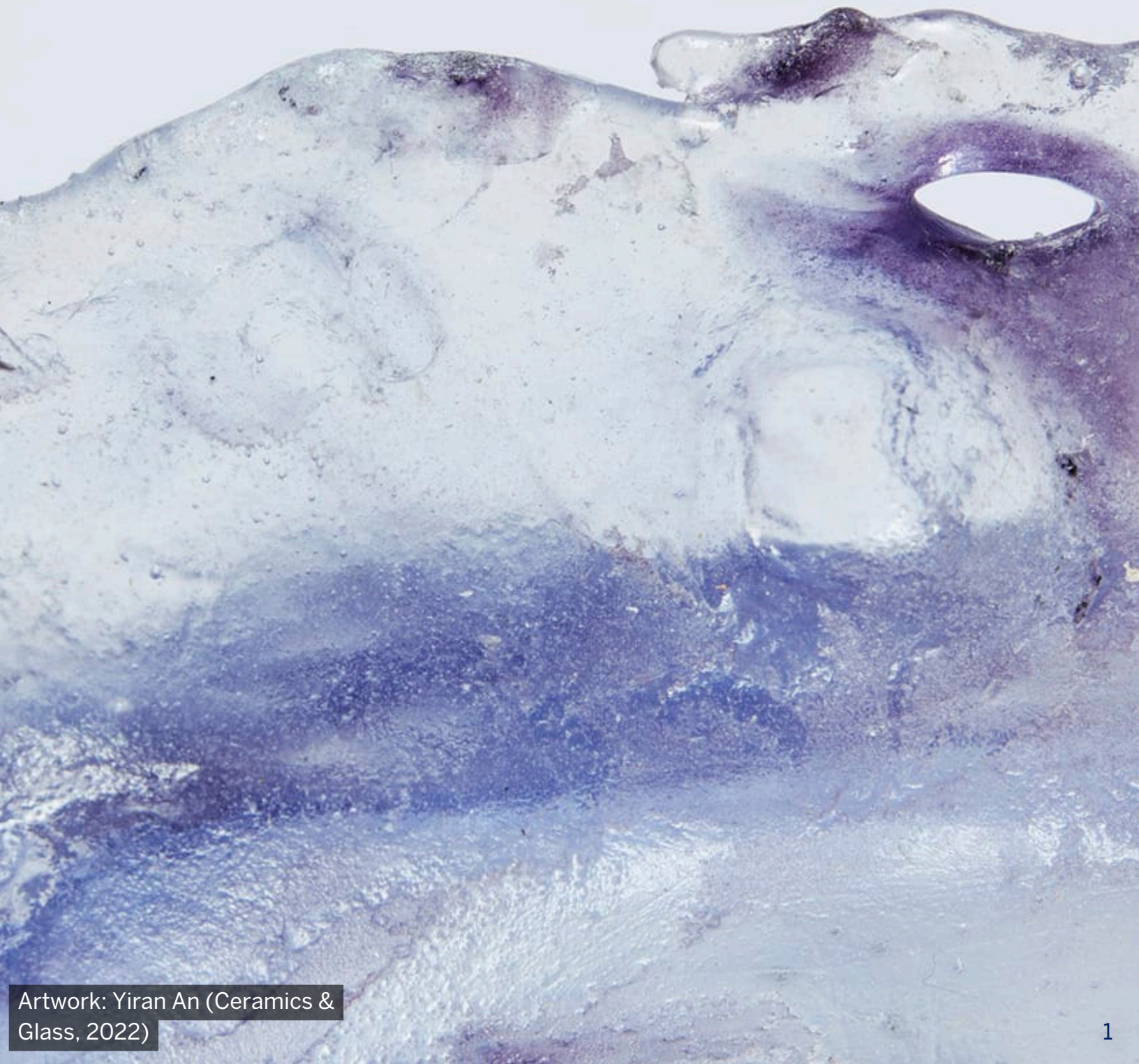


RCA

Financial & Project Accountant April 2026



Artwork: Yiran An (Ceramics & Glass, 2022)

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Photo: Richard Haughton

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WELCOME TO THE RCA



Photo: Iwan Baan

Founded in 1837, the Royal College of Art is the world's largest postgraduate-only community of art and design students. It has been ranked number one in the world 12 consecutive years (QS World University Rankings by Subject 2015-2026).

Studying at the RCA is the starting point for UK and global creative leaders. With more than 30,000 RCA alumni all over the world, the College's graduates form a diverse international network of artists, designers, creators and innovators.

Around 2,500 students are spread across four schools – Architecture, Arts & Humanities, Communication and Design - and in the RCA's Research Centres. The College creates an environment that champions exploration, collaboration and interdisciplinary learning - using art and design to reframe the possibilities of the humanities, technology, and ethics; and equipping graduates for new futures and opportunities

Research is at the heart of the RCA's impact. In active discussion with the world, the College brings interdisciplinary researchers and partners together in vital areas such as climate and sustainability, technology and society, and leads the field in practice-based research. As a result, the RCA is ranked as one of the most research-intensive specialist art and design universities in the UK [under the Research Excellence Framework 2014 and 2021].



Photo: Richard Haughton

The RCA champions exploration, collaboration and interdisciplinary learning - using art and design to reframe the possibilities of the humanities, technology, and ethics. We experiment, question and discover, putting research and practice at our heart, to equip students for new futures and opportunities and build on current knowledge.

Current 'real world' practices of our disciplines are fully integrated into our teaching delivery and student learning. The RCA model also consciously uses both the high research active levels of faculty, and the absence of undergraduate provision, to provide concentration and focus, in order to use research to creatively 'disrupt' the learning experience.

Our People



Photo: Richard Haughton

The strength of the RCA lies in its people: our students, academic community, researchers, technical specialists, professional services teams and our global network of alumni and partners.

The RCA's Chancellor is Sir Jony Ive, one of the world's most influential designers. The Pro-Chancellor and Chair of Council is Sir Peter Bazalgette, and the President & Vice-Chancellor — the College's Chief Executive — is Professor Christoph Lindner, who joined the RCA in 2024.

The RCA's academic faculty bring world-leading expertise and industry knowledge to the College's model of teaching. All faculty are actively engaged in their relevant industries and professional practice beyond academia, and the RCA is the only specialist art and design university where all of our permanent academic staff are also research active and included in the RCA's submissions to the UK Research Excellence Framework.

The RCA has a total academic and research workforce of over 400 people, which includes Associate Lecturers, Visiting Professors and Guest Lecturers who bring 'live industry' experience into the taught curriculum

The RCA also employs a team of over 100 highly skilled technicians, many of whom themselves have postgraduate qualifications and are well established and recognised practitioners in their fields of specialism. Our skilled technical staff and technical resources are integral to delivering an interdisciplinary approach which is a key part of the student experience.



OUR STRATEGIC DIRECTION: TOWARDS THE RCA AT 200 (2026–2030)

The RCA's new Strategic Plan sets out a transformational five-year phase as we begin our journey towards our bicentenary in 2037. Our ambition is to become the world's most influential art and design community, with a global footprint and a renewed approach to research, education, partnerships and organisational culture.

By 2030:

- The College will operate across two revitalised central London campuses, including a reimagined Darwin Building at Kensington.
- We will establish research and education hubs outside the UK for the first time.
- We will strengthen our global partnerships, increase access to scholarships and widen participation for students from all backgrounds.
- We will be recognised for leadership in emerging creative technologies, especially AI, and for our contribution to sustainability, regenerative practice and public good.

Our work is underpinned by the RCA's four values — Collaboration, Curiosity, Inclusion and Integrity — and by commitments to long-term resilience, financial sustainability, staff and student wellbeing, and a culture where creativity and innovation thrive.



The College's ambitions will be delivered through three Strategic Pillars:

Strategic Pillar One

Creating and delivering the best art and design education, dialogue and research.

Strategic Pillar Two

Championing a community with outstanding potential who are diverse, inclusive and connected.

Strategic Pillar Three

Convening transformational exchanges of art and design expertise and ideas.

Our Values



Photo: Shaun James

The RCA community operates in line with four agreed values:

Curiosity

We have a tenacious commitment to innovation and openness to change. We positively interrogate ideas, assumptions and plans and welcome the honest scrutiny that is alive in a learning community.

Inclusion

We celebrate diversity and embrace difference as a source of strength. We strive for an inclusive RCA community, removing barriers and challenging exclusionary and discriminatory practices.

Collaboration

We value what happens together and we help and support each other to achieve our collective goals. We work in partnership with our students, staff, alumni, institutions and communities across the globe to make a lasting difference.

Integrity

We are always willing to listen, we offer constructive feedback and we promote accountability, building relationships of mutual trust and respect. We are resilient in the face of challenges, pursuing outcomes with individual, cultural, societal and economic impact.

Financial & Project Accountant



Purpose of Role

Reporting to the Group Accountant, the Financial & Project Accountant will provide expertise across both technical accounting and business partnering functions. The role holder will drive financial excellence, influence decision-making, and lead key stakeholder relationships while developing and implementing innovative approaches to financial reporting and analysis.

The primary responsibilities of the role are to:

- Provide Finance Business Partnering Support for the College's Subsidiary companies, as well as for the College's externally-funded Research projects. This will include leading budget and forecast production, monthly management accounts, ensuring accurate posting of income and spend, and providing strategic financial support to the relevant teams;
- Alongside the Group Accountant, develop robust subsidiary and intercompany accounting, in compliance with transfer pricing and other legislation;
- Make key contributions to and influence the production of statutory/legal accounting reports and returns, including year-end group and subsidiary financial statements, ensuring compliance excellence;
- Represent the College's interests with key internal and external stakeholders, including with external auditors;
- With support from the Group Accountant, utilise technical expertise to own and optimise indirect tax returns, maximising opportunities for recovery in line with HMRC regulations;
- Own and develop the College's fixed asset register, ensuring that capital projects are accurately accounted for.

The role requires liaison across the College at all levels, including with Executive team members, Heads of Service, and external stakeholders. The role holder will be recognised as a subject matter expert, providing authoritative advice on a wide range of financial management and accounting matters including technical accounting and VAT.

Key Responsibilities

Strategy & Leadership

- Act as Finance Business Partner for the College's Subsidiary companies, as well as for the College's externally-funded Research projects. Lead budgeting and forecasting, performance analysis, and strategic planning initiatives for those areas;
- Support the development and application of accounting practices for the College's subsidiaries, including transfer pricing, intercompany balances and taxation. Ensuring that subsidiary and intercompany accounting is accurate, timely and reported against budget;
- Provide authoritative expertise on depreciation policies and fixed asset management, influencing College-wide asset strategy;
- Contribute to the development of financial policies and procedures that support institutional strategic objectives;

People and Management (including self-management)

- Identify and self-assess against appropriate annual goals as part of the performance review process;
- Ensure that monthly and year end deadlines are achieved;
- Provide mentorship and guidance to junior finance team members, contributing to team development and capability building;

Stakeholder Management

- Provide proactive finance business partnering support to budget holders and PIs in managing their budgets, understanding the information being presented and assist them in shaping their financial plans;
- Deliver training to colleagues across the College and subsidiaries regarding financial matters as appropriate;
- Represent the College's interests with external auditors during interim and final audits;



Finance

- Prepare useful management accounts for Subsidiary companies and for externally-funded Research projects, ensuring that all transactions have been accurately recorded, journals have been recorded with adequate backup, and that the relevant budget holders are operating within relevant restrictions placed on funding;
- Prepare and review indirect tax returns, including quarterly VAT returns and annual PESH returns;
- Develop College's fixed asset register, ensuring that capital projects are accurately accounted for;
- Support the Group Accountant with management of the College's restricted funds, ensuring optimal utilisation and compliance while identifying opportunities for development;
- Own key contributions to annual financial statements production, including oversight of supporting evidence, key reconciliations, and compliance with evolving SORP requirements

Governance & Risk

- Keep up-to-date with regulatory and technical developments, ensuring the College and subsidiaries maintain compliance with laws and regulations;

Systems & Data

- Identify process improvements across financial reporting and analysis functions, and contribute to development and implementation of solutions;

Other

- Undertake any other duties requested by the Group Accountant and other senior members of the Finance Department;
- Ensure continuing professional development.



Essential

- A strong financial accounting background. Newly qualified accountant (ACA, CIMA, ACCA, CIPFA or equivalent) or above;
- Capable of demonstrating up-to-date technical financial accounting and reporting knowledge;
- Expert-level IT skills including advanced Excel modelling and comprehensive experience with Finance ERP systems (e.g. Oracle, SAP, Unit4);
- Experience of producing year-end group and subsidiary entity financial statements;
- Experience of fixed asset accounting;
- Experience of finance business partnering, demonstrating excellent communication skills with ability to translate complex financial concepts for diverse audiences;
- Ability to work in a team, work under pressure and meet tight deadlines;
- Experience of building relationships with budget holders and external stakeholders, including challenging appropriately while maintaining engagement and driving results.

Desirable

- Knowledge of UNIT4 (Agresso) finance system
- Knowledge of current Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting for Further & Higher Education (SORP);
- Knowledge of partial exemption VAT in a higher education environment.



Pay & Benefits

Additional Information:

- Full time salary: Grade 9 £55,040 - £61,322 per annum including London Allowance
- 30 days annual leave plus extended breaks at Christmas and Easter, at the discretion of the College. Pro rata for part time employees, interest-free season ticket loan are available alongside many other benefits
- Location: Kensington/Hybrid
- Department: Finance
- 1fte permanent role
- Responsible to: Group Accountant
- Working hours 9.30am to 5.30pm with an hour each day for lunch.



Pension

The Royal College of Art is a member of the Superannuation Arrangements of the University of London (SAUL) which is a contributory defined benefit pension scheme. The college will contribute a sum equal to 16% of your salary while you pay 6%.

Holiday

30 days paid leave a year plus bank and public holidays normally observed in England and Wales. In addition, the college is normally closed for six days a year, one day on either side of Easter and the remainder between Christmas and New Year. Part-time staff will be entitled to the pro rata equivalent.

Season ticket loans

Interest-free loans are available for staff to purchase annual season tickets.

Enhanced maternity and adoption pay

Qualifying employees are entitled to enhanced maternity/adoption pay: 26 weeks' full pay, 13 weeks Statutory Maternity/Adoption Pay. This compares to the statutory provision of 90% of average pay for 6 weeks followed by Statutory Maternity/Adoption Pay for 33 weeks.

Enhanced paternity pay

Qualifying employees are entitled to six weeks' paternity leave entitlement at full pay.

Enhanced sick pay

Occupational sick pay after three months' service is three months full pay/three months half pay.

24/7 confidential support

Staff and family members in their household have access to a free, external confidential support service for work, financial, legal, family and personal problems 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Occupational health

Occupational Health support for the College is provided by Imperial College's occupational health service at their South Kensington Campus.

Life Cover

Active members of the SAUL pension scheme automatically receive life cover. A lump sum of four times your salary together with a refund of your contributions and a 2/3 pension for your dependent/spouse is payable should you die whilst in employment.

Library

All staff are welcome to join the college library.

Events

All staff are welcome to attend exhibitions, lectures and private views held by academic schools and programmes.



Equality, diversity and inclusion - Disability and neurodiversity

Disability Confident

RCA is a Disability Confident Committed employer. You may recognise the logo from our job adverts.

Disability Confident is a government scheme designed to encourage employers to recruit, retain, and develop disabled people. RCA was originally awarded the Disability Confident certificate in October 2022, which broadens and deepens our existing commitment as an employer.

As a Disability Confident Committed employer, we commit to the below core activities:

- ensure our recruitment process is inclusive and accessible
- communicating and promoting vacancies
- offering an interview to disabled people who meet the minimum criteria for the job
- anticipating and providing reasonable adjustments as required
- supporting any existing employee who acquires a disability or long-term health condition, enabling them to stay in work
- at least one activity that will make a difference for disabled people



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12 YEARS as the world's
N°1 University for Art & Design

QS World University Rankings by Subject 2015-26

Together, the RCA community can generate change now for a sustainable future everywhere.