

Bookkeeper – Bookkeeping for German Clients - Job description

Steiner Tax Consultants Pty Ltd · Hout Bay, Cape Town

Full-time · Permanent · On-site · Reports to the Head of Bookkeeping · Salary ZAR 22 000 – 28 000 per month depending on qualification and experience, reviewed after the 3-month probation period · Start: as soon as possible; notice periods are accommodated

Purpose of the role

Steiner Tax Consultants is a tax and accounting practice of about twenty people in Hout Bay, advising investors, entrepreneurs and medical professionals with interests in both South Africa and Germany. The Bookkeeper takes ownership of a fixed portfolio of German client accounts and delivers, every month, a complete and reconciled set of books that the tax team can rely on without rework. In addition, the role supports the South African side of our non-resident clients: tax returns, SARS correspondence and registrations. The work is done in DATEV, supported by an AI-assisted back office that removes the repetitive part of the job. German is not required; the German context is taught.

Monthly bookkeeping for a fixed client portfolio

- Take ownership of a fixed portfolio of German client accounts (small companies and self-employed professionals in the medical sector) and be the person who knows each set of books
- Capture and post all business transactions in DATEV according to the German chart of accounts (SKR03/SKR04) and German VAT logic – taught during onboarding
- Process bank statements, cash books and credit card statements; allocate receipts and payments to open items
- Post purchase invoices and sales invoices, including intra-EU and cross-border transactions with the correct VAT keys
- Maintain fixed asset registers, depreciation runs and recurring entries
- Post payroll journals from the payroll provider's reports and reconcile them to the bank

Reconciliations and month-end

- Monthly bank, debtor and creditor reconciliations; clear open items, overpayments and unallocated receipts before the month is closed
- Reconcile supplier statements against the creditors' ledger and resolve differences with the supplier or the client
- Reconcile VAT accounts, payroll liabilities and intercompany or shareholder loan accounts
- Post accruals, prepayments and provisions; keep suspense accounts at zero
- Review the trial balance for plausibility (signs, balances, unusual movements) before handing it over
- Deliver a clean, complete month-end by the agreed internal deadline for every client in the portfolio

VAT and reporting

- Prepare the figures for the monthly or quarterly German VAT returns (Umsatzsteuer-Voranmeldung) for review by the tax team
- Prepare monthly management figures (BWA) and supporting schedules for clients and the tax team
- Prepare open-item lists, ageing analyses and cash overviews on request

South African tax administration

- Prepare South African income tax returns and compute taxable income for non-resident clients, for review by the tax team
- Answer SARS requests for information and support SARS audits and verifications: compile the documents, draft the response, track the deadline
- Apply for tax number registrations and handle other tax-related administrative work with SARS (eFiling profiles, registered representative, tax clearance, address and banking detail changes)

Documents and client contact

- Check incoming documents for completeness and quality; request missing documents from clients via the Personal Assistant or directly, and follow up until they arrive
- Answer clients' bookkeeping questions (open items, payment status, what a figure means) in clear, friendly language
- Maintain client master data, bank feeds and document workflows in DATEV

AI-assisted back office

- Work with the firm's AI-assisted document and posting workflows: review AI-proposed postings, correct exceptions, and feed the corrections back so the system improves
- Use the firm's AI tools for summaries, translations and research in day-to-day work
- Spot recurring manual steps and propose how they can be automated or simplified

Quality, deadlines and documentation

- Work to the firm's monthly deadline calendar and flag early when a client's books cannot be closed on time
- Keep a short processing note per client: peculiarities, standing instructions, open questions
- Document recurring procedures so that a colleague can take over a client during absences
- Handle client data in line with POPIA and the firm's confidentiality rules
- Peer review: review colleagues' bookkeeping work (postings, reconciliations, month-end files) against the firm's checklist, give clear feedback, and have your own work reviewed in the same way

Basic professional understanding

- No German is required: the German context (chart of accounts, VAT logic, typical documents) is provided through learning by doing, a dedicated mentor and translator apps
- Understand the difference between South African and German bookkeeping conventions well enough to apply the German rules consistently after onboarding

- Read a letter from the German tax office or a client's accountant, with a translator app where needed, and know what it means for the books
- Know when a question is a bookkeeping question and when it must go to the tax team

What we are looking for

Essential

- A formal qualification in accounting or bookkeeping (e.g. ICB, SAIPA, a diploma or degree in accounting)
- At least 3 years of hands-on bookkeeping experience, ideally in an accounting or tax practice looking after several clients' books at the same time
- Confident with general ledger work, debtors, creditors and reconciliations: you can explain what a reconciling item is and how you clear it
- Working knowledge of South African income tax and VAT administration and of SARS eFiling
- Accurate, structured and comfortable working to monthly deadlines; someone who enjoys doing the accounting work itself
- Fluent English, spoken and written; clear, friendly client communication
- Able to commute to Hout Bay daily; the role is on-site (client data protection rules and our systems do not allow remote work)

Advantageous

- Experience with DATEV or another German accounting package
- German language skills
- Experience with non-resident tax matters or cross-border clients
- Experience working with AI-assisted or automated document workflows

How success is measured

- All month-ends in the portfolio delivered complete and reconciled by the internal deadline
- Suspense and unallocated accounts at zero – or at least fully reconciled and explained – at each month-end; supplier and bank reconciliations without unexplained items
- Accurate, meaningful narrations on every posting, and each month-end checked for completeness of documents and transactions before hand-over
- Tax team queries on the books decreasing over the first six months; year-end files usable without rework
- SARS deadlines in the portfolio met without exception; requests for information answered within the required period

What we offer

- Salary of ZAR 22 000 – 28 000 per month depending on qualification and experience, reviewed after the 3-month probation period
- A permanent position with a 3-month probation period and clear, agreed success criteria
- Structured onboarding with a dedicated mentor who guides you through DATEV, our workflows and the German-specific rules

- Exposure to cross-border (South Africa/Germany) accounting and tax work – rare experience in the Cape Town market
- A modern, AI-supported working environment where you learn tools most practices do not have yet
- A small, calm team and an office in Hout Bay, away from the city traffic; Monday to Friday, office hours

How to apply

Instead of a CV screening, you complete our online application on www.steiner-taxconsultants.com/en/jobs: a few details about you, questions about your experience, and a short practical part. Shortlisted candidates are invited to a single interview at our office in Hout Bay. We reply to everyone within one week and communicate our decision within two days of the interview.

Your data is handled in line with POPIA and used for this recruitment only. We are an equal-opportunity employer; applications are assessed on experience, skills and fit for the role.

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