

Position Title: Head of Finance	Business Unit: Corporate Services
Reports To: Chief Operating Officer	Direct Reports: Yes
Employment Type: Full Time	Classification: General Staff Level 9 – Education Services (Post Secondary Education) Award 2020
Budget responsible for: N/A	Location: Wellington Street Campus
Purpose of the Role	
<p>The Head of Finance provides senior financial leadership, oversight and advice to support Collarts’ strategic, operational, and regulatory objectives. The role is responsible for the integrity of financial reporting, the effectiveness of financial controls, and the quality of budgeting, forecasting and cash-flow management across the organisation.</p> <p>Working closely with the Chief Operating Officer, CEO and Executive team, the Head of Finance acts as a strategic partner to the business. This includes providing high-quality financial insight, scenario modelling, and advice to inform enterprise-level decision-making. This includes responsibility for financial sustainability, capital allocation, funding strategy, and support for potential sale, acquisition, partnerships, and/or investment activity..</p> <p>The Head of Finance is responsible for building a contemporary, high-performing finance function that is fit for purpose in a changing environment. This includes leading the finance team through change, strengthening systems and processes, improving financial capability across the organisation, and embedding a strong culture of accountability, transparency, and continuous improvement.</p> <p>The role oversees day-to-day financial operations to ensure accuracy, timeliness, and compliance, while maintaining a clear focus on longer-term sustainability, scale, and value creation.</p> <p>This position is based at the Wellington Street campus in Collingwood and requires regular presence across other campuses to support operational engagement and stakeholder relationships.. From time to time, the role there will required work outside normal business hours to meet project deadlines, support Board and Committee Meetings, or respond to operational needs.</p>	
Strategic Goals the role drives success for	
<p>We will look for opportunities to enter new interstate markets where barriers to entry are low. We will explore options for secondary site locations in Australia’s major cities, for a select group of low-infrastructure Collarts courses. We will boost awareness and reputation with an increasingly national profile.</p> <p>We will be the employer of choice, particularly for creative industry academics, attracting, retaining and developing top talent in our fields. We will have the best mentors, teachers, guides and coaches championing students for a lifetime of success.</p> <p>We will lay the groundwork for a consolidated campus footprint from 2028, bringing staff and students together for a one-Collarts campus experience. We will continue to invest in both online and on-campus infrastructure, mindful of our commitment to be experience-rich and materials light.</p> <p>We will be relentless in our pursuit of seamless, efficient ways of working, leaving creativity for the classroom. Our operations roadmap and financial plan will focus on taking the effort out of administration and delivering improved, sustainable margins.</p>	

Key Outcomes

- Financial and management reporting is accurate, timely, decision-ready, and fully compliant with all relevant legislation, accounting standards and regulatory requirements.
- Annual budgets, multi-year financial plans, and rolling forecasts are delivered on time, are robust and evidence-based, and clearly articulate risks, opportunities, and sensitivities for budget holders, the Executive, and the Board.
- Financial governance is strong and effective, with documented and embedded controls, policies, and procedures, and a demonstrated reduction in control weaknesses, audit findings, and compliance issues over time.
- Cash flow, working capital, and funding capacity are actively managed, with clear forward visibility of liquidity requirements, covenant headroom, and financial risk, and appropriate mitigation strategies in place.
- Effective management of the relationship with Collarts finance companies.
- Capital allocation and investment decisions are supported by clear financial analysis, scenario modelling, and return-based evaluation, enabling disciplined decision-making across BAU and strategic initiatives.
- The finance function operates as a trusted strategic partner to the organisation, providing high-quality insights, commercial advice, and performance analysis that influence operational and strategic outcomes.
- The finance team is structured, led, and developed to meet current and future organisational needs, with clear accountability, capability uplift, and strong performance culture.
- Financial due diligence, valuation support, and transaction reporting for any sale, acquisition, partnership, and/or investment activity are delivered to a high standard, within agreed timeframes, and in line with expectations.
- A clear Financial Roadmap is developed and delivered, aligning systems, processes, capability, and data to support Collarts' strategic priorities, scalability, and long-term financial sustainability.
- Management of the audit process with clear responsibility for the maintenance of the audit relationship and the adherence of the audit deadlines including engaging with internal stakeholders in advance of audit processes.
- Manage external relationships with tax advisors to ensure timely lodgement of all tax related matters.

Key Accountabilities

The following accountabilities are not exhaustive, and others may be included as directed and in alignment with the role classification level.

Financial Leadership and Enterprise Strategy

- Provide senior financial and commercial leadership to the COO, CEO, and Executive Team to support organisational strategy, major initiatives, and enterprise-level decision-making.
- Lead the development of financial models, scenario analysis, and sensitivity testing to assess strategic options, investment decisions, and potential sale, acquisition, and/or partnership activity.
- Proactively identify financial, commercial, and structural risks and opportunities, and provide clear, practical recommendations to mitigate risk and support long-term sustainability.
- Prepare and present clear, decision-ready financial insights, analysis, and recommendations to the Executive, Corporate Board, and relevant committees.

Financial Reporting, Compliance, and Stewardship

- Oversee the preparation of accurate, timely, and high-quality monthly, quarterly, and annual management and statutory financial reports.
- Ensure statutory financial statements are prepared in accordance with applicable accounting standards, regulatory requirements, and funding obligations.
- Lead external audit processes, including coordination with auditors, oversight of workpapers, and timely resolution of audit findings.
- Maintain oversight of taxation, regulatory, and funding compliance, ensuring risks are identified early and addressed appropriately.

Budgeting, Forecasting and Performance Management

- Lead the annual budgeting process and multi-year financial planning, ensuring alignment with organisation strategy, risk appetite, and capital capacity.
- Oversee rolling forecasts and long-term projections, ensuring assumptions are robust, transparent, and responsive to changes in performance and external conditions..
- Monitor financial performance against budget and forecast, providing clear variance analysis, insights, and recommendations for corrective actions.
- Build financial capability across the organisation by supporting and challenging budget owners to understand performance drivers and improve financial discipline.

Financial Controls, Systems and Processes

- Establish and maintain a strong internal control framework across all key financial processes, including revenue, expenditure, payroll, assets, and cash management.
- Oversee the development, documentation, and ongoing review of finance policies, procedures, and financial delegations.
- Lead continuous improvement initiatives across finance systems, data, processes, and reporting to improve efficiency, insight, and scalability.
- Ensure appropriate segregation of duties, approval workflows, and reconciliations are embedded and operating effectively.

Cash-Flow, Capital, Treasury and Risk Management

- Lead cash-flow forecasting, working capital management, funding oversight to ensure Collarts can meet operational and strategic obligations as they fall due.
- Oversee capital allocation, investment evaluation, and return analysis to support disciplined decision-making across BAU and strategic initiatives.
- Manage banking relationships, covenant compliance, and funding arrangements, working closely with the COO and external advisors within delegated authority.
- Lead financial risk assessment and stress testing, including downside scenarios, to strengthen organisational resilience and sustainability.

Leadership, Capability and Change

- Lead, develop, and structure the finance team to meet current and future organisational needs, fostering a high-performance, accountable, and service-oriented culture.

- Coach and develop team members, identifying capability gaps and supporting professional development and succession planning.
- Lead the finance function through change, including system enhancements, process redesign, and evolving organisational requirements.
- Work collaboratively with teams across the organisation to ensure finance processes support effective operations and a positive student experience.

Governance, Committe and Transaction Support

- Prepare high-quality financial papers, analysis, and commentary for the relevant committees and board.
- Lead and support financial due diligence, valuation input, data room preparation, and information requests associated with any sale, acquisition, partnership, and/or investment activity.
- Act as a key liaison with external advisors, including auditors, legal counsel, and tax advisors, ensuring advice is effectively integrated into decision-making.
- Ensure confidentiality and appropriate handling of sensitive financial, commercial, and organisational information.

Selection competencies

Essential competencies

- Tertiary qualification in accounting, finance or a related discipline.
- CA or CPA (or equivalent) qualification.
- Extensive senior-level experience in finance roles with accountability for financial reporting, budgeting, forecasting, and financial governance (typically 7+ years).
- Demonstrated experience operating as a Head of Finance, Finance Manager, Financial Controller, or equivalent senior role within a complex organisation
- Proven experience leading statutory and management reporting, including oversight of external audits and compliance with relevant accounting standards, taxation, and regulatory requirements.
- Demonstrated experience supporting Executive and Board-level decision-making through high-quality financial analysis, modelling, and clear, descision-ready reporting.
- Strong capability in budgeting, rolling forecasts, multi-year financial planning, financial modelling, and scenario and sensitivity analysis.
- Demonstrated experience designing, implementing, and maintaining effective financial controls, policies, procedures, and delegations.
- Proven ability to lead, develop, and manage finance teams, including performance management, capability uplift, and leading teams through change.
- Experience managing cash flow, working capital, and funding considerations, with an understanding of banking relationships, covenant management, and financial risk.
- High level of professional judgement, autonomy, and accountability, with the ability to operate confidently at an enterprise level.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills, including the ability to clearly explain complex financial matters to non-financial stakeholders.
- High level of integrity, discretion, and professionalism, particularly in relation to confidential and sensitive financial or organisational matters.
- Strong stakeholder management skills, with a collaborative, solutions-focused approach and the ability to influence across senior leaders and diverse teams.

- Well-developed organisational and time-management skills, with the ability to manage competing priorities and deliver outcomes in a dynamic, change-oriented environment.
- Alignment with Collarts' values, including a commitment to student experience, creativity, inclusion, and continuous improvement.

Desirable competencies

- Experience within a tertiary education environment (Higher Education and/or VET), or a similarly regulated and student-centred sector.
- Experience supporting or leading organisational change, transformation programs, restructures, or growth initiatives.
- Exposure to mergers, acquisitions, partnerships, or transaction-related activity, including financial due diligence and integration planning.
- Experience working with modern finance systems, data integration, and business intelligence or analytics tools.
- Experience working closely with Boards or Board Committees in a governance-focused environment.

Our Collarts Values

All employees are required to conduct themselves in accordance with the Code of Conduct and associated Human Resources policies and uphold Collarts core values. As a member of the management team, this role leads by example in embodying our core values of:

CURIOSITY Play, have fun, try new things, experiment, adapt and learn. Accept ambiguity and uncertainty. Embrace nuance and complexity. Ask questions and be open minded.

KINDNESS Get to know people, be gentle and respectful. Ask for help and help others. Be generous, humble and compassionate. Make kindness the currency of authentic relationships.

CONNECTION Share information freely, listen deeply and be honest. Invite people in. Build trust. Find collaborators who yearn for the same things. Have faith in the power of the team.

COURAGE Take risks. Be ambitious and determined. Find your voice: speak up and be vulnerable. Persevere. Practise progress over perfection. Make failure a step towards success.

MASTERY Immerse in the creative process. Find your thing: show grit in the face of struggle. Hone your craft and artistry. Challenge yourself in the relentless pursuit of excellence.