

# Careers in Retail

## Finance and Accounting

The choice of careers in retail is wide and varied. There are opportunities in shops of all sizes and product mix and behind the scenes in the warehouse, head office and support departments like human resources, merchandising, IT, accounts and finance.

In many retail organisations the Accounts Department is managed centrally. In all organisations the Finance or Accounts Department is very influential, as without efficient money management the business cannot function.

The role of the Accountant is to provide financial advice on the running of the business so that the organisation uses the money wisely and makes a profit. Finance Officers and Administrators will support this. The function is very broad and can involve anything to do with the financial management of parts or the whole of the business.

A Finance Officer is not necessarily a qualified Accountant but may have responsibility for a small area of the business like payroll, or may be responsible for a region or a cluster of shops. In a smaller organisation the Finance Officer/Administrator role could be involved in many aspects of finance and administration.

Working in Finance or Accounts involves contact with customers, although not always on the same scale as working on the Sales Floor in a shop, therefore good communications skills are essential. Numeracy skills and a logical approach to problem solving are vital.

A Finance Officer needs to be accurate, organised and methodical. Information Technology plays a big part in financial management and therefore an understanding of IT will be necessary.

### Routes to entry:

There are opportunities to enter the Retail Finance sector as an Administrator or Finance Officer and employers will require a good standard of general education. There may be minimum GCSE entry requirements but this will depend on the organisation.

A strong CV highlighting your skills and strengths is recommended.

Qualifications are offered by Colleges and these may follow the Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT), Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) and the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA). There are accountancy courses available on a full time basis that can be taken prior to applying for a job however many employers now provide on the job training, Apprenticeships or sponsored courses.

### Useful links:

[www.lsc.gov.uk](http://www.lsc.gov.uk)  
[www.skillsmartretail.com](http://www.skillsmartretail.com)  
[www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk](http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk)  
[www.connexions-southcentral.org](http://www.connexions-southcentral.org)

### Freephone

Call the Retail Career line for advice and guidance on training and careers in retail on **0800 093 5001**

### e-mail

[contactus@skillsmartretail.com](mailto:contactus@skillsmartretail.com)

### There is comprehensive information available on the following websites.

[www.aat.org.uk](http://www.aat.org.uk)  
[www.acca.org.uk](http://www.acca.org.uk)  
[www.cimaglobal.com](http://www.cimaglobal.com)

