Job Description – Tax Manager

Job Summary

In this new role within the National Finance team, you will lead Forestry Commission's taxation function, acting as the organisation's principal adviser on taxation matters across Forestry England, Forest Research and Forest Services. You will be responsible for ensuring compliance with all relevant tax legislation, providing expert advice on complex taxation matters, and developing policies, governance frameworks and controls that protect the organisation from financial, compliance and reputational risk.

You will provide strategic and operational leadership on payroll taxes, VAT, International imports including reverse charge and duty deferment, Construction Industry Scheme (CIS), and IR35/off-payroll working rules, supporting informed decision-making across a wide range of commercial, operational and employment activities. Working collaboratively with finance colleagues, senior managers and external stakeholders, you will continuously improve the organisation's tax compliance arrangements and strengthen tax awareness across the Forestry Commission.

You will also lead and develop members of the tax function, ensuring that taxation risks are effectively managed and that the organisation responds appropriately to changes in legislation, HMRC guidance and public sector taxation requirements.

Key Responsibilities & Accountabilities

Tax Compliance and Advisory

- Lead the Forestry Commission's taxation function, setting priorities and ensuring delivery of tax compliance obligations across Forestry England, Forest Research and Forest Services.
- Act as the organisation's principal taxation adviser, providing authoritative professional advice on complex taxation matters to senior managers and stakeholders.
- Lead on all aspects of VAT compliance, ensuring accurate treatment of transactions and compliance with HMRC requirements across a diverse portfolio of operational and commercial activities.
- Manage the preparation, review and submission of VAT returns, ensuring accurate recovery of input tax and appropriate treatment of complex transactions.
- Lead and advise on tax implications of importing goods, or procurement of services from overseas, ensuring compliance with all elements of import duty.
- Lead on Construction Industry Scheme (CIS) compliance and reporting, ensuring adherence to statutory requirements and effective reconciliation processes.
- Provide specialist advice and oversight on payroll taxes, including PAYE, National Insurance Contributions and Benefits-in-Kind, working closely with payroll and finance colleagues to maintain compliance.
- Act as Forestry Commission's lead adviser on IR35 and off-payroll working rules, supporting employment status determinations and advising managers on compliance requirements.
- Support strategic and operational decision-making by identifying taxation implications of, procurement activities, major projects, commercial arrangements and employment practices.
- Be the first line of approval of the twice weekly supplier BACS payment run.

Governance, Risk and Continuous Improvement

- Lead the development, implementation and continuous improvement of taxation policies, procedures, governance frameworks and internal controls.
- Identify, assess and mitigate taxation risks, ensuring appropriate controls and escalation arrangements are in place.
- Monitor changes in tax legislation, HMRC guidance and public sector taxation developments, assessing organisational impacts and implementing required changes.
- Manage relationships with HMRC, the Tax Centre of Excellence and external advisers, coordinating responses to enquiries, reviews and compliance checks.
- Research complex technical taxation issues and develop practical solutions that support organisational objectives while maintaining compliance.
- Contribute to wider finance and organisational improvement projects, ensuring taxation considerations are identified and addressed at an early stage.

Leadership and Management

- Lead and develop the tax function, providing effective line management, coaching and support to direct reports.
- Allocate and monitor workloads, ensuring delivery of high-quality outputs and compliance with key deadlines.
- Build collaborative and supportive relationships with finance colleagues, operational teams and senior stakeholders across the Forestry Commission.
- Develop tax awareness across the organisation by delivering guidance, training and advice to finance and non-finance colleagues.

Location-Specific Information (optional)

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Skills, Knowledge & Experience

Essential Professional and Technical experience

- Proven experience of preparing and submitting VAT returns and resolving complex VAT issues.
- Significant experience of managing and advising on UK VAT compliance and technical VAT matters within a complex organisation. With experience of researching complex technical tax issues and presenting practical, evidence-based solutions.
- Experience of managing Construction Industry Scheme (CIS) compliance and reporting requirements.
- Experience of line management, coaching and developing staff.
- Strong analytical skills with the ability to review financial information and accurately assess taxation implications.

Desirable Professional and Technical experience

- Experience of advising on payroll taxes, including PAYE, National Insurance Contributions and Benefits-in-Kind.
- Experience of applying and advising on IR35 and off-payroll working legislation.
- Experience of working within the public sector, arm's length bodies or government organisations, including experience of partial exemption, non-business VAT recovery and public sector VAT arrangements.
- Experience of delivering taxation training and raising tax awareness across an organisation.

- Experience of using financial and ERP systems to analyse transactions and ensure tax compliance.
- Knowledge of wider employment tax and corporation tax issues affecting public sector organisations.

Qualifications

Essential

- Fully qualified accountant with a recognised IFAC (International Federation of Accountants) member body (e.g. AAT, ICAEW, ACCA, CIMA, CIPFA, ICAS, IFA), or significant relevant experience equivalent to that level of qualification.