

ACCOUNTANT



ANNUAL SALARY: £40,000 - £48,000 (depending on qualifications and experience)

Join a small dynamic team at the forefront of managing surface water in the Upper River Great Ouse catchment. The Bedford Group of Drainage Boards comprises three Internal Drainage Boards; Bedfordshire & River Ivel IDB, Buckingham & River Ouzel IDB and Alconbury & Ellington IDB.

The Bedford Group of Drainage Boards are looking for a qualified accountant to join our small friendly team. You will be supporting the Principal Accountant in meeting the team's key purpose to provide a professional, effective, responsive financial management service that supports business planning. This post is responsible for the production of monthly financial management and costing information to budget holders. Information is produced to deadlines and includes processing transactions through the general ledger, transaction analysis and analysis of variances.

Applications from those looking to work part-time will also be strongly considered, with a minimum of 22.5 hours per week required.

Key Responsibilities:

- Assisting with the production, checking and distribution of finance reports for meetings.
- Assisting with the production, checking and distribution of monthly finance management reports to budget holders to agreed reporting timescales.
- Production of annual budgets for Bedford Group and its 3 Drainage Boards
- To support the development of more junior team members.
- To support with all aspects of the day to day running of the finance operation.
- Manage the administration and organisation of the Boards' rating system.
- Monthly cash flow forecasting.
- Any other duties as required.
- Management of fixed asset register and purchase and disposal schedule.

Qualifications and Attributes:

- Minimum of 4 years' experience within an accounting role, with a strong understanding of double entry bookkeeping.
- Must be fully qualified ACCA/CIMA/ACA (or equivalent).
- Exceptional organisational skills, ability to prioritise tasks, and work effectively under pressure.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills and the ability to collaborate effectively internally and externally.
- Meticulous attention to detail and accuracy in record-keeping.
- Proficient in Microsoft Office Applications (Excel, Word, Outlook).
- Ability to work well within a small office environment.

Benefits:

- Access to the Local Government Pension scheme.
- Generous holiday allowance starting at 26 days per year, which increases with full years' service, reaching 29 days, in addition to 4 Statutory Days and 8 Bank Holidays.

For more details about this position, see the job description and person specification below, contact Nicole Hunter on 01234 767995 or email nicole.hunter@idbs.org.uk with any further questions regarding the opportunity.

TO APPLY:

Please send a copy of your CV by email to nicole.hunter@idbs.org.uk, alternatively by post to Nicole Hunter, Bedford Group of Drainage Boards, Vale House, Broadmead Road, Stewartby, Bedfordshire, MK43 9ND.

The closing date for receipt of applications is 14 February 2025.

We look forward to receiving your application.

Job Description

Job title:	Accountant
Department:	Finance Team
Location:	Stewartby, Bedfordshire
Responsible to:	Principal Accountant
Hours:	37 Hours per week (Part time hours – 22.5 hours per week minimum will be strongly considered).
Overall Purpose:	To fulfil the role of an accountant supporting the Principal Accountant in meeting the team’s key purpose to provide a professional, effective, responsive financial management service that supports business planning.
Grade/Salary:	£40,000- £48,000 (dependent upon Qualifications and Experience)
Employer:	Bedford Group of Drainage Boards
Effective Date	31 January 2025

Context

The **Bedford Group of Drainage Boards** is a group of like-minded Internal Drainage Boards (“IDBs”) operating in the upper reaches of the River Great Ouse catchment, from North Oxfordshire, through Buckinghamshire, Milton Keynes and Bedfordshire to Huntingdon. Together they share vision, values and standards, and have chosen to jointly administer their affairs in order to reduce costs, strengthen their own organisations and increase influence at both a national and regional level.

Internal Drainage Boards (“IDBs”) are local public authorities that manage flood risk and land drainage within areas of special drainage need in England. Each IDB has permissive powers to undertake water management activities within their Internal Drainage District. The purpose of delivering this work is to reduce flood risk to people and property and to manage water in a way that meets the local needs of business and agriculture, including during times of drought, whilst also dealing with its obligations and commitments to the environment. IDBs exercise a general power of supervision over all matters relating to water level management within their district whilst conducting their work in accordance with a number of general environmental duties and promoting the ecological wellbeing of their districts.

We are actively involved in maintaining and improving watercourses and liaising with planning authorities about flood risk, sustainable drainage systems and development. All properties within a Drainage District are deemed to derive benefit from the activities of an IDB. Every property is therefore subject to a Drainage Rate paid annually to the Board.

We are now looking for a qualified accountant to join our small friendly team. You will be supporting the Principal Accountant in meeting the team’s key purpose to provide a professional, effective, responsive financial management service that supports business planning. This post is responsible for the production of monthly financial management and costing information to budget holders. Information is produced to deadlines and includes processing transactions through the general ledger, transaction analysis and analysis of variances.

Role and Responsibilities

To work as part of a team and contribute to establishing a high performing team recognising and promoting best practice, delivering consistent quality throughout the business in the following areas:

Main Responsibilities:

- To assist with the preparation, production and distribution of monthly accounts to budget holders and for inclusion within Board meeting papers including:
 - Maintenance of Staff and Plant Absorption accounts.
 - Maintenance of the Fixed Asset register and purchase and disposal schedules.
 - Cash Flow Forecasts.
 - Updated monthly projections.
- To assist with the preparation, production and distribution of the annual Estimates and make recommendations to the Boards for the setting of drainage rates and special levy in accordance with statutory deadlines.
- To support and oversee daily accounting and transaction processing, including payroll, purchase ledger, sales ledger, nominal ledger, fixed assets, stock records, invoices, payments, time sheets, plant sheets, job costings and BACS processing, obtaining necessary authorisation.
- To support and authorise account and VAT Reconciliations and monthly pension returns.
- To investigate budget variances and report these to the budget holders.
- Telephone, email, letters and processing other internal and external correspondence.
- Ensuring all sources and audit trails are properly maintained.
- Liaising with internal and external auditors, the bank, HMRC, ratepayers, and assisting with other audit or inspection requirements.
- Assist the Operations Manager with budget control through the use of the new Boards Asset Management System.
- Responsible for ensuring all drainage rates, rechargeable works, rents, acknowledgements, surface water discharge charges/income are invoiced and collected promptly.
- Month end Journals.
- Ensuring that the Boards Financial Regulations are properly followed.
- Manage the administration and organisation of the Boards' rating system including assisting in the migration over to the new Drainage Rating System.
- Deputise for the Principal Accountant in their absence.
- Preparation of any write offs for Board approval.
- Assisting others in the Finance & Rating department as and when necessary and providing cover during periods of holiday and sickness.

To undertake any such additional duties as required.

Person Specification	
Qualifications	
Essential	Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must be fully qualified ACCA/CIMA/ACA (or equivalent). 	
Experience	
Essential	Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum of 4 years of general finance/accounts experience, with a strong understanding of double entry bookkeeping. Financial accounting of the General ledger. Previous experience in the use of Sage 50/200 or similar accounting packages. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience working in the Public Sector. Year end reporting. Experience in payroll. Experience with effective customer liaison and debt collection.
Skills/Knowledge	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience with Sage 50/200 or similar accounting package. Confidence with figures and yourself. Experience in supporting and training junior members of the team. Ability to prioritise and organise workloads to meet deadlines and to remain calm under pressure. A high standard of ethics, both professional and personal. Well-developed written and spoken communication skills (including report and letter writing). Ability to competently use computer software such as Microsoft applications (Excel, Word, Outlook). Ability to work well with others at all levels both internally and externally. 	

Declaration and acknowledgement	
<p>I confirm that as of the date stated below the information in this job description is accurate and reflects the requirement of the role.</p> <p>Please note the details of the job description will be updated should substantive changes to the role occur or be proposed.</p>	
Line Manager:	Nicole Hunter
Position:	Principal Accountant
Date:	31 January 2025