



MCA
Cooper Associates

Education consultancy
and interim specialists

RECRUITMENT OF SENIOR FINANCE PERSONNEL



CIMA ANNUAL AWARDS
2010 WINNER
Consultant of the year

Who are we?

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MCA Cooper Associates are financial and general management specialists providing consultancy and interim management support to education providers across the UK. We were established in 2001 and have developed a settled team of very experienced core consultants, all with detailed knowledge of the sector.

What do we offer?

We offer a range of support services to FE Colleges, Independent Schools and other training providers.

These are just some of the services that we offer:

- MCA Map Pro - Process Mapping Solution
- Interim Management - Business Support
- Interim Management - Curriculum and Quality
- Recruitment Services
- Recovery and Improvement Planning
- Reorganisation Planning including Mergers and Formation of Federations
- Clerking Service
- Efficiency Reviews
- Feasibility Studies
- Due Diligence
- Business Planning and Forecasting
- Resource Planning
- Pre-Inspection Planning
- Acquisition Planning and Support
- Financial Modelling and Scenario Planning
- Financial Management Expertise
- Diagnostic Reviews
- Cost Reduction Advice

Testimonials

“Following the success we had in mapping our MIS processes it was an easy decision to extend MCA Map Pro to other processes in the College.

The response from everyone was very positive”.

Carole Kitching

Principal, Lewisham Southwark College

“MCA Cooper Associates provided the College with interim financial management for a period during 2012. The service provided was excellent. The member of staff supplied had considerable experience and expertise and did a great job for us. The service provided by Malcolm and his team at MCA was professional and responsive. I would feel happy to recommend MCA Cooper Associates to other colleges in need of interim financial management solutions”.

Amanda Mosek

Principal, Boston College

“The MCA team worked well with school staff. They respected the need to get on with normal school business and had a good understanding of how busy managers in the school were. Their report was well structured and clear. I would recommend them to other schools”.

Gill Wetherill

Head of HR and Administration, The Grammar School at Leeds

A selection of other quotes from clients

“The analysis was far more meaningful and intelligent than just a benchmarking exercise”

“The service provided was excellent”

“The Company has great experience and expertise”

“Their track record is first class”

“They have earned an enviable reputation”

“They worked efficiently with the staff without creating any additional burden on their time”

“They were both responsive and flexible”

Recruitment of Senior Finance Personnel

Our Approach

There is a view amongst general recruitment organisations that all accountants are very similar in their approach and that provided they have the necessary qualifications they all offer similar outputs. This is not a view we share. Our years' of working with and managing accountants has taught us that there are many different types of accountant. Although most qualified accountants should be technically competent, thereafter there is a variety of different skills that some have and some do not. These include interpersonal and presentational skills and an ability to empathise with others, especially where such people are in other technical functions but are managed by the accountant.

The process we recommend places candidates in real-life situations which give a realistic and reliable indication of whether they would fit into the organisation. They interact with governors, senior and other managers and those personnel with whom they would be working.

Benefits we offer

By appointing MCA Cooper Associates, you are accessing not only an additional resource but also sector-wide experience of recruiting excellent senior finance personnel.

These are just some of the benefits that we bring:

- Additional resource
- Experience of what different types of accountant can offer and knowledge allowing us to sort the “wheat from the chaff”
- An ability to set appropriate practical exercises to test the abilities of the applicants
- Up to date knowledge of sector parameters and standards relating to finance
- Up to date knowledge of remuneration levels in FE finance positions
- Knowledge of the advertising media which are likely to offer the best chance of success
- Complete management of the process from Job/ Person Specification to final interviews
- Structure to the recruitment project

Case Study

Dudley College 2015

In 2015 Dudley College appointed MCA Cooper Associates to advise them on a better structure for their finance function. MCA recommended that the department should be organised into two streams namely Financial and Management Accounting.

The College agreed that this was the most appropriate way forward and decided that it needed to appoint to two new roles, a Vice Principal – Financial Strategy & Control and a Management Accountant. MCA were approached to lead the recruitment campaigns for these two roles and were delighted to accept.

The approach that was adopted was MCA's standard approach which had the following features:

- Assistance with developing Person/Job Specifications
- Advising on content of advertisement(s) and mode(s) of advertising
- Placing of advertisements on behalf of the College
- Advising on the techniques which are available for attracting/communicating with candidates
- Providing access to an MCA Cooper Associates secure on-line portal for communicating with potential candidates and for communications between the College and MCA
- Handling front-line questions from potential candidates on behalf of the College
- Executive search using our extensive FE-based database of contacts
- Receiving and sorting applications
- Undertaking preliminary interviews with potential short-listed candidates
- Development of short-list of candidates for final interviews (number to be decided by the College but usually 3 or 4 candidates)
- Advising on the interview process and suitable interview questions

- Involvement in final interviews in an advisory capacity
- Advising and support for senior managers and Governors throughout drawing on relevant FE sector experience since 1998

MCA recommended that whilst we should handle the recruitment of the Vice Principal alone, the newly-appointed VP should then be involved in the selection of the new Management Accountant. This way was considered to be the best way to ensure that the person appointed to this new role would be exactly what the new VP envisaged.

The applicants for both roles were both numerous and high quality. They came from a mix of backgrounds from both within and outside the FE Sector. Successful appointments were made in each case.

The College were contacted eight months after the appointments were made and it was at this point that the testimonials included here were offered.

Testimonials from Dudley College

“I was so impressed with the organisation, sector knowledge and attention to detail shown by Malcolm Cooper and his team from MCA Cooper Associates during the recruitment process that concluded in my appointment as Vice Principal Financial Strategy & Control, that I had no hesitation in using Malcolm again a few months later to help recruit a new management accountant role at the college.

MCA Cooper provided a full and very effective recruitment service, which included advertising and sourcing a good number of strong candidates, organising all the candidate interviews and the final selection event all within relatively short timescales, and actively participating and advising throughout the interview process. With me being new to the FE sector, Malcolm's knowledge and experience of the sector proved invaluable. He provided excellent advice and guidance throughout, which helped me recruit an excellent candidate. Six months on, and I remain delighted with my new management accountant. MCA Cooper take a great deal of the credit in this successful outcome and so I can highly recommend them.”

Andy Comyn

Vice Principal Financial Strategy & Control

“Working with MCA on the recruitment of two senior financial posts turned out to be a really good move. They were efficient and knowledgeable ensuring the process ran smoothly. More importantly we made two cracking appointments!”

Lowell Williams

Principal

How to Contact us

Contact us by any of the following means. We offer a twenty-four hour response service seven days a week throughout the whole year:



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