

Candidate Brief

Chief Financial Officer

Bath College

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DODD PARTNERS

— BOARD & EXECUTIVE SEARCH —

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Bath College

The recent history of Bath College began with the joining of two distinct former colleges, City of Bath College and Norton Radstock College, which took place in April 2015.

Bath College serves the World Heritage city of Bath and the northeast Somerset town of Radstock and the surrounding areas. Students also travel in from north and west Wiltshire to study, as there are good train links from Chippenham, Trowbridge and Westbury. Some students travel from parts of Bristol with which there are also good transport links.

Bath itself is a prosperous area but includes some of the most economically deprived areas in the country, with Bath and North East Somerset Council (B&NES) seeing some of the worst achievement for disadvantaged young people in England and Wales. The area is strong in the creative industries: arts, crafts, media, design, software, architecture and engineering. Financial and professional business services also make significant contributions to

the local economy, together with retail and tourism sectors. Part of the city – North/South Quays – is an enterprise area.



In the Radstock area, much employment is in manufacturing and although there have been closures of some large scale businesses, this area presents positive opportunities to increase economic competitiveness particularly with SMEs and highly skilled entrepreneurs. Radstock has been designated as an enterprise zone.

The College continues to operate over two main campuses at the City Centre and Somer Valley. Recent investment in estates

at both campuses have been supported by the West of England LEP and the Combined Authority, B&NES and the college itself. The College also offers adult provision in community venues across Bath and Northeast Somerset.

The College has developed a strong reputation with its regional stakeholders and partners, offering a distinctive curriculum which is well matched to local, regional and national needs, and particularly with the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) priorities. There is a strong focus on vocational and technical education at all levels. This includes full time provision for young people, apprenticeships for all ages, and part-time and flexible provision. There is a growing provision for SEND across both campuses with a newly developed SEND centre at the Somer Valley Campus. There is also a programme of adult community courses, although there is no A level provision offered.

Partnerships with business and key stakeholders are central to the College's work, alongside a very strong community and civic ethos. Recent examples of partnerships include Institute of Technology status for Bath College, opened in 2020; an IStart programme in partnership with the University of Bath, Bath Spa University and B&NES local authority; and a Restart initiative with Bath Spa University.

Strategic Planning

The Board agreed a new strategic plan (2025-2030) and objectives in support of the improvement trajectory at its meeting in December 2025. At the same time, the Board approved and signed its 2024-5 Accounts and Financial Statements demonstrating a significant improvement in financial stability and a clean audit opinion, having resolved a number of outstanding challenges.

Key strategic ambitions for 2025 - 2030 are to:

1. Deliver Outstanding Education Quality - by achieving Ofsted 'Secure' by 2026 and aim for 'Strong/Exceptional' by 2030.
2. Align our Curriculum with Local and Sub-Regional Skills Needs — expand provision in health, digital, creative, green skills, and advanced engineering, directly responding to WECA and BANES priorities.
3. Increase Learner Engagement, Progression and Inclusion — ensure all students succeed and progress to positive destinations, supported by an Employability Hub and Bath College Works expansion.
4. Strengthen Employer Partnerships and Community Engagement — co-create curriculum and expand work-based learning opportunities with anchor organisations and regional employers.

For more information on Bath College's Strategic plan, please visit: <https://www.bathcollege.ac.uk/about/strategic-plan>



Quality Improvement

The Ofsted Rating of Requires Improvement has resulted in a consolidated and robust quality improvement process steered by the Curriculum and Quality Committee and led by the Executive Lead (Deputy Principal, Dave Trounce, who joined in July 2025) and additional senior expertise in an interim Director of Inclusion and Director of Quality.

Corporation

The College's governance was evaluated by an external board review, and the report of this work was published in January 2024. The governance review highlighted the work which had commenced in 2023 to develop strong systems of governance within the College, and also the continuing workstreams that have been the focus of an implementation plan to improve the corporate governance per se. A review in 2025 evidenced significant improvements and best practice.

This work was supported by the FEC and the appointment of a number of new governors under the Chair of John Lakin.



Mission, Vision & Values

Mission: Bath College empowers people of all ages to learn, grow, and succeed, delivering high-quality education, values, and training that strengthen our community and prepares learners for bright, meaningful futures.

Vision: By 2030, Bath College will be recognised as an inclusive and outstanding college at the heart of our community — transforming lives and shaping the future:

- Transforming lives through exceptional teaching, learning, and skills development.
- Co-creating curricula with employers, schools, universities, and civic partners.
- Leading in health, creative industries, engineering, green construction, and digital innovation.
- Ensuring every learner has a pathway to employment, higher education, or enterprise.
- Investing in staff and celebrating inclusivity as our strength.
- Contributing to the cultural, social, and economic prosperity of our community.

Values: Bath College exists to inspire and transform lives through lifelong learning — providing inclusive pathways for all to gain the confidence, knowledge, and skills they need to thrive. We equip people to succeed in a changing economy, we support employers with a skilled workforce, and we strengthen the cultural, social, and economic life of our communities.

We do this through the delivery of **HEART** values.

H - HONESTY

- We act with integrity, fairness, and transparency in everything we do.
- We keep our word to learners, staff, and partners and make decisions with clarity and accountability.
- We build credibility with our community through honesty in order to strengthen Bath College's reputation.

E - EQUITY

- We ensure inclusion and fairness so that every learner, apprentice, and staff member has the opportunity to succeed.
- We celebrate diversity, value lived experience and actively remove barriers to participation.
- We tailor our support so that everyone has what they need to thrive.

A - ASPIRATION

- We encourage ambition, curiosity, and a growth mindset in learners and staff.
- We value innovation, creativity, and forward-thinking approaches to respond to changing skills needs.
- We aim high in terms of our aspiration for personal progress, for the college, and for the communities we serve.

R - RESPECT

- We value people as individuals, treating everyone with dignity, kindness, and professionalism.
- We learn, teach, collaborate, and engage with employers, partners, and our wider community with respect.
- We foster a positive culture where everyone feels safe, supported, and inspired.

T - TOGETHERNESS

- We place collaboration at the heart of Bath College, with learners, staff, employers, schools, universities, and community partners all working side by side.
- We reflect our civic role by building stronger connections with Bath, BANES, Wiltshire, and the West of England.
- We work together so that we achieve Excellence as the outcome of living our **HEART** values.

For more information, please visit: www.bathcollege.ac.uk

Job Specification

Job Title: Chief Financial Officer (Senior Post Holder)
Reports To: Principal & Chief Executive
Reports: Finance Function

Purpose

The postholder will have overall responsibility for the financial effectiveness of the organisation; ensuring our operations and our infrastructure functions are robust, efficient and able to support our continued and sustainable growth and development.

This role is responsible for leading a positive financial performance for the College, overseeing the work of the Finance Team. In addition to this, the postholder will drive the commercial development and income generation of the College ensuring we are able to flourish as we move into the next decade. Working closely with curriculum, quality and student services, this role is vital to the College's efficiency, forming a strong and sustainable basis on which to deliver a diverse curriculum.

Applicants should be in no doubt that this is very much a leadership role and synergy between departments under direct line management, as well as departments in the curriculum-based areas of the College, will be vital.

Key Responsibilities

- Shaping the development and delivery of relevant corporate plans, strategies, resources, operations, programmes, financial plans, including being an active member of the College Leadership Group (CLG) and working with the Board (this post is a Senior Post Holder position).
- As a member of the College Leadership Group, work collectively to support the development of the College's Strategic Plan, ensuring targets, projects and systems are given appropriate attention and oversight operating within the relevant statutory framework and best practice.
- Assist the Principal and other Senior Postholders in the strategic and annual planning processes, ensuring that the organisation's systems, structure, and culture are all aligned to the organisation's strategic plan and values.
- With the Executive Director of People & Culture, provide assurance to the Board on effective financial planning associated with the staff establishment.
- Lead the process of developing annual budgets and business plans across all teams and ensuring the CEO and board have clear and agreed budgets.
- Leading and facilitating corporate, cross-organisational working to achieve the most effective services possible for the College.
- Support the effective development of robust, coherent and financially viable business models across the organisation.
- Lead on Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery for the organisation, ensuring appropriate testing of these plans is in place.

Finance & Operations

- Lead the process of developing annual budgets and business plans across all relevant teams, ensuring the delivery of measurable, cost-effective results that support the delivery of our strategic goals.
- Oversee the production of timely, accurate financial management information to aid and improve staff's understanding of departmental budgets and financial in-year position.
- Responsible for the overall financial strategy; working with the Head of Finance to ensure effective internal financial controls framework and policies are in place and regularly reviewed.
- Working with the Head of Finance, keep under review the College's payroll, accounts, finance, and other systems to ensure they are fit for purpose and include appropriate reporting and escalation of risk.
- Manage outsourced contracts.

- Responsible for overseeing the development of a procurement and contract management approach within the college; ensuring a regular process of review of contracts and licences across all departments.
- Work with the finance team to develop a rigorous financial modelling and financial business planning approach.
- Responsible for establishing and delivering organisational standards and processes, including financial operations.
- Responsible for the effective management of budgets and forecasting of financial trends, using concise analysis of performance data to advise how the Corporation should best allocate resources and determine financial risks.
- With the Head of ICT, plan, develop and implement strategies for the effective and impactful use of Information Technology and ensure a cost efficient and fit for purpose IT function.

Asset Management & Procurement

- Ensure the College has an effective strategy for managing its assets, including capital replacement and consideration of whole life costs and scheduled replacement.
- Advise on funding opportunities and mechanisms to ensure that capital grants and bids for other funds are properly submitted to ensure income is maximised. Ensure the correct valuation, maintenance, and security of assets, including buildings and land.
- Ensure the maintenance of a fixed asset and property register.
- Oversee major capital projects, with particular emphasis on contracts and cost control.
- Ensure disposals and acquisitions are efficiently conducted and legal and other costs arising are closely managed.
- Provide financial and commercial input for the evaluation of tenders, particularly for building contracts, planned maintenance and procurement.
- Oversee the maintenance of the Contracts Register and ensure procurement activities and contracts maximise value for money.
- Ensure proper levels of insurance for the College are maintained and claimed.

Other Responsibilities:

- Attend meetings of the Corporation, Committees and meetings with external stakeholders either in person or virtually as required by the Principal and CEO.
- Carry out any other duties as may reasonably be requested by the CEO within the spirit and scope of the role.

Health and Safety:

- Observe and keep aware of Health and Safety documentation and procedures in line with College Policy.

Safeguarding:

- Demonstrate a commitment to promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young persons in line with College Policy.

Equality & Diversity

- Embed equality of opportunity and the promotion of positive attitudes towards diversity.

GDPR

- Ensure that you keep confidential all Personal Data that you collect, store, use and come into contact with during the performance of your duties.
- Take all steps to ensure there is no unauthorised access to Personal Data whether by other College Personnel who are not authorised to see such Personal Data or by people outside the College.

Person Specification

Qualifications

Degree qualified or equivalent with a recognised CCAB qualification: ACA, ACCA, CIMA or CIPFA.

Essential Experience

- A proven track record of success in a strategic financial leadership role within a customer-centric environment of relevant scale and complexity.
- Prior responsibility for organisation-wide financial control, risk, reporting and systems development, to include the consolidation of accounts and board reporting.
- Detailed understanding of financial systems, associated processes and governance structures to inform financial planning and analysis, to better support strategic decision making and aid forecasting.
- Proven track record and success of working with complex revenue lines and previous experience of delivering innovative solutions and continuous improvement across finance and wider operational activities.
- Experience of treasury functions (to include investment portfolio management) with accountability for regulatory compliance and audit management.
- Strong exposure to the development and analysis of commercial opportunities for growth and diversity of revenue (bids and tenders, funding, start-ups) to ensure effective and efficient use of college resources.
- Strong project management skills as well as a profound understanding of risk management techniques and protocols to ensure the sustainability of Bath College.
- Strong understanding of procurement protocols with negotiating and influencing skills and the ability to convince through personal credibility.
- Experience of leading teams with a clear capacity to ensure financial prudence and business partnering is truly embedded across the organisational structure.

Personal Qualities & Skills

- An innovator and motivator who promotes new thinking to achieve change and continuous improvement, both in individuals and across the organisation.
- Undisputed personal integrity and a personal style that demonstrates authority and commitment with a proven track record of insightful judgement and delivering against organisational objectives.
- A proactive learner, with an open manner and exceptional interpersonal skills who can adapt quickly to the College's operating environment and establish trust and respect at all levels, both internally and externally.
- Provide direction, challenge and leadership in a way that inspires confidence and commitment from others across your professional remit and beyond.
- Clear capacity to develop strategic and operational plans to achieve organisational objectives in a clear and concise fashion.
- Capacity to be resilient with clear analytical mindset to identify issues and manage complex and informative data.
- Excellent communication skills with the ability to engage effectively with stakeholders, students, the Board, academic and operational colleagues at all levels, and to communicate complex issues in clear language to a range of audiences.
- Robust judgement with the ability to seek and challenge information to reach and take decisions.
- High levels of visibility at all times across the operational and strategic environment.
- Demonstrable commitment to, and understanding of, diversity and equality.

Terms

Remuneration

The remuneration for this post is highly competitive and commensurate with the role's requirements.

Flexibility

The Board are open to discussing a flexible working arrangement for interested applicants (please discuss further with John Dodd in the first instance).

Annual Holidays

The annual leave entitlement is 35 days per annum, plus Christmas closure days (variable), plus recognised public holidays.

Pension Scheme

The holder of this post will have access to an LGPS or Teachers Pension Scheme.

Checks

This appointment is subject to satisfactory pre-employment references and DBS clearance.

Timeline

The following timeline is indicative and should only be used as a guide. This may be subject to change.

Process	Date
Close for Applications	9:00 am, Monday 17 th August 2026
Interviews with Dodd Partners	w/c 24 th August 2026
Shortlist Meeting	w/c 31 st August 2026
Interviews with Bath College	Early September 2026

How to Apply

The recruitment process is being undertaken by Dodd Partners on behalf of Bath College. If you wish to apply for this position, please supply the following:

- A covering letter highlighting your suitability and how you meet the **Essential Experience** criteria detailed within the Person Specification, along with your current remuneration details.
- A comprehensive CV setting out your career history, with responsibilities and achievements.
- All applications should be emailed to Dodd Partners at your earliest convenience and no later than 9 am Monday, 17th August 2026, to contactus@doddpartners.com, clearly marked with reference number DP3190.

Should you wish to have an informal discussion about the role, please contact John Dodd on 07545 431 848 or 01244 738 450. Alternatively, email: johndodd@doddpartners.com

