

Director of Operations

Department:	Senior Leadership Team
Reports To:	Chief Executive Officer
Direct Reports:	Social Enterprise Manager, Business Development Manager, Finance Coordinator, Help Desk Coordinator <i>(Also responsible for mentoring elected Student Representatives)</i>
Key Relationships:	External accountancy, Health and Safety and HR support organisations.
Pay Band:	Grade F (£42,973–£48,340) <i>Subject to pay review in year</i>
Role Summary:	Lead the Union's commercial activity, finance and business operations functions, ensuring safe and engaging commercial activity, robust financial management, well-run people operations and organisational compliance. Bring energy and leadership to the Union's social enterprise activity, ensuring it operates sustainably, generates income for the Union, and enhances the wider student experience. Work closely with the Union's external finance support, while retaining accountability for financial management, reporting and controls within this Union. Act as the organisational lead on operations, ensuring the Union's business functions enable its charitable and membership priorities.

Key responsibilities

Strategic Leadership & Development

Driving the Union's strategic objectives for social enterprise, finance, compliance and business operations, and steering the strategic direction of the charity as a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Operational Oversight & Compliance

Ensuring the safe, efficient and effective management of the Union's commercial, finance, people operations and compliance functions. Maintaining robust financial and legal/regulatory compliance.

Team & Stakeholder Management

Leading high-performing teams, fostering collaboration, and maintaining strong relationships with internal and external stakeholders.

Key Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership

- Be an active member of the Senior Leadership Team, steering the strategic direction of our charity and leading your teams with confidence and care.
- Prepare and present reports and operational plans relevant to your area to staff, Trustees and other key stakeholders.
- Contribute as a senior manager to the strategic development and operational success of the Students' Union, ensuring alignment with the Union's objectives.
- Lead or contribute to projects and task-and-finish groups to deliver continual service improvements across the Union.

Social Enterprise & Commercial

- Work with the CEO to develop a new commercial strategy for the Union, co-created with students, taking the lead on supporting your team to shape it and deliver against it once set.
- Drive forward commercial activity to maximise income generation while ensuring services have student needs at the heart and include students at all levels.
- Ensure that Union spaces and venues are effectively utilised for both membership engagement and income generation.
- Support the development of digital engagement strategies, leveraging e-commerce, digital platforms, and membership reward schemes,

- Maximise marketing income through advertising/media sales, sponsorships and retailing through the business development function.
- Ensure all commercial operations have agreed business plans with clear financial, quality and service objectives, and be responsible for ensuring these are regularly reported against.
- Be responsible for the development of budgets and capital investment plans for commercial activities, monitoring performance against budget and taking mitigating action where required.
- Ensure all social enterprise activity complies with relevant legal, financial, and health & safety regulations.
- Regularly review risks and opportunities in the commercial activities of the Union, alerting SLT, the CEO and Trustees as appropriate.
- Be responsible for the safe operation, maintenance and care of the Union's premises, and act as the main point of contact for licensing matters, always ensuring appropriate management presence.

Finance

- Line manage the in-house finance team, connecting them with the outsourced strategic finance support for technical accountancy matters and ensuring they have adequate resources to fulfil their roles.
- Have responsibility for the management of the Union's financial resources, ensuring that robust systems of financial management are in place to monitor spend against budget and keep managers informed of their financial responsibilities.
- Be the key point of contact between the Union and the strategic finance provider on technical finance matters, ensuring their specialist input is embedded into the Union's financial governance.
- Work with the CEO to ensure that annual budgets are compiled and set, working with the strategic finance provider, budget holders and other staff to ensure these are accessible and transparent.
- Be responsible for working closely with the outsourced strategic finance provider to ensure they deliver monthly management accounts and quarterly finance updates to the Board of Trustees and ensure budget holders are regularly updated on the Union's financial position.
- Work with the CEO to ensure delivery of year-end statutory accounts, with support from the outsourced finance support.
- Work with the strategic finance provider to ensure we have proper inhouse management of accounting software, financial operating procedures and

controls, including reconciliation of VAT returns and oversight of the purchase/sales ledger and payroll system.

- Maintain, develop and implement effective systems of internal control, and compile accessible dashboard-style reporting for trustees and staff with support from the external finance provider.

People & Compliance

- Lead the day-to-day operation of the Union's people processes, working closely with the CEO, who retains overall responsibility for HR strategy, employee relations and people policy.
- Ensure staff records are complete, accurate, up to date and held securely, and that people processes (recruitment, induction, probation, appraisals, absence and leave recording) are followed consistently by managers across the Union.
- Maintain a system for tracking mandatory and statutory training across all staff, following up on gaps and reporting completion to the CEO.
- Monitor and report on key people data, such as absence, turnover and training completion, to inform SLT and Board reporting.
- Act as a first point of contact for managers on routine people-process queries, escalating complex or sensitive matters to the CEO.
- Support the CEO and Board of Trustees to manage organisational compliance and risk, including health & safety, data protection (GDPR), safeguarding and charity/regulatory compliance requirements. Building and leading on systems and processes that track compliance and alert to risk.
- Ensure there are robust systems in place so that the Union complies with the requirements of the law, regulators and Board policy, in accordance with the Statement of Delegated Authority

Leadership

- Lead teams with a people-centred and flexible approach, ensuring that all people you are responsible for get the clarity and support they need to do the best job they can.
- Have responsibility for the recruitment, induction and ongoing support of people across the Operations directorate.
- Ensure your teams have clear objectives and performance measures, and work as an effective team to deliver against agreed goals and plans.
- Deputise for the Chief Executive Officer in their absence in matters related to Operations.

- Lead on sharing insight from your directorate with the Senior Leadership Team and the Board of Trustees.

General Requirements of All Staff

- Ensure all areas of activity for which you work or are responsible comply with relevant legislative provisions including Health & Safety, the law relating to charities and employment law and other legal requirements as may apply to specific roles.
- All work to be carried out in line with the Union's Articles of Association, Byelaws, policies and procedures.
- Develop and maintain positive relationships with colleagues, external partners and agencies.
- Ensure that the diversity of the Union's membership is recognised and that equal access to services and activities is available to all members.
- Because we are a membership-focused and innovative organisation, you may be required to undertake other duties appropriate for the grade and responsibilities of the post that may from time to time be reasonably requested, which may include evening and weekend working.

This job description is an outline of the main responsibilities of the post and may be subject to any future amendments as may be deemed appropriate. It should not be read as, nor is it intended to be, a complete statement of an individual's contractual duties and responsibilities.

Person Specification:

List of the knowledge, skills, experience, and qualifications required for the role and whether these are essential or desirable for the role.

Qualifications and Experience	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications		
Leadership / management qualification		✓
Health & Safety (managing others) qualification, or equivalent experience. (We can cover the cost to take you through the IOSH Managing Safely course to achieve this qualification if you do not already hold one. But some experience of working with health and safety management is required for this role.)	✓	
Personal License Holder (We can cover the cost to take you through the course to achieve this qualification if you do not already hold a personal license. But some experience of working in licensed premises is required for this role.)	✓	
Accountancy qualification, or a minimum of 3 years' experience of financial management.		✓
Experience		
Experience of leading staff and teams across a broad and varied portfolio	✓	
Experience of leading commercial operations	✓	
Experience of managing people in a licensed premises.	✓	
Experience of preparing and presenting both management and statutory accounts		✓
Experience of managing financial processing and tracking systems	✓	
Experience of supporting a HR/people function, including maintaining people records and tracking training compliance		✓
Knowledge		
An understanding of accountancy best practice		✓
An understanding of the Higher Education environment in which we're working		✓

An understanding of Health & Safety legislation and working practices	✓	
An understanding of employment legislation	✓	
An understanding of safeguarding compliance requirements	✓	
Skills		
Be able to prepare clear and concise financial information for a range of stakeholders		✓
High ICT literacy, to utilise applications and channels to support personal and organisational effectiveness	✓	
Ability to manage and prioritise time effectively across a broad portfolio	✓	
Ability to lead strategic planning processes and use analytical skills to influence strategy development and necessary change		✓
Adaptable leadership and the ability to support changes in service priorities, culture and team working with compassion	✓	
Ability to manage projects from inception to completion	✓	
Exceptional interpersonal and communication skills (written and oral) with the ability to influence in different environments	✓	
Qualities		
Ability to generate innovation and find creative solutions to challenges	✓	
Willingness to present necessary, respectful challenge as part of a Senior Leadership Team	✓	
Understanding and support for the aims of the Students' Union and wider student movement.	✓	
Strong commitment to the principles of equality, diversity, and inclusion, with a willingness to continually learn and develop in this space	✓	
Collaborative and flexible leadership style, able to adapt to different needs of people you are supporting	✓	
Commitment to continuous professional development for yourself and your team	✓	