



AMERICAS ASIA PACIFIC EMEA



**UCC**

**Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh**  
University College Cork, Ireland



Appointment of

# Director of Estates & Commercial Services

June 2026



# Director of Estates & Commercial Services

UCC's Office of Buildings & Estates is responsible for the planning, management, stewardship, commercial optimisation and physical development of a diverse university estate comprising approximately 290,000m<sup>2</sup> of buildings, 80 hectares of grounds and property, and more than 140 buildings across over 20 locations. The estate includes a distinctive mix of heritage and modern assets and a geographically distributed presence extending from the main campus and city-centre locations to Curraheen, Ringaskiddy, Lough Hyne, West Cork and the University's Dublin property, together with subsidiaries and other campus-related property interests.

The function supports a broad portfolio of services including campus masterplanning, capital development, property and portfolio management, engineering and maintenance, utilities and energy management, space and room-booking interfaces, campus operations, heritage and landscape management, biodiversity, conservation, commuter planning, flood risk management and distributed site facilities support.

The portfolio also has an important commercial dimension. In addition to stewardship of the core academic estate and campus services, the postholder will support the effective management and optimisation of the commercial value of the University's property, subsidiaries and related campus assets and services. This includes providing strategic oversight of commercial property interests, enabling appropriate revenue generating activity such as leasing, licenses, external room bookings, events, sponsorship and other ancillary opportunities, and ensuring that commercial decisions are aligned with the University's mission, governance framework, financial sustainability and long-term Capital Plan.





# Role purpose

The Director of Estates & Commercial Services is a pivotal strategic leadership role for the University. The postholder will report to the President or nominee and will be a member of the University Leadership Team. They will lead the planning, stewardship, development and commercial leadership of the University's estate and campus services so that the physical environment, infrastructure, property interests and campus operations enable the delivery of UCC's academic mission, research ambition, student experience, financial sustainability and long-term strategic development.

It combines strategic estate planning and campus masterplanning; capital development and delivery of the University Capital Plan; property management and commercial optimisation of the estate, including subsidiaries and campus-related property interests; engineering, maintenance and utilities; space planning and utilisation; campus operations and service experience; sustainability and decarbonisation delivery in partnership with the relevant University functions; resilience and compliance; and the development of more data-enabled and intelligent campus management.

In addition, the postholder will be expected to bring strong commercial, financial and strategic acumen, ensuring that estate investment, operational expenditure, revenue opportunities and commercial activity are developed and managed in a coherent way that supports institutional priorities, public accountability and value for money.

UCC as a progressive organisation will continue to change and evolve its structures and reporting lines to deliver on the University's strategy and future business needs. The postholder is expected to proactively engage with the University's programme of change as it evolves.

## Leadership Scope

The postholder will lead a modern Estates & Campus Services function built around the following enduring operational pillars:

- Estates Strategy, Business Support & Space
- Capital Projects & Physical Development
- Engineering, Maintenance & Utilities
- Campus Services & Operations
- Campus Facilities Management / distributed site leadership

The role also carries explicit cross-cutting strategic accountabilities for:

- Property management and commercial optimisation of the estate
- Space strategy and utilisation
- Sustainability, biodiversity and net zero estates delivery
- Smart campus, intelligent campus and estate data
- Resilience, risk and compliance and Health & Safety





# Key accountabilities

## Strategic estate, property and commercial leadership

- Lead the development and delivery of an integrated estates, property and campus services strategy aligned to the University's Strategic Plan, academic priorities, financial context, Capital Plan, commercial priorities and campus development ambitions.
- Contribute as a senior University leader to institution-wide strategy, decision-making and change, ensuring that estate, property, commercial and campus considerations are integrated into major University priorities and investments.
- Provide strategic advice to the President, University Leadership Team, Governing Authority and relevant committees on estate opportunities, property and commercial issues, constraints, risks, investment choices and long-term value creation.
- Maintain the University's Estate Strategy, campus masterplanning framework and related strategic plans for the physical environment, including conservation planning, biodiversity, commuter planning, flood risk management and other relevant estate-wide frameworks.

## Capital development, property portfolio and commercial value

- Lead the strategic planning, prioritisation and delivery of the University's capital development programme, ensuring that projects are supported by robust business cases, clear governance, affordability analysis and value-for-money principles.
- Oversee major developments, refurbishments, minor capital works and estate renewal activity so that they are delivered safely, efficiently and in line with institutional priorities, quality standards and long-term asset stewardship.
- Shape the long-term physical development of the estate, including land and property opportunities, estate rationalisation, acquisitions, disposals, leasing and the effective management of the University's wider property portfolio, subsidiaries and campus-related property interests.

- Lead the optimisation of the commercial value of the estate and associated campus assets and services, including external room bookings, events, sponsorship, leasing, licences, ancillary revenue opportunities and other appropriate commercial initiatives consistent with the University's mission and governance requirements.

## Financial stewardship, budgeting and value for money

- Provide strong financial oversight and leadership across the function, including annual budgets, medium- and longer-term projections, scenario planning and financial analysis to support strategic decision-making.
- Oversee the monitoring and reporting of expenditure across HEA Devolved Grant and other non-core funding streams, ensuring robust financial controls, transparent reporting and compliance with public procurement and other applicable requirements.
- Drive value for money across all activities, ensuring resources are used efficiently, costs are controlled, whole life financial implications are understood, and financial decisions support long term sustainability, resilience and affordability.
- Work closely in collaboration with Chief Finance Officer, IT Services, Procurement, Office of Corporate & Legal Affairs and other relevant University functions to ensure coherent financial planning, commercial governance, business case development and delivery of the Capital Plan.



# Key accountabilities



## Campus operations, engineering, maintenance and asset performance

- Lead the effective operation of campus services and estate functions across engineering, maintenance, utilities, grounds, room-booking and related campus operational services, ensuring high standards of service delivery for students, staff and visitors.
- Oversee planned and reactive maintenance, asset lifecycle planning and the prioritisation of backlog maintenance expenditure using evidence based assessment of condition, risk, statutory obligations and operational impact.
- Ensure effective management of estate condition records, as built information, asset registers and maintenance intelligence to support sound decision-making, compliance and long-term asset performance.

## Space strategy, campus experience, inclusion and stakeholder engagement

- Lead the development of a strategic institutional approach to space planning, utilisation and optimisation, ensuring that space is treated as a strategic asset and deployed in support of academic, research, student and commercial priorities.
- Work closely with academic and professional service leaders, subsidiaries, end users and student representatives to understand needs, improve campus service quality, strengthen user responsiveness and enhance the overall campus experience.
- Ensure that the estate and campus environment support inclusion, accessibility and the diverse needs of staff, students and visitors, including the creation of welcoming, future-ready campus environments.

## Sustainability, climate action, quality standards and resilience

- Provide leadership for estates related sustainability delivery, including energy management, waste and water management, carbon reduction, biodiversity, conservation, sustainable commuting, protected structures and environmental performance, in close partnership with the University's wider sustainability and climate action functions.
- Oversee relevant estates aspects of UCC's climate action and sustainability commitments, including the continued development of the Climate Action Roadmap and the plans, systems and programmes required to meet institutional and statutory targets for 2030 and beyond.
- Oversee the University's estates related energy management systems and relevant quality standards, including ISO 50001 and other applicable management system requirements, and ensure that energy and environmental performance are embedded in day-to-day operations and investment decisions.
- Lead the integration of resilience into estate planning and operations, including emergency preparedness, business continuity interfaces, climate adaptation, flood and weather-related risk, health and safety, and statutory compliance.



# Key accountabilities

## Digital estate intelligence, intelligent campus and future campus capability

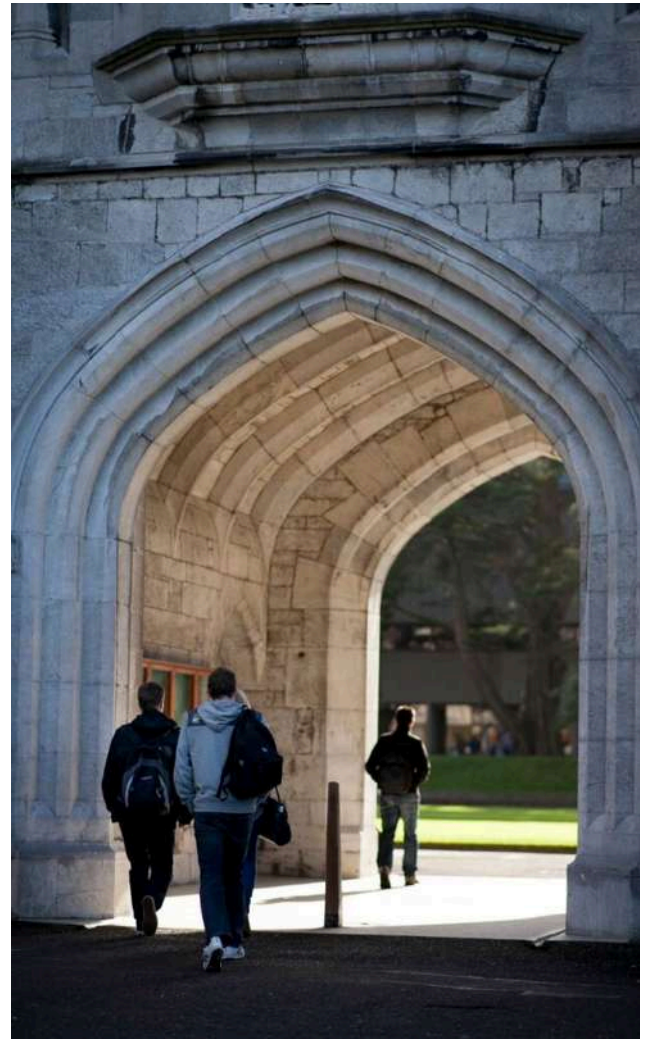
- Champion the development of a data enabled estate management, including stronger use of asset systems, performance data, space data and digital tools to inform planning, maintenance, sustainability and operational decision-making.
- Lead the development of an intelligent campus approach that makes smarter use of data, technology and connected systems to improve operational efficiency, sustainability, user experience and the effective use of space and facilities.
- Work with IT Services and other relevant functions to identify appropriate opportunities for digital innovation, intelligent campus capability and the responsible use of AI enabled tools, analytics and automation in support of a more responsive, inclusive and future ready campus.

## Governance, external engagement and leadership of people

- Ensure robust governance reporting, risk management, regulatory compliance, health and safety compliance and effective engagement with statutory agencies, funding bodies, utilities, local authorities, contractors, consultants and sectoral networks.
- Lead and develop a high performing multidisciplinary management team, setting clear priorities, expectations and accountability across the Estates & Campus Services portfolio.
- Build organisational capability across the function, including leadership development, succession planning, change leadership and a culture of service, professionalism, collaboration, commercial awareness and continuous improvement.
- Ensure that the design and leadership of the function evolve in line with the University's future needs, while preserving the operational and heritage strengths.

## Key relationships

- President and University Leadership Team
- Governing Authority and relevant committees
- Deputy President & Registrar, Chief Finance Officer and Finance, IT Services, Sustainability and Climate Action, Corporate Secretary / Risk, Health & Safety, Colleges, Schools, Research leaders, student representatives and relevant subsidiary or commercial entities
- Public Sector Bodies e.g. DFHERIS, HEA, SEAI, HSE
- External funding bodies, statutory agencies, local authorities, utilities providers, contractors, consultants and sectoral and professional networks.





# Person Specification



## Essential Criteria

- A relevant honours degree or equivalent professional qualification in engineering, architecture, surveying, construction, property, facilities, infrastructure, or another relevant discipline. Equivalent senior professional experience in a directly relevant field will also be considered.
- Substantial senior leadership experience in a large, complex estate, campus, infrastructure, property or facilities environment, with experience operating at strategic organisational level.
- A strong track record in strategic estate planning, campus development, and the stewardship of large, diverse and geographically distributed physical assets.
- Proven experience in developing and delivering large capital programmes and projects to agreed timelines and within budget.
- Demonstrated commercial acumen in advising on the development, acquisition, and disposal of property assets.
- Significant experience of leading multidisciplinary teams across hard and soft services, engineering or technical operations, projects, property-related activity and service delivery in a complex environment.
- Demonstrable experience of financial stewardship, budget leadership, commercial acumen, business case development, procurement oversight and value-for-money decision-making in a regulated or publicly accountable context.
- Experience of identifying, shaping or overseeing commercial or revenue-generating opportunities linked to property, campus assets, service operations or related activities.
- Experience of working effectively with senior stakeholders, governing bodies, academic leaders, external agencies, end users and professional partners, with strong influencing, negotiation and communication skills.
- Strong understanding of health and safety, statutory compliance, risk management and governance obligations relevant to a complex estate and property portfolio.
- Experience of sustainability, energy management, decarbonisation, climate action, habitat enhancement, biodiversity, conservation or related environmental delivery in an estate, infrastructure or campus context.
- Excellent digital and data literacy, including experience of using systems, management information and performance data to improve estate or operational decision-making; experience of smart campus, intelligent campus or integrated asset management approaches would be advantageous.
- Commitment to inclusive leadership, accessibility, collaboration and continuous professional development.
- Demonstrated experience of leading strategic change and organisational transformation in complex environments, with the ability to bring people through change in a way that is inclusive, accessible, collaborative and aligned with institutional priorities.

## Desirable

- Experience in higher education or another mission led, complex public or not-for-profit institution.
- Experience of leading within a historic or mixed age estate, including protected or listed structures and balancing conservation with contemporary estate needs.
- Experience of working with subsidiaries, commercial entities, leased assets, external partnerships or campus-related property interests.
- Relevant postgraduate qualification or further professional development in leadership, sustainability, project management, risk management, health and safety, finance, commercial management, digital transformation or a related field.
- Membership of a relevant professional body.



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Grafter House  
Suite 101, 10 Ely Place  
Dublin 2  
D02 HR98

[perrettlaver.com](http://perrettlaver.com)