

# Hills Road Sixth Form College

**Appointment of:** Executive Assistant to the Chief Operating Officer and Chief Finance Officer

**Location:** Hills Road, Cambridge



Shape  
the  
future



Hills Road  
Sixth Form College  
Cambridge

## Welcome from the Principal and CEO Designate



Thank you for your interest in Hills Road Sixth Form College and in this post. I hope that the information in this booklet will help you to decide whether this role and our college might be the right next step for you. I sincerely hope it is!

As I prepare to take up the role of Principal in September, this marks an important moment in the College's continuing journey. Hills Road enjoys a strong national reputation and has led Sixth Form College performance tables for many years. But we are not complacent. In an ever-changing world, excellence is a moving target and we are ambitious - for our students, for our staff and for the future of post-16 education. We respond thoughtfully, continually reflecting and evolving to ensure that what we offer remains exceptional.

Working in a Sixth Form College brings distinctive rewards, not least the privilege of engaging with bright young minds who challenge, question and inspire. It is an intellectually rigorous environment grounded in collaboration and shared purpose. Everyone here has a role to play in helping every young person who comes through our doors to realise their potential – sometimes in ways they may never previously have been able to imagine.

I am fortunate enough to know first-hand the transformative impact that Hills Road has on our students and, as a former student, I am deeply committed to ensuring that it continues to flourish as a centre of academic excellence where kindness and integrity remain at the heart of everything we do.

We recognise that staff wellbeing is fundamental to student success and we pride ourselves on being consultative. In response to colleague feedback, we have introduced a two-week October half term and redesigned professional development. Staff consistently speak of the strength of our community. Our core values – Diversity, Kindness, Integrity, Respect, Community and Excellence – are not slogans, but lived commitments that shape how we work, how we lead and how we support one another. Hills Road is ambitious, yet humane; high-performing, yet deeply caring.

I hope I have been able to give you a flavour of Hills Road. If you would welcome an informal conversation about the role or about the College more broadly, we would be delighted to hear from you.

Finally, thank you for considering our college and for the commitment that an application entails. Whatever the outcome, I wish you every success in your future career.

With very best wishes,  
Ali Kirkman

**(Vice Principal – Staff and Student Learning)**

## Executive Assistant to COO and CFO

Permanent, Part time, Term-Time plus 5 days

32 hours per week, Monday to Friday,

Pro rata salary: £31,026 per annum (Support Spine Point 23, £41,019 FTE)

We are looking for a well organised and self-motivated individual who has outstanding administrative and operational experience to work with and for our Chief Operating Officer and Chief Finance Officer. This is a new role, joining the Executive Office Team which consists of two further Executive Assistants each of whom support two senior colleagues. The successful applicant will be responsible for supporting and maximising the efficiency of the COO and CFO across their wide-ranging leadership portfolios.

This role will suit you if you enjoy working in an organisation that is focused on doing all it can to make a positive difference to the life chances and opportunities of young people. This is an interesting and fast-paced environment - your ability to switch quickly between subjects, to react calmly under pressure, to prioritise effectively and to communicate with emotional intelligence will be key skills.

Recently rated 'Outstanding' again by Ofsted, Hills Road Sixth Form College continues to enjoy a strong national reputation for excellence in education. In part, this is because we continually review and refine our practices to enhance the experiences of our students and staff, for example, through our collaborative evidence-based approach to professional development. We also appreciate that academic success requires a happy, healthy and caring community, so our coaching culture ensures that the wellbeing of our students and staff is at the heart of all we do.

We offer a wide range of competitive benefits including a generous pension scheme, free use of the college sporting facilities, free on-site parking, cycle to work scheme, as well as discounts on all our Adult Education courses.

**Closing date:** Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2026 at 9am

**Interviews:** w/c Monday 8 June 2026

Details and an application form for the above post may be obtained from our website [www.hillsroad.ac.uk](http://www.hillsroad.ac.uk)

The college is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of its students and staff and expects all members of the college community, volunteers and visitors to share this commitment. The college actively promotes equality and diversity and welcomes applications from all sections of the community.

# Information for applicants

## The Post

The Executive Assistant (EA) to the COO and CFO will play a pivotal role in the smooth running of college operations. The post-holder will provide high-quality executive support and help coordinate friction-free operational delivery across Estates, Compliance, IT, Finance, HR, Information Systems, the Sports & Tennis Centre and teaching departments. The post-holder will maintain momentum on priorities, strengthen day-to-day internal processes, and support reliable delivery of projects to time, cost and quality targets.

The role covers four substantial strands of work, EA support, operational management, governance support and Data Protection. These responsibilities have very different timelines, coordination needs and deadlines. Therefore, effective prioritisation and close communication with the COO and CFO are vital skills.

The role demands discretion, initiative and clear judgement. It will suit someone who combines rigour and responsiveness, and who enjoys creating order and clarity in complex and fast-paced environments. The successful applicant will be a confident communicator, a proactive organiser, and someone who is motivated by helping others succeed in their roles.

<b>Location:</b>	Executive Team office
<b>Reports to:</b>	Chief Operating Officer
<b>Works closely with:</b>	The College Strategy Team (CST), the Governance Professional, 2 Executive Assistants, and managers across support and academic teams.

The purpose of this new role is to –

- Maximise the COO's and the CFO's capacity by ensuring priorities, papers, decisions and follow-up are handled accurately and on time.
- Keep momentum during the COO's non-working days so that operations remain stable and predictable.
- Coordinate delivery across the COO's portfolio so that work is sequenced, risks are surfaced early, and deadlines are met.
- Manage the efficient processing of Trips & Visits.
- Manage day-to-day FOI and SAR coordination so the college responds lawfully, calmly and consistently.
- Support strong governance administration by enabling well-run Board and committee cycles.
- Improve operational processes so that routine work becomes simpler, faster and more reliable over time.

# Job Description

## Executive Assistant to the COO and CFO

### Main Accountabilities:

#### Executive Support to the COO

- Proactively manage the COO's diary and workflow; schedule meetings, research and prepare notes and papers, and ensure the COO is fully prepared for internal and external commitments.
- Draft, proofread and format documents, correspondence and presentations with an exceptional eye for accuracy and version control.
- Maintain continuity of work during the COO's non-working days by progressing delegated tasks as agreed.
- Own the tracking and follow-through of operational actions across the COO's portfolio.
- Exercise delegated authority to request returns, set deadlines and escalate delivery risks.

#### Executive Support to the CFO

- Support the CFO with document preparation and administrative tracking during the year-end closure and budgeting process.
- Coordinate finance-related meetings, such as budget planning and financial review sessions, including papers and actions.
- Maintain a log of financial cycles and submissions (e.g. ESFA returns, audits) to help ensure timely completion.
- Draft or support internal communications related to financial milestones or changes in procedure.
- Prepare paperwork related to financial governance and committee reporting.
- Assist with the administrative management of financial records or other financial documentation, where relevant.
- Manage small departmental budgets on behalf of the CFO
- Provide secretarial support for Cantabrigians, the college's wholly owned trading company.

#### Operational Processes and Projects

- Manage the processes of Trips & Visits on behalf of the COO
  - Ensure guidance and advice is accurate and up to date.

- Liaise with trip leaders to ensure planning and paperwork is accurate and completed in a timely manner.
- Liaise with Finance to ensure trips are budgeted accurately, and payment processes are straightforward and accessible to parents.
- Check that safety procedures, risk assessments, well-being and safeguarding considerations are in place and properly recorded before trips depart, escalating concerns where necessary.
- Check that appropriate emergency procedures are in place and clearly documented and escalate any gaps of concerns.
- Coordinate operational outputs across the college to ensure accurate reporting of progress on the Strategic Plan.
- Lead or support short, defined projects arising through the year; scope objectives, stakeholders, timelines and risks; and report progress to the COO.
- Contribute to the development and embedding of proportionate project management tools and templates across the college.
- Identify and help deliver technology-enabled improvements to workflows.

### Data Protection

- Provide day-to-day guidance to colleagues on good practice in data protection and information handling in line with college procedures.
- Act as first point of contact for FOI and SAR requests to the college; log, triage and acknowledge requests within statutory timescales.
- Scope requests; identify relevant data owners; commission searches; and maintain an auditable case file.
- The post-holder will be authorised to request information and set internal deadlines for returns to meet statutory response times.
- Assess exemptions and redactions in line with college procedures, the FOI Act 2000 and the UK GDPR/Data Protection Act 2018, escalating complex or high-risk cases to the COO as required.
- Draft clear, accurate responses for COO sign-off; issue responses within legal deadlines; and maintain the disclosure log and performance metrics.
- Promote good information hygiene, including advising colleagues on record-keeping and retention relevant to FOI/SAR compliance.
- These responsibilities are undertaken with the support and oversight of the COO, with complex or high-risk matters escalated as required.

### Governance and Trust Board Support

- Provide executive assistance to the Governance Professional in the planning and delivery of Trust Board and committee cycles.
- Support the production and timely circulation of agendas, papers and minutes.
- Ensure publications and filings meet governance and regulatory requirements.

- Maintain forward plans, attendance records, action trackers and decision logs.
- Manage practical arrangements for Board and committee meetings, including scheduling, venue, catering and technology.
- Manage induction materials and administrative arrangements for new trustees/governors.

### Executive Support Team

- Collaborate with two experienced Executive Assistants in the delivery of support to all CST members.
- Work collaboratively to problem-solve and provide capacity and resilience when the unexpected happens.
- Work with colleagues to ensure minimal loss of capability and capacity in the event of absences within the office.

### Accountabilities that relate to all staff at the College

- Demonstrate behaviours and values consistent with the person specification for this role.
- Promote equality of opportunity in accordance with the college's Equality and Diversity Statement.
- Comply with all college policies and procedures. This includes those where each member of staff has an individual duty to act and for which the college can be held vicariously responsible for the actions of its employees:
  - Equity, diversity and inclusion
  - Safeguarding the welfare of young people
  - Health and Safety.

### Anticipated time commitments

The following is a guide to the anticipated balance of the EA's time over the year.

- EA to the COO – 10 hrs/wk
- EA to the CFO – 4 hrs/wk
- Operational Processes and Projects – 7 hrs/wk
- Data Protection – average 6 hrs/wk, varies by number/complexity of requests
- Governance – average 2 hrs/wk, but cyclical within the meetings schedule
- Executive Support Team – 3 hrs/wk coordinating CST tasks with colleagues

## Person Specification for EA to the COO and CFO

	Essential	Desirable
<b>Qualifications, training and experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant experience providing executive-level administrative support in a complex organisation.</li> <li>• Demonstrable experience managing competing priorities to deadlines.</li> <li>• Experience building alignment across teams, resolving bottlenecks, and improving end-to-end delivery.</li> <li>• Accurate numeracy, analytical ability and confidence interpreting data.</li> <li>• Database and spreadsheet skills.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience handling regulated information processes such as FOI/SAR, complaints handling or audit preparation (training can be provided for FOI/SAR).</li> <li>• Experience of working within an education environment</li> <li>• Experience of working with young people</li> <li>• There are no prescriptive academic requirements, but the working level requires an academic ability at approximately first-degree level.</li> </ul>

In addition, the successful candidate will demonstrate, or have potential to develop, strengths in the following areas. Evidence will be established from the application form, CV, covering letter, references, the interview or a combination of these.

<b>Skills and Ability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confident organiser able to anticipate needs, solve problems and follow through to completion.</li> <li>• Strong digital skills, including Microsoft 365, document templating, version control and collaborative tools.</li> <li>• Strong Excel skills, for example use of pivot tables etc</li> <li>• Evidence of engagement with, and willingness to use AI to improve workplace efficiency</li> <li>• Excellent written communication, drafting and minute-taking.</li> <li>• Sound judgement and discretion.</li> </ul>
<b>Knowledge</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working knowledge of UK GDPR/Data Protection Act 2018 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000, or willingness to be trained.</li> <li>• Knowledge of some relevant areas of work including Safeguarding, H&amp;S, project management, budgets, governance processes etc.</li> <li>• An awareness of the range of needs of people from diverse ethnic, cultural and social backgrounds.</li> </ul>
<b>Organisation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detailed, methodical and data-driven</li> <li>• Well organised, able to manage own time effectively to meet deadlines and to develop contingencies to cope with the unforeseen</li> <li>• Commitment to collaborative teamwork</li> </ul>

<b>Disposition and Approach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent inter-personal skills demonstrating a professional and assured disposition and with the ability to establish a good working rapport with students and colleagues</li> <li>• A mature and non-judgemental outlook</li> <li>• Enthusiasm and a “can do” approach</li> <li>• High degree of personal responsibility</li> <li>• Demonstrate the college values of Diversity, Excellence, Respect, Integrity, Community and Kindness.</li> </ul>
<b>Focus on quality</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commitment to high standards of work and accuracy.</li> <li>• Commitment to the aim of the college to achieve quality and value for money in all aspects of its work</li> <li>• Commitment to professional development and willingness to attend appropriate training and development opportunities that support the college</li> </ul>

## How to Apply

Applicants are asked to do the following:

- complete the online [Hills Road Sixth Form College application form \(Part 1\)](#)
- complete the online [equality and diversity monitoring form \(Part 2\)](#)
- write a supporting statement of application (no more than 1,000 words)
- supply a brief CV

The online application forms ([Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#)) are available at the links above, and on the College's webpage for this vacancy. When completing Part 1, you will have the opportunity to upload your CV and provide a Supporting Statement of Application. Once you have submitted Part 1, you should then proceed to Part 2 (Equality and Diversity Monitoring form). All documents should be submitted **by 9am on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2026**.

Please note that applications received after the closing date may not be eligible for consideration. If Human Resources have not contacted you by Friday 5 June, then unfortunately your application has not been successful.

**Interviews will be held w/c 8 June 2026.**

Hills Road Sixth Form College will base its decision as to whether to invite you for interview solely on the details provided on your application and how well they match the criteria for this post.

In accordance with Home Office guidance, successful candidates will be required to evidence their right to work in the UK before commencement of employment. The successful candidate therefore must be able to demonstrate their right to work during the recruitment process.

Hills Road Sixth Form College is committed to ensuring equal opportunities in all aspects of employment and selects staff on merit, irrespective of race, religion, sex, disability or age. You are not obliged to complete the equal opportunities monitoring form, but any information given will help us to monitor the effectiveness of our equality and diversity policy.

If you have a disability, you are invited to request any special arrangements you may require for interview, or any adjustments you may anticipate would be needed in your working arrangements, by contacting the Human Resources Team on 01223 278063 (direct line). Further information about accessibility to the site can be found on our website under 'Equality and Diversity/Site Plan' and from 'AccessAble': [www.accessable.co.uk](http://www.accessable.co.uk).

Thank you for your interest in this post and in the college. We do hope that you will decide to apply, and we should like to thank you in advance for taking the time and trouble to do so. For more information about working life at the college please go to our website <http://www.hillsroad.ac.uk>



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