

Appointment of Chief Finance Officer



Ollscoil
Teicneolaíochta
an Atlantaigh

Atlantic
Technological
University



Role Overview

The Chief Finance Officer is a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), reporting to the President, with responsibility for the management and reporting of the overall financial status of the University.

As a member of the SLT, the successful candidate will:

- Make a strong personal contribution to a collegial leadership approach;
- Contribute to and deliver the strategic plan through collaborative working, across internal and external networks and stakeholders;
- Mentor and develop relevant teams, communicate effectively and strive to continuously improve the service provided for students and staff;
- Uphold and role-model the values of ATU and work to positively impact the University community.



The transition to a Technological University comes with challenges, including the need to integrate university systems, processes and procedures, while operating across nine geographically spread campuses. Finance will serve as a strategic enabler, supporting the Deans and Chief Officers in the delivery of services across the Institution. The Chief Finance Officer plays a crucial role in positioning Finance appropriately, creating a supporting framework for all users that is effective and easy to engage with.

Role Overview

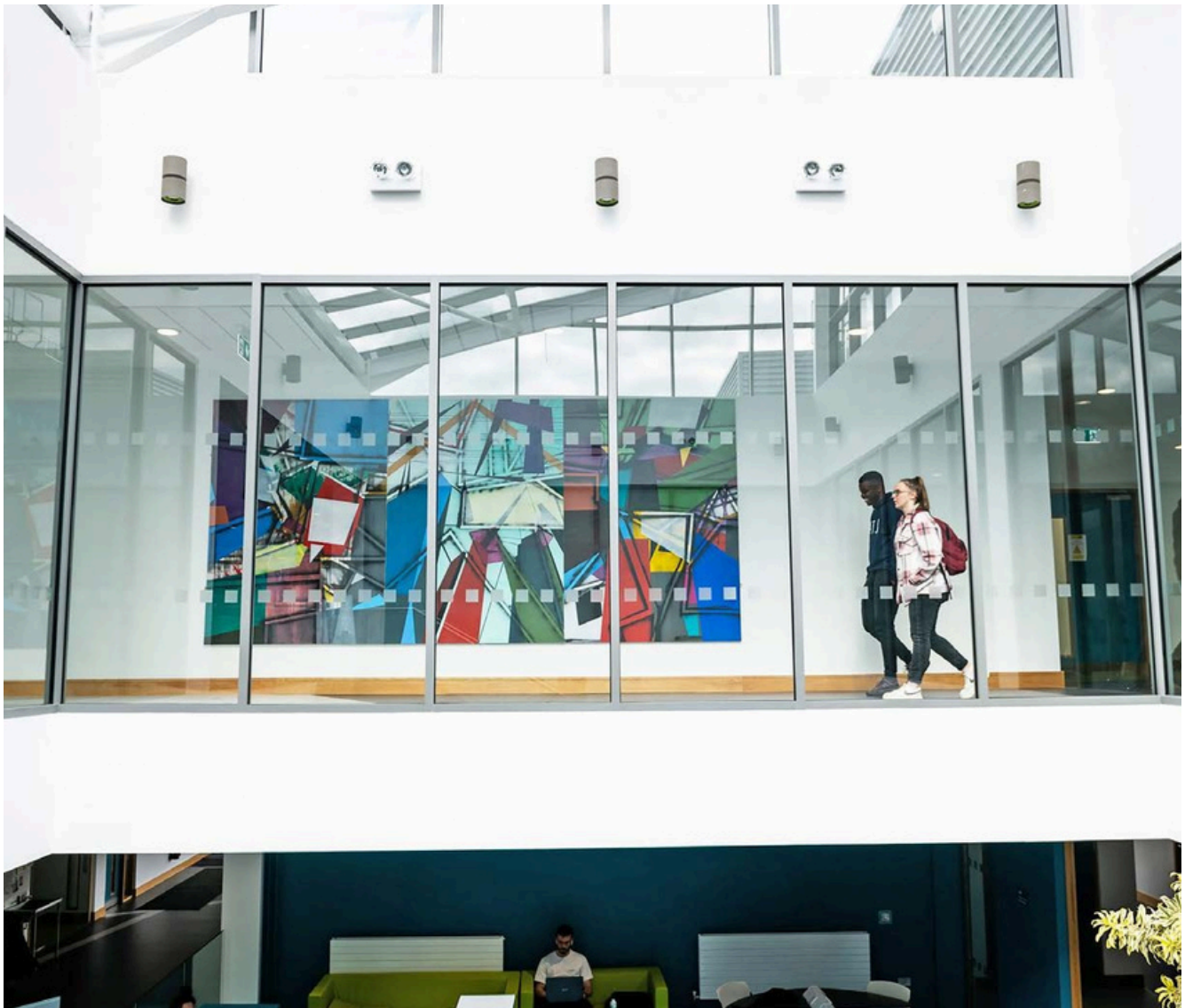
Broad functional areas encompassed in the Chief Finance Officer remit include inter alia:

- **Finance Operations** – Operational management of financial resources, budgeting, forecasting and financial management reporting
- **Finance Strategy** – Financial strategy, planning and long-term financial modelling
- **Finance Reporting** – Statutory reporting, treasury and accounts
- **Research and Project-based Finance**

The role is fundamental in supporting the delivering of ATU's strategic plan and the five "Guiding Lights", with significant input into developing themes, such as:

- **Financial Resilience** – Ensuring financial sustainability by having diverse funding streams, enabling investments in ground-breaking initiatives and infrastructure

This is a unique opportunity to be part of shaping the operational design in ATU, leading the effective transition to new structures and embedding the University's commitment to sustainable decision making and an equitable and inclusive culture.



Responsibilities

Leadership

- As a member of ATU's SLT, provide strategic leadership across all campuses, contributing to the development and delivery of the University strategy and vision;
- Drive the development and enhancement of a unified ATU culture and identity across academic and professional service areas across all campuses;
- Chair and/or participate in relevant committees and advisory groups related to University finances;
- Assume the role of lead person on campus, where appropriate and deputise for the President on any/all campuses as required;
- Other duties, as may be reasonably required by the President.

Financial Strategy & Planning

- Develop and implement financial strategies and controls which enable the mission, goals and objectives of the University;
- Develop long-term financial plans and models, incorporating scenario analysis and risk assessments to inform decision-making;
- Monitor financial performance, analyse financial trends and provide recommendations for improving financial efficiency and effectiveness;
- Deploy suitable technology to automate appropriate processes and increase efficiencies across the function;
- Provide financial advice and support to the Senior Leadership Team and University Governing Body;
- Oversee the timely and accurate preparation, monitoring and analysis of management accounts, development of standardised financial templates in the University for programme costing and budget modelling and the tracking of related spend;
- Identify and evaluate any potential investment opportunities;
- Produce a detailed annual report for the function, which will also feed into the University Annual Report.

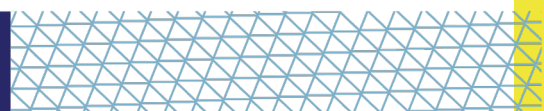


Financial Operations, Control Compliance

- Ensure the accuracy and compliance of financial accounts, including the preparation of statutory financial statements and adherence to regulatory requirements and accounting standards;
- Oversee the financial reporting of projects and research activity, monitoring funding spend and ensuring adherence to regulatory, state aid and fund rules;
- Develop and implement robust financial controls to safeguard institutional assets and enhance financial accountability;
- Design and implement effective budget allocation models that align with institutional priorities across the Faculties;
- Manage financial risk and compliance, including reporting in line with all regulatory requirements;
- Ensure the University procurement strategy is monitored and updated regularly ensuring value for money across the Institution;
- Manage organisational cashflow to facilitate the day-to-day University activities.

Partnerships, Investments & Capital Planning

- In partnership with the Chief Officer for Research, Innovation and Engagement, encourage the development of income-generating opportunities across all parts of the University including commercialisation, spinouts, and industry partnerships;
- Liaise closely with the Chief Operations Officer to oversee capital expenditure, including the strategic planning and financial management of long-term assets and infrastructure development;
- Liaise with legal teams, insurers and internal stakeholders to oversee all insurance requirements of the University;
- Provide strategic leadership of the University's treasury management function, including oversight of cash flow and investment management; financial governance of philanthropic funds; planning, securing, and managing future borrowing facilities; and ensuring full compliance with all financial covenants and reporting obligations;
- Build and maintain trusting relationships with key clients, partners and stakeholders.





Person Specification

ATU are seeking to appoint a dynamic individual to the role of Chief Finance Officer. The successful candidate must be a strategic leader with a keen understanding of business operations and how best to support operational excellence.

Knowing how to manage and lead through the supporting team is important, coupled with the ability to use appropriate lead and lag indicators that will ensure time is focussed for the best value outcomes.

The Chief Finance Officer should be collaborative and comfortable leveraging the expertise of the team through delegated responsibility. Maintaining a big picture view is critical, while maintaining sufficient bandwidth to deep dive into the detail when necessary.

The ideal candidate will be comfortable with the analysis and interpretation of the full range financial data and metrics, exhibit excellent communication skills and demonstrate the ability to effectively lead their team through periods of change.

Resilience and agility will be key assets, along with the ability to multitask and engage the many stakeholders this role interfaces with.

The Chief Finance Officer is a trusted advisor, sitting at the heart of sensitive and, at times, confidential financial information and strategic decision making. Strong ethics and integrity are essential, along with the ability to successfully balance delicate conflicts of interest as part of day-to-day operations.

Essential Skills and Experience

Qualification

- A qualified accountant (ACA, CIMA, ACCA) with membership of a prescribed accountancy body supervised by the Irish Auditing and Accounting Supervisory Authority (IAASA) or a relevant level 9 qualification.

Leadership of a Finance Function

- Leadership in a finance function, enabling effective financial management and strategic financial planning in a large and complex organisation, which has gone through significant change;
- Extensive experience in financial management, including financial and management accounts, forecasting, profit and loss, procurement and regulatory compliance;
- Experience in leading the adoption of new or upgrading of current financial and procurement technologies;
- Experience of developing robust financial control frameworks with appropriate reporting and controls;
- Experience in setting policy or contributing to its creation, implementation and evaluation in an academic setting, or knowledge intensive organisation;
- Experience advising and supporting senior leadership teams and non-executive Boards and Committees on complex issues related to finance and strategy;
- Outstanding communication skills with the ability to develop and deliver effective messaging, write impactful documents and present complex data to a varied audience;
- Demonstrable experience in actively promoting equality, diversity and inclusion.

Person Specification

Operational Leadership

- Proven project management and problem-solving abilities;
- Demonstrable line management experience in a varied and complex organisation, ideally including site or division management;
- Experience managing or contributing to change in a complex operating environment for activities such as organisational structure and new product or service implementation;
- Experience driving continuous improvement initiatives;
- Demonstrable experience and awareness of sustainability principles and building these into decision making;
- Demonstrated ability to manage large-scale capital projects, including budgeting, financial forecasting, and risk assessment, ensuring alignment with corporate objectives and financial sustainability;
- Strong knowledge of procurement regulations and frameworks, including public procurement laws, tendering processes, and regulatory compliance;
- In-depth understanding of insurance requirements, including coverage for research activities, international partnerships, student placements, and campus operations;
- Experience of building and maintaining partnerships with external stakeholders;
- Strong communication skills, with the ability to clearly explain complex financial concepts to all relevant stakeholders;
- Ability to act as an ambassador and represent ATU regionally.

Personal Attributes

- Ability to handle demanding and competing workloads;
- Ability to face challenging situations and consensus build during times of change;
- Strong judgement and decision-making skills both independently and within a collaborative setting;
- Commitment to ATU Values.

Desired Skills & Experience

- Background of working in knowledge intensive service organisations, such as higher education, financial services or a research-performing organisation;
- Experience working across a multi-site organisation;
- Demonstrated in-depth understanding and knowledge of university operations and academic culture, innovation ecosystems and education;
- Experience with of public sector regulatory compliance including reporting and procurement processes;
- Knowledge of the full student lifecycle, from recruitment, through graduation and onto post graduate activity;
- Experience engaging with unions;
- Understanding of the role of a regional institution, with demonstrated experience engaging and collaborating with diverse regional stakeholders, including relevant industry partners and key public sector external stakeholders;
- Demonstrated experience reporting to governing bodies, including audit and risk and finance subcommittees;
- Understanding of research commercialisation processes.

Salary Scale

€169,819

Hours of Work

35 hours per week.

Annual Leave

The annual leave entitlement for this post is 30 days per annum.

Pension Entitlements

The successful candidate will be admitted to the appropriate public sector pension scheme.

Nature& Duration of Contract

The appointment will be offered on a fixed term wholetime basis for a period of five years. This contract may be renewed for one further period of up to five years.

Location

Multi-campus coverage, with base location to be agreed.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

ATU is committed to being a fully inclusive university which actively recruits, supports and retains staff from all sectors of society. We value diversity as well as celebrate, support and thrive on the contributions of all our employees and the community they represent.

We are proud to be an equal opportunities employer and encourage applications from everybody, regardless of race, sex, ethnicity, religion, nationality, sexual orientation, age, disability, gender identity, marital status/civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, as well as being open to flexible working practices.

Sustainability

Through its Sustainability for the Future-Vision 2040, ATU is committed to constantly improving sustainability on campus and throughout the University. It is crucial we embed sustainability in all our disciplines, operations and engagements, to achieve a sustainable and healthy planet, both for people and for the natural systems we share our planet with and rely upon.

The successful candidate will be expected to embed sustainability principles throughout their decision making.

As a member of the senior leadership team, this role is fundamental in driving "Sustainability for the Future", one of ATU's five strategic "Guiding Lights." Our Sustainability for the Future, 2024-2028 strategic objectives are in Governance and Accountability, Climate and Environment Action, Education and Research, and Community and Social Responsibility. This role will have significant input into developing these themes and collaborating across the University community to ensure ATU is recognised as a leader in sustainability and our graduates positively contribute to a more equitable, inclusive future firmly rooted in the respect and protection of our natural world.





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