

School Business Manager

Introduction

School business managers are responsible for the financial and support systems in schools. They usually manage and supervise administration, support and maintenance staff. They are also involved in strategic planning on school leadership teams, and in deciding how money will be spent in the future. They make sure that the school works within its annual budget.

Also known as

- Bursar, School
- Business Manager, School
- Bursar



Work Activities

As a School Business Manager, you will provide and manage the financial, administrative, human resource and support functions that are needed for the efficient running of schools. You are also sometimes known as School Bursars.

You manage the finances of schools. You keep track of what has been spent and how much money is still available. You must make sure that the school and the Governors meet the requirement to have a strong and secure financial management plan in place. This is called the Schools Financial Value Standard.

At regular intervals and at the end of each year, you are responsible for the preparation of statements showing an accurate and complete record of all financial transactions. You are also involved in planning how much money will be needed and how it will be spent in the future.

School Business Managers have overall responsibility for computerised management information systems. You make sure that they hold accurate information about finance, payroll and pupils or students - although this information might be gathered and summarised by administrative staff.

You make sure that schools comply with laws such as employment legislation and health and safety regulations. You might be responsible for school insurance and for community liaison.

In larger schools, School Business Managers are usually responsible for the recruitment, management, development and supervision of administration, support and maintenance staff such as Caretakers, Lunchtime Supervisors, Receptionists and Secretaries.

You will compile reports and statistics for the local authority and School Governors, and give presentations and financial advice at meetings.

You are responsible for transport and catering contracts and the maintenance and development of the school buildings, grounds and administrative computer systems, and might choose, liaise with, and pay, contractors.

You are also responsible for buying equipment and supplies, and for making sure that bills are paid. You ensure value for money for all school services and supplies.

Many School Business Managers are based in one school. Smaller schools sometimes share the services of a Bursar/Business Manager.

In small primary schools, you might combine your role with that of School Secretary and Receptionist. In this case, you might also be responsible for first aid, arranging meetings with parents and writing newsletters, for example.

In independent schools and some state schools, you will prepare bills for tuition fees and collect payment from parents. In independent schools, you might also pay tax and staff salaries, administer pension schemes and advise the School Governors on investing money and marketing.

Being able to read, write and speak Welsh may be an advantage when you're looking for work in Wales.

Personal Qualities and Skills

To become a School Business Manager, you should have:

- management and leadership skills
- good skills and competencies for financial management
- problem-solving skills
- negotiating skills
- a proactive and forward-looking approach
- IT skills
- good written and verbal communication skills
- interpersonal skills

You will need to be well organised, decisive, resilient and adaptable.

Pay and Opportunities

Pay

The pay rates given below are approximate.

- Starting: £37,000 - £44,500
- With experience: £50,000 - £57,500
- Senior School Business Managers earn £62,000 - £69,000

Hours of work

Your working week is based around office hours. Additionally, some evening and weekend work might be required, for example, to attend Governors' meetings, or other school activities.

Where could I work?

Employers are all types of primary and secondary schools, including academies, independent schools and sixth-form colleges.

Opportunities for School Business Managers occur in cities, towns and rural areas throughout the UK.

Where are vacancies advertised?

Vacancies for School Business Managers are advertised on the National Association of School Business Management website.

They are also advertised on job boards, on websites such as LGJobs and the Independent Schools' Bursars Association, on some school websites, in local/national newspapers and journals, on Find a Job and at Jobcentre Plus.

Entry Routes and Training

Entry routes

There are many different routes into this career. Some School Business Managers have worked as School Secretaries or Administration Assistants. Others enter after gaining skills in human resources or finance. Some have accounting qualifications.

To prepare for this career, choose GCSEs and A-level courses in business studies, economics, and maths. Courses in accounting and computing are also useful.

Many School Business Managers study for the certificate of school business management (CSBM). The diploma for school business managers is aimed at more experienced school business managers, and holders of the CSBM. An advanced diploma is also offered, and there is a school business director programme.

The certificate in financial reporting for academies is for School Business Managers. The programme is accredited by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA).

Some School Business Managers study for a master of business administration (MBA). The entry requirement is normally a first degree, but practice-based learning and experience will be considered.

The Independent Schools' Bursars Association (ISBA) offers a 2-day new bursars' course. Run in November each year, this will give an introduction to the role of a bursar in an independent school.

The level-4 school business professional apprenticeship takes between 18 and 24 months to complete. After completing the apprenticeship, you can become a member of the Institute of School Business Leadership (ISBL)

Progression

Some School Business Managers progress by moving to larger schools and taking on more responsibility. Many are members of the school's senior leadership team.

Work Experience

Previous experience working in banking, finance, accountancy, administration or hotel management would be really useful for this career.

Rehabilitation of Offenders Act

This career is an exception to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. This means that you must supply information to an employer about any spent or unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands or warnings, if they ask you to. This is different from other careers, where you only have to reveal information on unspent convictions if you are asked to.

Qualifications

For entry to a degree course in a business or accountancy subject or for registration with a chartered accountancy body, the usual requirement is:

- 2/3 A levels
- GCSEs at grade C/4 or above in 2/3 other subjects
- English and maths at GCSE (grade C/4 or above)

Alternatives to A levels include:

- BTEC level 3 qualifications
- the International Baccalaureate Diploma.

To get onto an Advanced Level Apprenticeship, you'll usually need 5 GCSEs at grade C/4 or above, including English and maths, or to have completed an Intermediate Level Apprenticeship.

Some universities accept the Welsh Baccalaureate as equivalent to 1 A level.

Adult Opportunities

Age limits

It is illegal for any organisation to set age limits for entry to employment, education or training, unless they can show there is a real need to have these limits.

Skills/experience

Many people enter after working in, for example, banking, finance, accountancy, administration or hotel management. Others enter with skills gained as school secretaries or administration assistants.

There is growing recognition of the value of school business managers/bursars, as schools have greater self-government over their budgets and resources.

Courses

The National Association of School Business Management (NASBM) offers a range of workshops and training courses to support the school business manager role.

NASBM also offers short courses: Induction Programme and Development Programme.

The National College for Teaching and Leadership (known as the National College) offers the Certificate, Diploma and Advanced Diploma of School Business Management. These can be studied online, with some college attendance. The National College also has a suite of programmes for the progression of the school business manager role.

Access courses

If you don't have the usual qualifications needed to enter your chosen degree or HND course, a college or university Access course could be the way in.

These courses are designed for people who have not followed the usual routes into higher education. No formal qualifications are usually needed, but you should check this with individual colleges.

Statistics

- 12% of people in occupations such as school business manager/bursar work part-time.
- 26% have flexible hours.
- 5% of employees work on a temporary basis.

Further Information

Professional institutions Professional institutions have the following roles:

- To support their members.
- To protect the public by keeping standards high in their professions.

The National Association of School Business Management is the main professional institution for this career.

Contacts

- **LGjobs**
Local government vacancies
Website: www.lgjobs.com
- **myjobscotland: Scottish local government vacancies**
Scottish enquiries
Email: myjobscotland@cosla.gov.uk
Website: www.myjobscotland.gov.uk
- **The Institute of School Business Leadership**
Address: First Floor Offices, 140 Wood Street, Rugby, Warwickshire CV21 2SP
Tel: 01788 573300
Email: info@nasbm.co.uk
Website: www.nasbm.co.uk
- **National College for Teaching and Leadership**
Tel: 0845 6090009
Email: college.enquiries@bt.com
Website: www.education.gov.uk/nationalcollege

- **Independent Schools' Bursars Association (ISBA)**
Address: Bluett House, Unit 11-12 Manor Farm, Cliddesden, nr Basingstoke, Hampshire RG25 2JB
Tel: 01256 330369
Email: office@theisba.org.uk
Website: www.theisba.org.uk
- **Careers Wales - Welsh Apprenticeships**
Tel: 0800 028 4844
Website: ams.careerswales.com/
- **Local Government Careers in Wales**
Website: www.lgcareerswales.org.uk
- **Welsh Local Government Association**
Email: enquiry@wlga.gov.uk
Website: www.wlga.gov.uk

Related Careers

- Nursery Nurse
- NVQ Assessor
- School Lunchtime Supervisor
- History Teacher
- Geography Teacher
- Modern Foreign Languages Teacher
- Teaching Assistant
- Music Teacher
- English Teacher
- Maths Teacher
- Science Teacher
- Education Welfare Officer
- Playworker
- Special Educational Needs Teacher
- Art and Design Teacher
- Design and Technology Teacher
- Early Years Teacher
- Physical Education Teacher
- Primary Teacher
- Secondary Teacher
- Training Manager
- Higher Education (HE) Lecturer
- Teacher of English as a Foreign Language
- Lecturer
- Teacher
- Welsh Teacher
- Nursery Assistant
- Headteacher