

# Entry requirements, skills and interests (finance manager)

Precise entry requirements will vary, depending on the role and level.

## Entry requirements

There are a variety of entry routes into a career in financial management. The following are general entry requirements. For specific entry requirements check the person specification for individual job vacancies and see our examples below.

- [with moderate to high grade GCSEs and/or work experience](#)
- [with A levels/equivalent](#)
- [as a graduate](#)
- [if you already have management experience](#)

### With moderate to high grade GCSEs and/or work experience

You can join the NHS administrative level and work your way up into management through supervisory level positions, supported by in-house and external training schemes. For most junior positions, you will need 4 or 5 [GCSEs at Grades A-C](#) <sup>[1]</sup> or equivalent. Employers may also consider applicants with fewer formal qualifications if they can demonstrate they have the right skills, for example, previous clerical experience. There are sometimes opportunities to enter financial roles through an [apprenticeship](#) <sup>[2]</sup>

[Find out more about support roles within finance](#) <sup>[3]</sup>

### With A levels/equivalent

If you have 2 or 3 A-levels or equivalent vocational qualifications you may be able to start at a higher administrative grade, leading to a supervisory role and then into management. Internal and external training schemes, for example in communications skills or budget management, will assist your progress and enable you to apply your academic skills to work situations. Previous work experience can be an advantage. There are sometimes [higher apprenticeships](#) <sup>[2]</sup> available

### As a graduate

If you have a degree or equivalent vocational qualifications you can apply for junior management posts or apply for entry on the [NHS Graduate Management Training Scheme](#) <sup>[4]</sup> in which you can specialise in finance management. As well as the fast-track graduate scheme, depending on your degree and your employment experience, you may be able to apply directly for junior management vacancies. Alternatively, you can join an NHS trust or other health-related organisation in an administrative role, gain experience of staff supervision and move on into management with appropriate training and support.

### **If you already have management experience**

We welcome applications from people who have already built up financial management experience in the private sector or in other public or voluntary organisations. You can often join at a level corresponding to your skills and expertise. Some managers are recruited directly for specific positions.

[Find out more about the training you'll receive for a career in financial management](#) <sup>[5]</sup>

## **• Skills, qualities and interests needed**

For a career in financial management, you'll need a variety of skills and qualities, typically including:

- effective business acumen
- a high level of numeracy
- excellent attention to detail
- good communication skills
- leadership skills
- organisational skills
- a willingness to work with others and respect their views
- confidence with information technology
- negotiating skills
- the ability to challenge the way things are and find better alternatives
- honesty and fairness in dealing with other people
- a commitment to the ideals of quality and fairness in delivering healthcare.

If you're applying for a role either directly in the NHS or in an organisation that provides NHS services you'll be asked to show how you think the NHS values apply in your everyday work. The same will be true if you're applying for a training position or university course funded by the NHS.

The NHS values form a key part of the [NHS Constitution](#) <sup>[6]</sup>.

[Find out more about the NHS Constitution](#) <sup>[7]</sup>

## **• Example requirements for specific roles**

The skills and qualifications needed vary according to the type of post. For example, holding professional accountancy qualifications and/or membership of a relevant professional body is usually required for finance managers.

Here are examples of specific requirements for particular roles.

- management accountant
- assistant director of finance
- financial planning manager
- assistant director of finance
- head of finance

### **Management accountant**

In this example you'd need to be an active finalist or qualified accountant with experience of delivering a financial management service. Alongside expertise in computerised finance packages and proven analytical skills, you'd need an ability to demonstrate strong inter-personal, planning and team working skills.

### **Assistant director of finance**

This type of role would demand an ability to implement tight controls and so you'd need effective communication, interpersonal and staff management skills, together with strong negotiating skills. A good understanding of NHS finance, including financial planning, budgetary control and performance management would also be essential.

### **Financial planning manager**

For this example, you'd ideally be educated to degree level with NHS experience and a qualified accountant recognised by the Consultancy Committee of Accountancy Bodies (CCAB). Effective communication, excellent analytical and problem-solving ability would be required.

### **Assistant director of finance**

This type of role would require strong communication, management and interpersonal skills, and ideally, you would need to have experience of financial planning and control, preferably within the NHS. You're most likely to need to be a CCAB qualified Accountant

### **Head of finance**

You'd need to hold a recognised CCAB qualification and have experience of working at a senior level within a finance department in an NHS organisation or an organisation of a comparable complexity. You would also need a sound understanding of NHS accounting/financial policies and requirements and an awareness of government policy on ICT issues.

## Links

[1] [https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#GCSEs\\_at\\_grades\\_A-C](https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#GCSEs_at_grades_A-C) [2]

<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/secondary-school-or-fe-college/apprenticeships-traineeships-and-cadet-schemes> [3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/corporate-services/finance-staff> [4]

<http://www.isthenhsforme.co.uk> [5] [https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/finance-](https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/finance-manager/training-and-development-finance-manager)

[manager/training-and-development-finance-manager](https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/finance-manager/training-and-development-finance-manager) [6]

[https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#NHS\\_Constitution](https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#NHS_Constitution) [7]

<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/about/working-health/nhs-constitution>