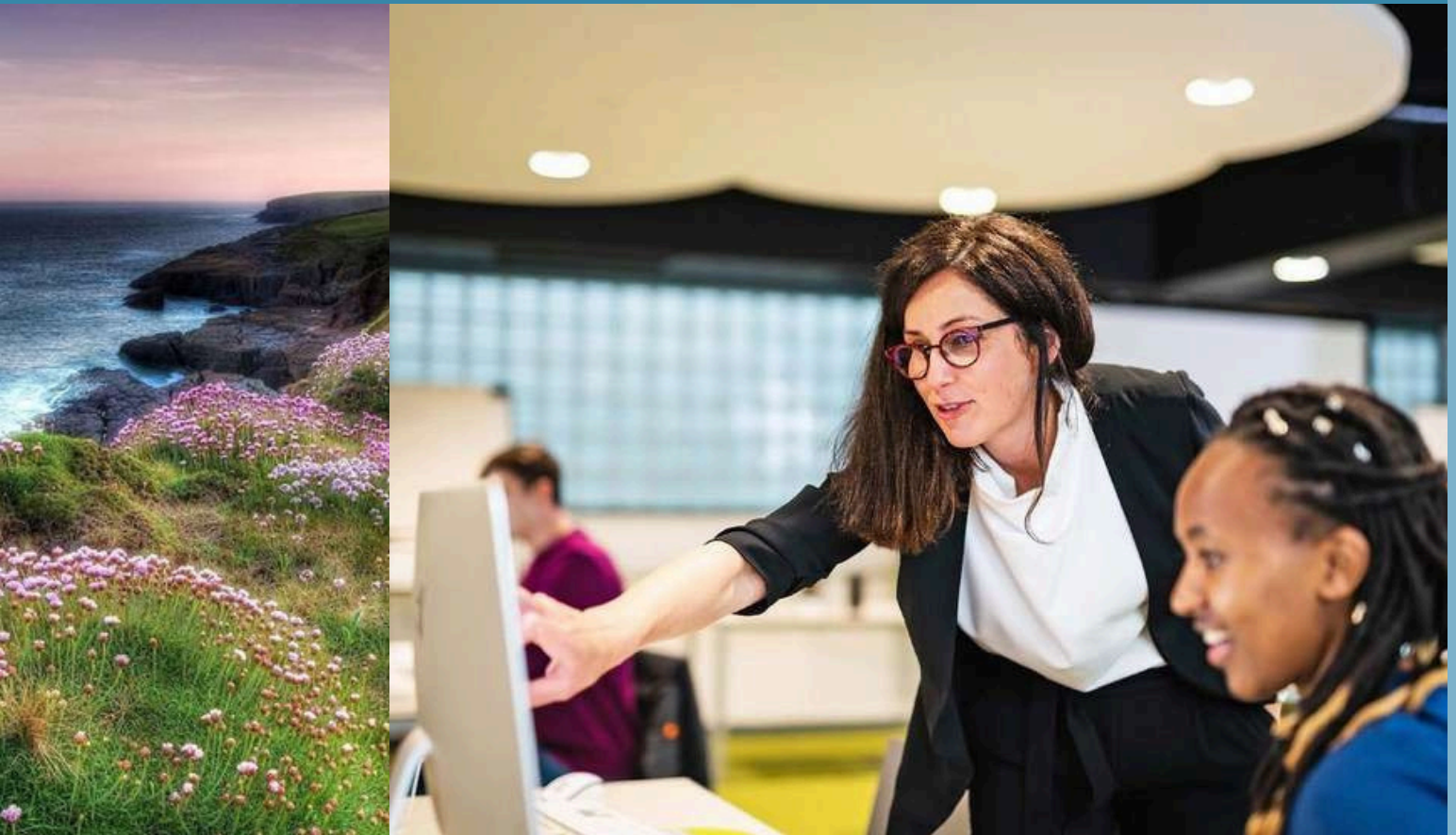


Appointment of Chief Operations Officer



Ollscoil
Teicneolaíochta
an Atlantaigh

Atlantic
Technological
University



Role Overview

The Chief Operations Officer (COO) is a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), reporting to the President, with responsibility for the leadership and coordination of many core services supporting the successful delivery of university operations. Along with the primary areas of Facilities, Capital projects and Information Technology Services, the role holder will be accountable for enhancing procurement services, ensuring a positive health & safety culture, developing commercial activities and managing the University's insurance requirements.

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

- Make a strong personal contribution to a collaborative and collegial leadership approach;
- Contribute to and deliver the strategic plan through collaborative work, 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.

Masterplanning, delivering key capital projects and planning for the future development of the campuses to meet the needs of learners is a key responsibility of the Chief Operations Officer in collaboration with colleagues.

The Chief Operations Officer plays a crucial role in achieving University integration and ensuring the adherence and delivery of best practice operating principles.

Functional areas reporting to the Chief Operations Officer include *inter alia*:

- Information Systems and Services – Strategically manage infrastructure, systems and services to integrate digital technologies, covering technical operations, cybersecurity, cloud infrastructure and solution development;

Role Overview

- Buildings & Estates – Ensuring the provision of safe, functional and conducive physical environments that support teaching, research and the overall student experience;
- Capital Projects – Leading the project management, from tender creation, evaluation and selection, through to build completion and commissioning;
- Procurement - Leading the development and enhancement of purchasing processes, supplier relationships and contract negotiations to ensure the efficient acquisition of goods and services;
- Health & Safety – Safeguarding the well-being of the University population and ensuring compliance with regulations to create a secure and supportive learning and working environment;
- Sustainability & Climate Action - Promoting environmental sustainability initiatives and integrating sustainability principles into University operations and practices.

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

- Dynamic Technological Adaptation – Ensuring the availability of an appropriate technology infrastructure to support student learning, integrating dynamic learning environments into curriculum design and promoting technological adaptation;

- Cyber Resilience - Ensuring best-in-class cyber security and resilience through robust strategies and protocols, safeguarding digital infrastructure, data and day-to-day operations;
- Performance Through Integration – Being a technologically advanced and interconnected university ecosystem that streamlines processes and supports collaboration across academic, research and operational domains, fostering an inclusive University community;
- Operational Excellence and Zero Carbon - Being a model of operational excellence reducing zero carbon emissions, showcasing best practice to the wider community.

The COO plays a multifaceted role in providing leadership in and managing the University's cyber strategy, campus masterplan and digital strategy enhancing the student experience through the provision of excellent teaching and learning facilities.

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



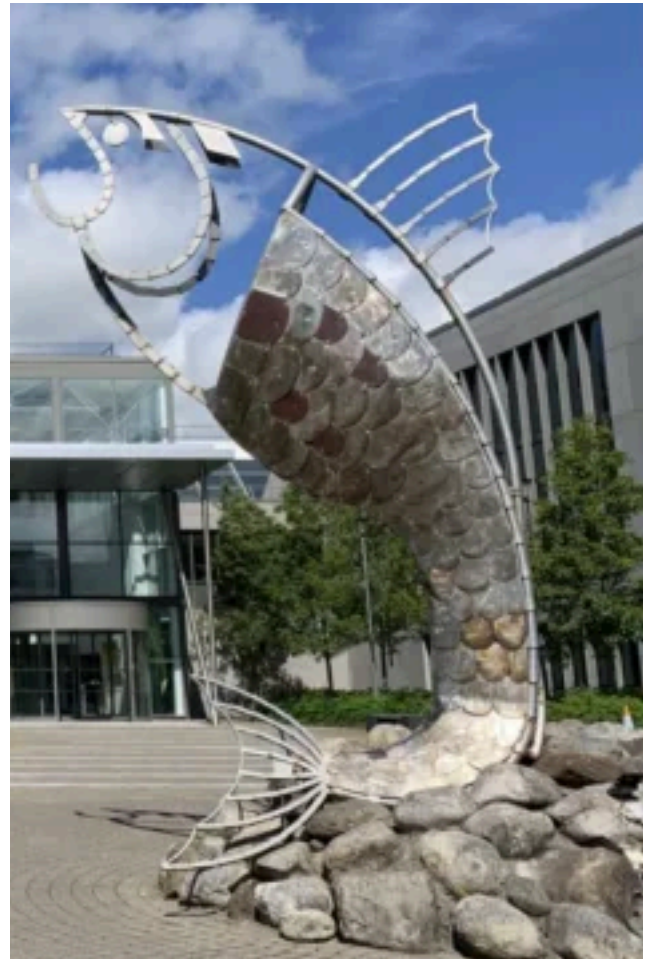
Responsibilities

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, ensuring alignment and consistency of operational practices across all campuses;
- Lead the development and implementation of a comprehensive campus operational masterplan that aligns with the University strategic goals and integrates best practice sustainability principles;
- Collaborate with academic and administrative leaders to align digital initiatives with institutional priorities and strategic goals;
- Build and maintain trusting relationships with key clients, partners and stakeholders;
- 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.
- Oversee the implementation and management of effective procurement strategies and processes ensuring all contracts are fit for purpose across the Institution;
- Ensure robust procurement governance, including policy development, risk management, and continuous improvement of procurement practices;
- Lead the University's insurance strategy and arrangements, ensuring appropriate coverage, effective risk management, and compliance with the relevant requirements;
- Develop and implement a sustainable commercial model to maximise the value and utilisation of the University's facilities and infrastructure investments;
- Lead the identification and evaluation of revenue-generating opportunities and strategic partnerships aligned with institutional objectives.

Operational Management

- Monitor operational performance through active engagement with the University community to gather input, address concerns and incorporate feedback to continuously improve operational functions;
- Ensure operational activities support and align with academic, administrative and student experience;
- Deliver effective leadership to the team providing the day-to-day operation and maintenance of ATU facilities across all campuses, ensuring they are fit-for-purpose;
- Enhance existing facilities in line with feedback and ensure continuous improvements;
- Ensure all campuses are secure and supportive learning and working environments by overseeing compliance with health and safety regulations;
- Share objective evaluations of space allocation and utilisation with colleagues to ensure effective alignment with needs across all campuses;
- Improve the overall sustainability and environmental footprint of the University infrastructure;





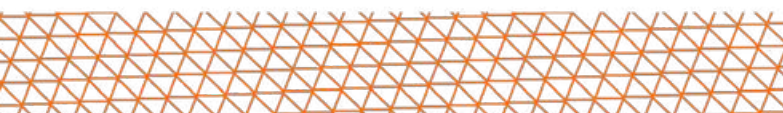
Responsibilities

Digital Transformation

- Develop and implement a digital strategy that leverages technology to enhance teaching, learning, research and administrative processes;
- Lead the development and execution of a comprehensive cybersecurity strategy aimed at fortifying the protection of the digital infrastructure and systems;
- Continuously monitor and assess emerging cybersecurity threats and implement cybersecurity best practices;
- Oversee the effective response to cybersecurity incidents, orchestrating investigations, coordinating incident response and ensuring remedial actions are promptly implemented;
- Oversee the training and education of staff to minimise exposure to cyber risks using appropriate security measures and behaviours;
- Work to ensure effortless and easy access to ATU systems and platforms for users, while ensuring the systems remain robust and secure;
- Lead the adoption and integration of digital tools platforms and solutions to improve efficiency, productivity and user experience;
- Monitor and evaluate the impact of digital strategies, collecting feedback and making continuous improvements to optimise outcomes;
- Identify opportunities for innovation and digital transformation across university operations and services.

Governance & Reporting

- Support and report to key Governing Body Committees, including the Strategic Development Committee, and when relevant the Finance Sub-Committee and Audit & Risk Committee;
- Provide structured, timely, and high-quality reporting to the Governing Body and its Committees on the progress, risks, and performance of major strategic projects and development initiatives;
- Produce a detailed annual report for the function, which will also feed into the University Annual Report.





Person Specification

ATU is seeking to appoint a dynamic individual to the role of Chief Operations Officer. The successful candidate must be a strategic leader with a keen understanding of business operations and what drives operational excellence.

The role holder must be comfortable overseeing a diverse portfolio, including some functions where they are not necessarily subject matter experts. Knowing how to manage and lead through the experts who report to the COO is important, coupled with establishing appropriate lead and lag indicators that allow time to be focused for the best value outcomes. Being collaborative, leveraging the expertise of the team and being happy to delegate, will give the best chance of success. Maintaining a big picture view is critical, while maintaining sufficient bandwidth to deep dive into the detail when necessary. Resilience and agility will be key assets, along with the ability to multitask and deal with the variety inherent within this role.

Essential Skills and Experience

Qualification

- Educated to a minimum of degree level

Leadership

- Leadership in an operational function in a large and complex organisation, which has gone through significant change;
- Proven ability to develop and lead high-performing, cross functional teams;
- Experience in leading the planning, delivering and managing large scale infrastructure projects within budget and on time;

- Experience of developing and implementing strategy within varied and complex organisations;
- Experience of leading the creation and delivery of Estates masterplans to support institutional growth and evolving needs;
- Experience advising and supporting senior leadership teams and non-executive Boards and Committee on complex issues related to operations;
- Proven experience providing leadership on all aspects of health and safety, embedding a culture of continuous improvement and ensuring compliance with all relevant legislation and standards;
- A successful track record of championing the sustainability agenda, integrating initiatives into all operations and practices to achieve university sustainability targets;
- Demonstrable experience in actively promoting equality, diversity and inclusion;
- Ability to act as an ambassador and represent ATU regionally and nationally.

Operational Management

- Proven project management and problem-solving abilities;
- Demonstrable management experience in a varied and complex organisation, including site or division management;
- Outstanding communication skills with the ability to develop and deliver effective messaging, write impactful documents and present complex data to a varied audience;
- Experience managing or contributing to change in a complex operating environment for activities such as organisational structure and new product or service implementation;
- Experience of establishing robust governance structures for risk management, capital investment and statutory compliance;

Person Specification

- Demonstrable experience and awareness of sustainability principles and building these into decision making;
- Demonstrable experience engaging with regulatory authorities;
- Experience of building and maintaining partnerships with external stakeholders;
- Demonstrated experience in leading and professionalising procurement functions;
- Extensive experience in leading an institutional insurance strategy;
- Experience in leading the development and implementation of sustainable commercial models to optimise the value and utilisation of institutional facilities and infrastructure.

Digital Transformation

- Proven experience and ability to direct and monitor the implementation and effectiveness of IT systems;
- Experience driving continuous improvement initiatives;
- Knowledge of best practice in technology enhanced learning, research and administration.

Governance & Reporting

- Proven ability to support and report to Governing Body Committees, including strategic, finance, and audit and risk committees;
- A track record of producing structured, timely, and high-quality reports for Governing Bodies and Committees.

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 in a collaborative setting;
- Commitment to ATU values.

Desired Skills & Experience

- Background of working in knowledge intensive service organisations, such as higher education or a research-performing organisation;
- Membership of appropriate representative and/or professional bodies;
- Experience working across a multi-site organisation;
- Possess a background in IT Services particularly in shared services and development of and implementation of best practice cyber security processes;
- Demonstrated in-depth understanding and knowledge of university operations and academic culture, innovation ecosystems and education;
- Knowledge of the full student lifecycle, from recruitment through graduation and onto post graduate activity;
- Experience with public sector regulatory compliance;
- Experience engaging with unions;
- Understanding the role of a regional institution and experience engaging and collaborating with diverse regional stakeholders.

Salary Scale

€166,473 per annum.

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 whole time 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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