

Payroll Assistant

Job Outline

Purpose

The Payroll Assistant supports the accurate and timely processing of Ark's payroll and expenses, ensuring that employee pay is correct, compliant and processed in line with contractual commitments, statutory regulations and Ark policies. The role provides first-line payroll support to staff, contributes to high-quality data management and supports the Payroll Coordinator in delivering an effective and customer-focused payroll service.

Reporting to the Payroll Coordinator, the Payroll Assistant maintains accurate payroll information, processes changes and transactions, resolves routine queries and supports continuous improvement across payroll operations. The role works closely with colleagues in People & OD, Finance and operational services to ensure the integrity of payroll data and a positive employee experience.

Responsibilities

Fact Finding & Analysis

- Act as the first point of contact for routine payroll and expenses queries, providing accurate information and support to employees.
- Maintain accurate pay-related data within the HR/payroll system, ensuring changes to terms and conditions are processed correctly and on time.
- Process monthly payroll inputs, ensuring accuracy of hours, allowances, deductions and employment changes.
- Ensure expenses claims are processed accurately and in line with Ark policy.
- Undertake calculations for statutory payments including sick pay, maternity, paternity and adoption leave.
- Monitor and update pension auto-enrolment requirements, ensuring compliance with legislation.
- Identify data errors or inconsistencies, resolving issues or escalating them to the Payroll Coordinator where required.
- Produce routine payroll reports and provide data to support payroll checking, audit and compliance activity.
- Keep up to date with changes to payroll legislation and share relevant information with the Payroll Coordinator and People & OD colleagues.

Innovation & Initiative

- Contribute to improving payroll processes, documentation and data quality.
- Suggest process improvements to reduce errors, streamline work and improve employee experience.
- Work proactively to resolve problems within agreed boundaries, applying good judgement and knowledge of Ark systems and policies.
- Support the Payroll Coordinator and People Services Manager in implementing digital improvements or system enhancements.

- Help build payroll awareness and capability among managers and staff by providing clear guidance and signposting.

Interpersonal Skills

Internal

- Build and maintain positive working relationships with managers, staff, People Partners, L&OD colleagues and Finance.
- Communicate payroll information clearly to employees, ensuring queries are handled promptly and professionally.
- Apply statutory, regulatory and data protection standards consistently.
- Exercise discretion and maintain confidentiality in all payroll matters.
- Demonstrate Ark's values through a customer-focused, supportive and solution-oriented approach.

External

- Report system issues or service concerns to external payroll system support teams as required.
- Maintain professional relationships with pension providers and external agencies when supporting routine enquiries.

Leading & Developing People

- Role model high standards of accuracy, professionalism and customer service within People & OD.
- Share knowledge and learning with colleagues to improve payroll capability across the function.
- Support effective communication and teamwork within the payroll and wider People & OD team.

Resources

- Ensure accurate processing of salary-related transactions to minimise risk of underpayment or overpayment.
- Ensure appropriate authorisation and documentation for expenses, maintaining receipts and audit trails.
- Maintain accurate digital and paper-based payroll records in line with GDPR and Ark procedures.
- Use HRIS and payroll systems effectively, ensuring data integrity and compliance.
- Participate in the People & OD business support rota, providing front-of-house and administrative support including mail handling, intercom management and welcoming visitors.
- Reports directly to the Payroll Coordinator.

Impact on Decisions

- Provide accurate payroll information that supports decision-making and operational planning.
- Identify issues requiring escalation and contribute to problem solving within the payroll team.
- Ensure payroll data entered into systems is correct to support organisational reporting, budgeting and compliance.

Expertise

- Strong IT skills, particularly Excel.
- Accuracy, attention to detail and commitment to high-quality data management.
- Ability to interpret payroll information and apply policy and statutory rules.
- Ability to build effective working relationships and communicate clearly.

Qualifications

- Relevant qualification at SCQF Level 7 or equivalent experience.
- Payroll or finance-related training desirable.
- Commitment to continued professional development.

Experience

- Experience working in a payroll environment.
- Experience using HR or payroll systems.
- Experience supporting employees and managers with payroll queries.
- Experience working with confidential information and maintaining discretion.

Knowledge & Skills

- Knowledge of UK payroll legislation, statutory payments and pension auto-enrolment.
- Strong numerical and analytical skills.
- Good time management and ability to prioritise work in a busy environment.
- Strong customer service skills.
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team.

Head Office Competencies

- Continuous Learning;
- Communication;
- Teamwork;
- Professional Boundaries;
- Problem Solving;
- Customer Service;
- Ark's Values.