



AMERICAS ASIA PACIFIC EMEA

Appointment of Chief Administrative Officer



Ollscoil
Teicneolaíochta
an Atlantaigh

Atlantic
Technological
University



Role Overview

The Chief Administrative Officer is a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), reporting to the President, with overall responsibility for the leadership and coordination of university governance, strategy, compliance and communications ensuring cohesive messaging and alignment with institutional objectives.

Working directly with the heads of faculties and functions, as well as the President, the successful candidate will ensure the incorporation of effective governance systems and principles, while spearheading a cultural shift to a more proactive approach to risk management, legal compliance and ethical conduct.

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 unify formerly independent functions and foster collaboration and promote synergies between them. This role will actively drive this unification through interdisciplinary and cross-functional working groups and committees, developing strategic initiatives, providing policy guidelines and ensuring compliance with legal liabilities. This role will also oversee administrative operations for the Senior Leadership Team and Governing Body, ensure follow-up of actions at both governance and executive levels, facilitate communication and serve as a primary point of contact and liaison between the President and internal and external stakeholders. The Chief Administrative Officer will lead the growth of this Pillar and its functional areas, maximising the use of all available levers.

Serving as Secretary to the Governing Body, the role provides advice and high-quality support to the Governing Body, its committees, and sub-committees, facilitating informed decision-making and the smooth operation of all governance functions, ensuring compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements.

Role Overview

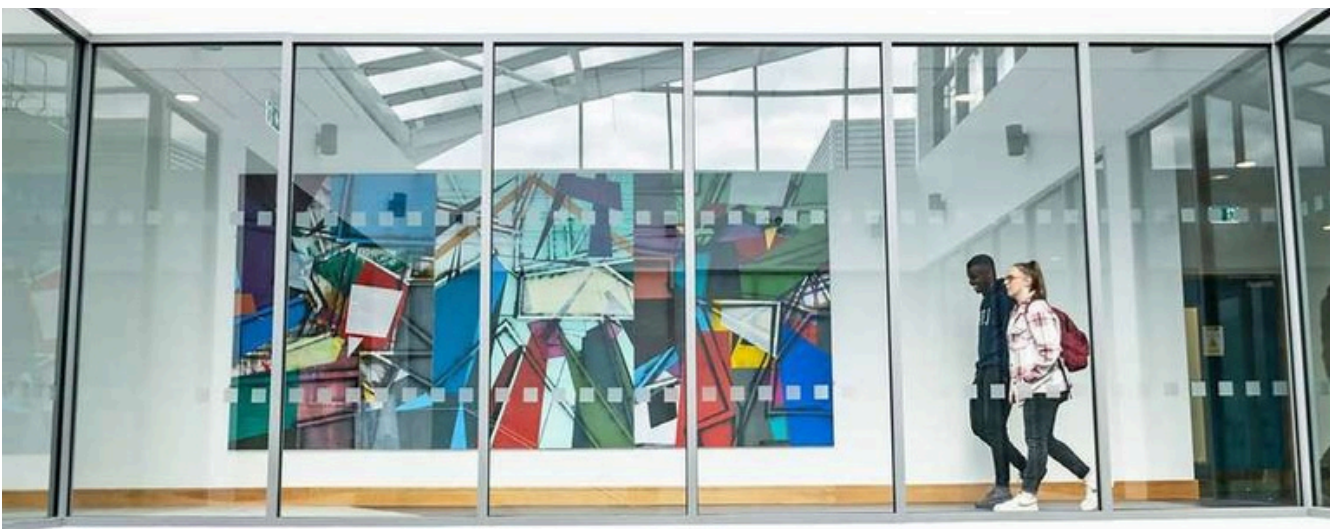
Functional areas reporting to the Chief Administrative Officer include *inter alia*:

- Governance - Ensuring effective governance structures, processes and compliance with legal and regulatory requirements; providing secretariat to Governing Body;
- Assurance, Risk & Legal - Managing risks, ensuring compliance and providing legal support to protect the University's interests, while safeguarding data protection and upholding Freedom of Information principles;
- Managing administrative support to the University's leadership, including providing secretariat to the Senior Leadership Team meetings, managing correspondence, and maintaining relevant records;
- Strategy – Managing and supporting the delivery of ATU's strategic plan with significant input into the development, maintenance and communication of the strategy, as well as overseeing reporting on implementation;
- Communications - coordinate public relations and communications between the President and internal and external stakeholders, to foster engagement and enhance the University's reputation;
- Contribution to Policy - Developing, reviewing and implementing policies and procedures relevant to various aspects of university operations but especially relating to corporate governance, risk and compliance while also supporting the University at a national level with relevant Government stakeholders and policy development;

- Institutional Performance – Developing and deploying a range of dashboards using data harvested from multiple sources, to enable a data-driven decision-making environment;
- Projects - Overseeing key strategic projects and initiatives to support the University's goals and objectives such as Sustainability, Organisational Transformation and Institutional Knowledge. Steering organisational transformation and capability enhancement projects such as TSAF and TEF;
- Change Management - Leading organisational transformation and cultural integration initiatives across multiple campuses, ensuring alignment of services, teams and institutional practices.
- President's Office - Providing support and assistance to the President and management of the office.

The Chief Administrative Officer plays a multifaceted role in providing leadership in and managing the University's communications strategy, Irish language strategy and strategic plan reporting.

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 embed 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;
- Provide strategic leadership of the University's governance function, ensuring robust frameworks, effective processes;
- Drive the development and enhancement of a unified culture and identity across academic and professional service areas across all campuses;
- Act as primary point of contact on matters such as change management, governance, risk management, legal, policy contribution and strategic planning for internal and external stakeholders;
- Ensure effective decision-making, accountability, transparency and ethical conduct across the Institution;
- Provide oversight of major university-wide initiatives across key institutional priorities, including sustainability, organisational transformation and institutional knowledge;
- Promote and manage environmental sustainability initiatives and integrating sustainability principles into university operations, practices and decision;
- Cultivate and manage relationships with key stakeholders involved in the EU Green Consortium.

Operational Management

- Plan, develop and maintain administrative procedures and processes;
- Provide comprehensive administrative leadership and guidance to the Office of the President, overseeing scheduling, correspondence management and preparation of briefing materials;
- Set priorities and monitor workflows within the administrative team, providing guidance and training where required;
- Define strategic priorities and oversee workflow optimisation across the administration team;
- Arrange, support and promote meetings and events for both internal and external stakeholders.

Governance, Risk, Compliance and Reporting

- Develop, implement and monitor governance policies and procedures to ensure compliance with legal and regulatory requirements;
- Serve as Secretary to the Governing Body, overseeing the efficient functioning of the University's secretariat, ensuring timely and effective support for meetings, committees and decision-making bodies;
- Responsible for supporting the University's governance processes and frameworks, providing strategic advice and oversight to the Governing Body and its sub-committees to drive strategic alignment, accountability, and institutional performance;
- Identify and mitigate risks to the University, including financial, operational, legal and reputational risks;
- Co-ordinate a high standard provision of legal services across the University and ensure that appropriate legal advice is given to the Governing Body, University Leadership Team, and members of staff;
- Lead on GDPR compliance and Freedom of Information matters, ensuring policies, procedures and practices align with legal and regulatory requirements;
- Contribute to a culture of continuous improvement by evaluating processes, procedures and protocols to identify and implement improvement opportunities;
- Oversee institutional reporting responsibilities including strategic planning and reporting, Governing Body communications, University annual report and Irish language strategy;
- 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.



Person Specification

ATU are seeking to appoint a dynamic individual to the role of Chief Administrative Officer.

The ideal candidate should possess strong leadership qualities and be a strategic thinker, always acting with integrity and with a commitment to upholding the highest standards of ethical conduct and accountability. They should possess exceptional organisational skills, attention to detail and the ability to manage confidential information with discretion. They should be an excellent communicator, adept in managing relationships both within the organisation and with external stakeholders. They should demonstrate proficiency in administrative tasks and a commitment to supporting the Institution's objectives. They should be comfortable with both project and operational challenges and be able to lead their teams through the change management journey in progress.

Essential Skills and Experience Qualification

- Hold a postgraduate qualification.

Leadership

- Possess a background in administration management, ensuring efficient processes and effective organisational support;
- Proven ability to develop and lead high-performing, cross functional teams;
- A background in a senior leadership role with demonstrable experience of higher education governance;
- Demonstrate experience operating across executive and non-executive functions within a large and complex organisation;

- Demonstrable understanding of the national and international higher education landscape;
- Experience in setting policy or contributing to its creation, implementation and evaluation in an academic setting, or knowledge intensive organisation;
- Experience in developing and implementing policy and strategy to shape governance frameworks and compliance standards within complex organisations;
- Excellent knowledge of the current landscape and future developments facing the higher education sector nationally and internationally;
- Demonstrable experience in actively promoting equality, diversity and inclusion.



Person Specification *(cont.)*

Operational Management

- Proven experience of managing budgets and analysing financial reports including profitability, resource utilisation and forecasting;
- 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;
- Outstanding communication skills with the ability to develop and deliver effective communications including the analysis and presentation of complex data;
- Strong knowledge of the full student lifecycle, from recruitment to graduation and into post grad;
- Demonstrable experience setting compliance standards and engaging with regulatory authorities.

Governance, Risk, Compliance and Reporting

- Experience in developing and implementing risk management frameworks to safeguard organisational objectives;
- Proven ability to integrate risk considerations into strategic planning and organisational decision-making;
- Experience of engaging with external stakeholders, both nationally and globally and building and maintaining relationships/partnerships;
- Proven understanding of information governance, including data protection (GDPR) and Freedom of Information (FOI) legislation and their application in complex organisations;
- Demonstrated digital literacy, including familiarity with governance-related technologies and data security principles;

- Proven capability to articulate governance and policy issues clearly and effectively to a wide range of internal and external stakeholders.

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

- Membership of appropriate representative and/or professional bodies;
- Proven project management and problem-solving abilities;
- Demonstrable experience and awareness of sustainability principles and building these into decision making;
- Experience of policy development.

Salary Scale

€169,819 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 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.

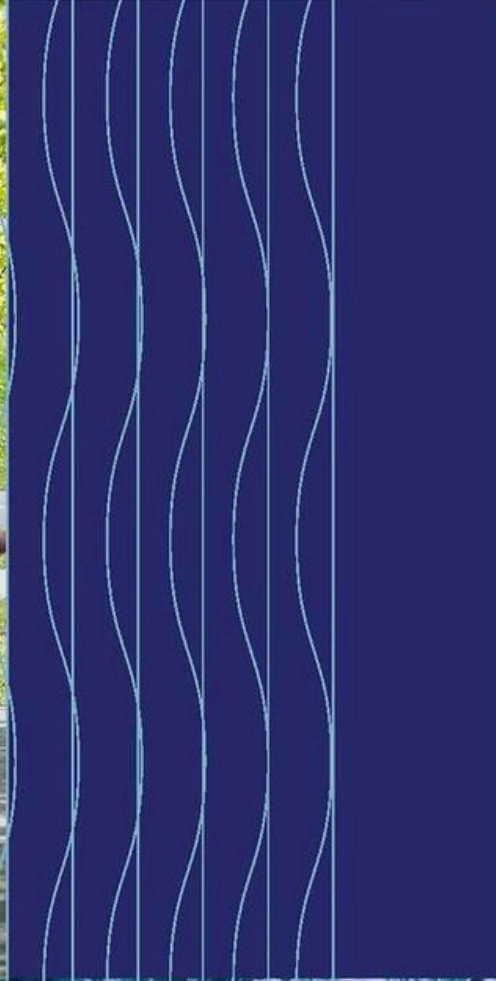
As a member of the senior leadership team, this role is fundamental in driving "Sustainability for the Future", one of ATU's five strategic "Guiding Lights". Our Sustainability for the Future, 2024-2028 strategic objectives are in Governance and Accountability, Climate and Environment Action, Education 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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