing Body.

The functions within the remit of the Chief Financial Officer are under review, as part of the Christ Church's Governance Review. It is possible that there may be some minor adjustments to the position in the longer term, however the substantive duties of the role will remain as outlined here.



Governing Body Committees

Matters relating to the running of Christ Church come to the Governing Body through committees.

The Chief Financial Officer convenes the **Finance Committee**, which considers questions involving overall financial policy, plans and budgets, accounts and recommendations for major items of expenditure. In addition to Governing Body members, there are two external Finance Committee members. The Chief Financial Officer may also either be a member of, or in attendance at, the Investment Committee, which is convened by the Investment Director. The Chief Financial Officer is also responsible for advising the following committees, presenting policy options to them, preparing their business and producing their reports for the Governing Body:

Archdeacon's Committee which administers the charitable distribution of over £400,000 per year for the benefit of the incumbents of about 70 church appointments or livings for which Christ Church has sole or shared patronage.

The Gardens Committee which deals with questions relating to planting and layout in the gardens and the Meadow.

Other committees

The Chief Financial Officer sits on a variety of other internal Committees across Christ Church, including the **Audit and Risk Committee** which takes an overview on the risks for Christ Church and monitors actions and mitigations associated with these risks.

The Chief Financial Officer is also on the Board of Governors of **Christ Church Cathedral School**. They convene the Cathedral School Committee, which has oversight of the provision of buildings and land for the School and reports on its financial situation.

The Chief Financial Officer is a member of the Estate Bursars Committee, a committee of those with similar roles in the various colleges of the University of Oxford.



Financial management

It is the Chief Financial Officer's responsibility to take an overall view of expenditure and financial strategy, and to advise the Governing Body accordingly. A key part of this function will be the continued development of appropriate financial management information systems, encompassing the entire range of activity within Christ Church.

Repair and maintenance of buildings and grounds

The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for the repair and maintenance of the following:

- All the College and Cathedral buildings;
- Boathouse, pavilion and squash courts;
- The Choir School (landlord's repairs);
- The Meadow, gardens and grounds

Some of the jobs are carried out by the Clerk of Works Department, but many are put out to external contractors under the management of the Clerk of Works.

The Chief Financial Officer is also responsible for the general supervision of new works carried out through Christ Church's architects and surveyors.

Health and safety

The Chief Financial Officer is one of the College Officers responsible to the Governing Body for the implementation of the Governing Body's health and safety at work policy.

The Treasury departments

The Chief Financial Officer's office staff comprises: the Chief Financial Officer's Administrator, College Accountant, Assistant Accountant, two Accounts Assistants and a part-time clerical assistant.

The team includes a Chartered Surveyor and a Director of Planning and Housing, as well as a Works Department comprising the Clerk of Works, Secretary, Planned Servicing and Records Assistant, two Meadow men, and an in-house maintenance team. There are also a Head Gardener, four Gardeners, and a Head Groundsman.

Oxford City and external relations

There are a number of issues which arise in the areas of property, finance and the use of Christ Church's main sites in which the Chief Financial Officer is involved. The management of external relations, in conjunction with other representatives of the House, is an occasional task.

Person specification

The Chief Financial Officer will be a finance professional with senior level experience. They will need to be self-motivated, organised and efficient and importantly, have excellent interpersonal skills and emotional intelligence. Ideally, they will have empathy with higher education and the charitable objectives within which it operates.

Christ Church expects the Chief Financial Officer to have the following skills and experience:

Essential

- Education to degree level.
- An accountancy qualification, ideally ACCA.
- Extensive experience of senior financial leadership, ideally in a medium or large charitable or public sector environment.
- Significant leadership experience demonstrated through collaborative leadership and team management. The ability to manage and motivate people and teams.
- The ability to operate at a strategic level and contribute to the overall organizational strategy.
- Excellent communication skills, including the clear presentation of information, both orally and in writing. In particular, the ability to present financial issues clearly to a non-financial audience.
- Excellent interpersonal skills and experience of working successfully with a wide variety of people, including internal and external stakeholders.
- Proven ability to lead and drive projects.
- Strong analytical ability, able to evaluate risk and make evidence-based recommendations and decisions.
- Sound problem-solving skills, able to identify unique and creative options in response to challenges.
- Excellent financial and numeracy skills. Experience of maintaining oversight of complex budgets.
- Provision of financial information and advice, including the preparation and presentation of budget estates and accounts.
- A strong commitment to equality and diversity, including the ability to work with a wide range of people and to treat everyone with respect.
- Proficiency in IT, particularly finance-based planning tools and Excel.
- Strategic awareness of financial and other issues relevant to higher education and research.

Desirable

- Experience of overseeing facilities and property functions.
- An appreciation of the culture and objectives of an intellectual community.
- An understanding and broad sympathy with the aims and purposes of Christ Church, notably the support and maintenance of the institution both as college and cathedral.

In addition to the above, the person appointed will be energetic and enthusiastic, keen to drive positive change and consider new ways of working. Candidates will be determined, flexible, adaptable and reliable.



Terms of appointment

Christ Church is keen to make an appointment as soon as possible. A handover will be possible.

A competitive salary will be offered.

The successful appointee may become a member of the Universities Superannuation Scheme, under which there is a deduction of 6.1% of salary, the College contributing 14.5% at present.

The post holder is eligible to participate in the private health scheme to which Christ Church subscribes.

There is also an entitlement to meals in College when the College kitchens are open.



How to apply

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to Christ Church, Oxford on this appointment.

Candidates should apply for this role through our website at www.saxbam.com/appointments using code **FBQFA**. 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 closing date for applications is noon on **Friday 11 October 2024**.

- The equal opportunities monitoring online 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.

Due diligence

Due diligence will be carried out as part of the application process, which may include searches carried out via internet search engines and any public social media accounts.



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