

A Very Royal Engagement



Vaughan Williams, Interim Finance Manager

One of the main attractions of life as an interim manager is the change of scene and chance to work in different and more stimulating environments. Not many assignments however, are quite as grand as the Royal School of Needlework at Hampton Court, where finance manager, Vaughan Williams is working as an interim finance manager.

The Royal School of Needlework (RSN) is an exciting, forward-looking organisation which is dedicated to keeping the art of hand embroidery alive in the 21st Century. It offers a unique educa-

tion in embroidery. Following a three year technical Diploma Course, highly skilled professional embroiderers are equipped to work in a commercial Studio, or follow a career in fashion or textile art and design. It also offers shorter classes to anyone with an interest in learning embroidery, from beginners to more advanced level students. The RSN's own Studio carries out varied commissions including the design and production of contemporary work and the conservation of textiles. Many pieces worked on in the Studio are of national importance.

Vaughan relishes working in such a unique and artistic environment. He also loves the fact that his office is located in such an historic and picturesque setting and that he can enjoy the views of the palace's beautiful gardens from his office.

His main job functions at the School are the financial and management accounting and payroll and one of the key challenges that he faced was to modernise the existing financial systems,

many of which were manual. One of the difficulties was the time constraints placed upon him. The School is a small charity and as such, could only afford to employ Vaughan three days a week, instead of five.

However, undeterred, Vaughan upgraded the Sage accounting software and added Sage Intelligent Reporting within the given time period. By automating these systems, he has reduced the amount of resource needed in the accounting function, whilst making the accounting processes and management reporting much faster and less complex.



He has also prepared the latest financial estimates for the year and will be completing a budget for 2007-08. He reviewed the VAT partial exemption calculations and made some taxation savings of around £1,000 a year, which is a big financial bonus for the charity.

Vaughan has now been with the School for almost five months and soon it will be time to hand over his role to a permanent finance manager. He is ensuring that his skills are being transferred to his successor and to other staff members. He has enjoyed working in such a great environment and certainly won't forget his Royal engagement.



Stephen Brooker, Chairman of the Charities Practice at Russam GMS said, "As Vaughan has clearly demonstrated, Interim managers can bring a fresh perspective and new ways of doing things. He has not only improved the School's existing financial systems, which will save a great deal of time and money, he has made genuine financial savings in other areas. Vaughan will stay on to ensure that his successors fully understand the new systems he has created, so the School can continue to improve its financial status and can benefit from the changes that have been implemented for many years to come."



Stephen Brooker, Chairman

