



University of the  
Sunshine Coast  
Australia

## POSITION DESCRIPTION

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<b>Position:</b>	Associate Director, Financial Management and Commercial
<b>Work Area:</b>	Financial Services
<b>Supervisor:</b>	Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

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### VISION

To become Australia's premier regional university.

### MISSION

Enriching our regions, connecting with our communities and creating opportunities for all.

### VALUES

At UniSC we will:

- Advocate for equitable access to education and knowledge.
- Recognise and embrace diversity and inclusion.
- Champion environmentally sustainable principles and practices
- Commit to fair and ethical behaviour.
- Respect our people, our communities, and their potential.
- Be accountable to ourselves and each other.
- Strive for excellence and innovation in all that we do.

### OVERVIEW OF FINANCIAL SERVICES

Financial Services operates as a strategic advisor within the Office of the Vice-Chancellor, to drive the university's financial success and sustainability.

The Financial Services division encompasses strategic and operational financial management and advisory, procurement, financial operations and governance (including Accounts Payable, Accounts Receivable, Travel, Statutory financial reporting, Insurance, Taxation, Treasury, Audit relations and Asset Accounting).

The division is responsible for the development and maintenance of the University's financial policies and Procedures, and providing clear guidelines for financial and procurement governance and accountability. Through these efforts, Financial Services ensures compliance with regulatory obligations and significantly contributes to the University's long-term financial sustainability and strategic growth, reinforcing Financial Services as an essential partner in the university's decision-making process.

Financial Services drives systems and continuous improvement initiatives, ensuring the adoption of best practices and the integration of contemporary finance frameworks.



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## OVERVIEW OF FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND COMMERCIAL TEAM

The Financial Management and Commercial team are responsible for management of the University's financial planning, budgeting, forecasting and financial advisory functions.

This includes overseeing the development and management of short, medium and long term financial budgets and forecasts that address both immediate operational needs and long-term strategic goals.

The team develops financial business cases, conducts scenario and options analysis, and develops cost models that enable data-driven decision-making, enabling the university to effectively evaluate investments, teaching programs and strategic initiatives.

The team also provides expert financial and commercial advisory services, offering insights into evaluating and optimising new and existing opportunities. This advisory function supports the university in identifying and capitalising on opportunities that drive sustainable growth and value creation.

Continuous improvement and innovation are central to the team's responsibilities. They lead refinement of financial strategies and policy frameworks, ensuring these remain agile, effective, and responsive to the university's evolving needs. This involves implementing best practices and adopting contemporary finance frameworks to maintain a forward-looking approach.

The team fosters strong and trusted partnerships with stakeholders, including Executive and staff. This collaborative approach enables the financial management and commercial team to play a true business partnering role in decision-making processes, supporting the university's strategic and operational goals.

## PRIMARY OBJECTIVES OF THE POSITION

1. Ensure the University's long-term financial sustainability by developing and managing robust financial planning, budgeting and forecasting frameworks.
2. Drive strategic decision-making and value creation by providing expert financial and commercial advice and guidance, ensuring alignment with the University's strategic objectives.
3. Foster a culture of financial excellence by guiding staff and stakeholders in complex financial issues and enhancing operational efficiency.
4. Strengthen the University's financial management capabilities by leading and developing financial acunum and promoting accountability and continuous improvement



## **NATURE AND SCOPE OF POSITION**

The Associate Director reports to the Chief Financial Officer and is part of the Financial Services leadership team.

They will work with the CFO to transform the financial budgeting and forecasting frameworks of the University, and then lead a program of continuous improvement that adapts to emerging issues in the University sector, new technology and ways of working.

The position requires considerable initiative, the ability to work autonomously with guidance from the CFO and needs to have a strategic and operational mindset.

The position needs to understand how to leverage and use technology and data analytics to support, streamline and inform decision-making.

As a hands-on leader, the Associate Director will supervise a team of finance professionals, guiding them in delivering high-quality financial support and fostering strong business partnerships with stakeholders across the university. This collaborative approach is essential for advancing the university's financial objectives and ensuring effective financial management throughout the institution.

## **CHALLENGES AND PROBLEM SOLVING**

The Associate Director, Financial Management and Commercial collaborates with the Chief Financial Officer to address complex financial issues, requiring high-level problem-solving to balance diverse financial needs with strategic objectives.

The Associate Director will work with the CFO to transform the University's financial planning, analysis and management frameworks, in order to ensure the University is agile in responding to the complex governance and funding landscape of Australian higher education institutions. The role requires a strategic mindset to address the intricacies of government regulations and evolving funding mechanisms.

The Associate Director must assist with balancing the diverse financial needs of academic and non-academic work areas, including research projects and program budgets, with practical and cost-effective solutions. This is a hands-on role that will need to focus on strategy whilst also executing operational tasks, along with ad-hoc requests for advice and assistance.

## **DECISION-MAKING**

The Associate Director works closely with the CFO, providing senior strategic and operational decision-making, translating high-level strategies into actionable plans, and represents the CFO in various forums.

This role involves translating strategies into actionable business activities, which are then either delegated to team members or executed hands-on.

Under the direction of the CFO, committees, and senior staff, the Associate Director will also be responsible for strategic and operational decision-making to effectively deliver on strategies and plans.



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## INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

The Associate Director, Financial Management and Commercial will lead a team that has strong and trusted business partner relationships with senior executives stakeholders, and academic leaders. Building effective working relationships with these stakeholders is crucial for the successful delivery of financial services and alignment with the broader objectives of the Financial Services Division and UniSC.

The Associate Director, Financial Management and Commercial will also work collaboratively with the Financial Services leadership team to support the delivery of broader Department objectives and lead and develop a team of finance professionals.

## KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES OF THE POSITION

1. Lead the transformation and management of financial management frameworks, focusing on significant innovation and alignment with the university's strategic goals, and enhancing overall performance.
2. Lead and develop the Financial Management and Commercial team, fostering a collaborative environment and guiding them in delivering high-quality financial support and strategic insights, enhancing performance and accountability.
3. Working across the University to develop and manage short, medium and long term financial plans on a cyclical basis, and prepare regular analysis and reports on performance, to support both operational and strategic decision-making.
4. Support the CFO to develop and execute the University's finance strategy and transformation priorities, including recommending and implementing initiatives that will add substantial value to the University's core activities, growth and strategic initiatives.
5. Acting as a trusted advisor to university leaders regarding financial performance strategies and outcomes. Provide expert financial and commercial advice on evaluating and optimising new and existing opportunities, driving sustainable growth and value creation for the university.
6. Identify and implement contemporary financial management strategies and service delivery, including optimal systems, organisational structures and resourcing, to enhance service delivery.
7. Work with stakeholders (internal/external) and the CFO to support development of business cases, undertake scenario analysis, and develop complex financial costing models for existing and new programs in order to evaluate commercial opportunities, determine full delivery cost, assess profitability, and ensure efficient utilisation of University resources.
8. Support the delivery of capital and investment planning, student revenue and load planning, including forecasting and monitoring against University's targets aligned with strategic priorities.
9. Foster effective working relationships with senior University stakeholders including University executives, senior management team, Academic Deans, and functional leaders, to support delivery of the University's strategic objectives.



10. Continually review, monitor, interpret and anticipate the impact of legislation, policies and accounting standards; and maintain an awareness of financial and economic trends. Provide expert technical interpretation; identify opportunities to enhance outcomes and develop solutions for the University whilst managing compliance and exposure to risks.
11. Demonstrated experience in using contemporary technology and data analytics to support, streamline and inform decision-making.
12. Work collaboratively with the Financial Services leadership team to grow and develop an exemplary Financial Services function.

#### **KNOWLEDGE SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE NECESSARY**

Applicants need to demonstrate they meet the following **Selection Criteria**:

##### **Essential**

1. Education, training and experience equivalent to the completion of a relevant Business or Commerce postgraduate qualification, combined with extensive expertise and management experience in financial management and financial advisory. In addition, current membership with the Australian Society of Certified Practising Accountants (or equivalent) or other relevant industry body.
2. Experience in a senior leadership and financial management role within a complex organisation characterised by robust governance structures and administrative processes.
3. Demonstrated resilience, strong self-awareness, and the ability to effectively balance competing demands in a dynamic environment.
4. Demonstrated experience in using contemporary technology and data analytics to support, streamline and inform decision-making.
5. Expertise in undertaking budget development and management, financial analysis and reporting, cost models, scenario analysis within a complex and dynamic environment.
6. Proven ability to implement comprehensive business partnership solutions and demonstrated skill in proactively developing, maintaining, and enhancing constructive and collaborative relationships with stakeholders.
7. Strong people leadership and management skills, including the ability to establish and monitor workflows and coach and manage individuals and teams for performance and development.
8. High level of business and commercial acumen, with strong negotiation and analytical skills. Ability to understand complex business environments, identify growth opportunities, and effectively negotiate with stakeholders.
9. Highly developed, innovation and problem-solving abilities with a proven track record of initiating and leading change.



10. Ability to initiate, design, develop, and implement new policies, practices, and business systems. Experienced in creating and refining frameworks that enhance efficiency and align with organisational goals.
11. Highly developed computing application knowledge and skills, including financial packages and contemporary technologies designed to deliver financial insights and solutions.
12. Excellent communication skills, both in the preparation of written documentation and the effective liaison with stakeholders, including senior and executive staff and external stakeholders.
13. Contribute to a positive and safe work environment for you and others, by modelling and promoting conduct that is culturally capable, inclusive, respectful, and ethical.

#### **Desirable**

14. Solid understanding of university operations, systems, and funding mechanisms, with practical experience in navigating the academic and administrative landscape of higher education institutions.

Additionally, in accordance with UniSC's Staff Code of Conduct – Governing Policy, all staff are expected to display professional behaviour, communicate respectfully, and perform their duties responsibly.

A position description is not intended to limit the scope of a position but to highlight the key aspects of the position. The requirements of the position may be altered in order to meet the changing operational needs of UniSC.

***UniSC is committed to creating a work and study environment that values diversity, facilitates equitable access and full participation.***