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Inspiring



Cydweithredol
Collaborative

Chief Operating Officer

Starting salary £155,397 per annum

The University of South Wales is a major, modern civic university rooted in South Wales, with a proud commitment to student success, applied research, innovation, partnership working, regional impact and widening access. As the University responds to a challenging and changing higher education environment, we are seeking an exceptional Chief Operating Officer to help translate strategic ambition into effective delivery.

Based across the University of South Wales campuses, with travel across the University and externally as required, this role offers the opportunity to utilise your strategic leadership, organisational development, digital, estates and student services expertise at Executive level.

Reporting to the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive, the Chief Operating Officer is a key member of the University Executive, providing strategic leadership across people and organisational development, estates infrastructure, digital capability and student-facing services. The postholder will work collegiately with academic and professional services leaders to ensure that USW has an agile, efficient and sustainable operating model that enables delivery of the University strategy.

This is a full-time, permanent post.

To arrange an informal conversation about this post please contact emma.stone@southwales.ac.uk.

If you are a successful candidate and this position will be your first professional services role at the University / RWCMD (or you are currently employed by PSS Ltd), you will be employed by Professional and Support Services Limited, a wholly owned subsidiary of the University of South Wales, which provides services to the University and Colleges.

Discover the advantages of working with us at USW: <https://tinyurl.com/PSSatUSW>

USW is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. All those working at the University are expected to share this commitment.

We are committed to employing a diverse workforce and creating an inclusive environment. Where colleagues can be themselves and every person is treated with dignity, fairness and respect. We actively encourage applications from diverse backgrounds and communities, especially with regards to age, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, race and religion and/or belief. We benchmark our success through equality accreditations with Athena Swan,



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Race Equality Charter, Stonewall and Disability Confident.

If you're a Welsh learner or a Welsh speaker, we'd be delighted to receive your application. At USW, you'll have access to Welsh courses to enable you to develop your Welsh skills further, in order to provide a bilingual service to our students, colleagues and the public.

We welcome applications in Welsh and English. Applications in Welsh will not be treated less favourably than those made in English.

Apply online <http://www.southwales.ac.uk/jobs>

Job Description

Job position	Chief Operating Officer
Faculty/department	Executive
Providing Services to	USW
Grade and salary	£155,397 per annum
Contract duration (perm/fixed term)	Permanent
Reports to (job title)	Vice Chancellor and Chief Executive
Responsible for (job roles)	Director of People and Organisational Development, Director of Student Life, Chief Information Officer and Director of Estates & Facilities.
Location	University of South Wales campuses, with travel across the University and externally as required

Job purpose

Reporting to the Vice-Chancellor, the Chief Operating Officer (COO) is a key member of the University Executive, providing strategic leadership across the people and organisational development agenda, estates infrastructure, digital capability and student-facing services. Working collegiately with academic and professional services leaders, the postholder will ensure that USW has an agile and efficient operating model that ensures financial sustainability and enables delivery of the University strategy.

A key component of this role will be to ensure that the university develops a workforce which is fit for the future, and which is efficient, agile, motivated and engaged with the university's core mission.

The COO will align workforce experience, student experience, digital transformation and estate development; drive organisational performance and innovation; shape an inclusive, high-performing culture; and enhance the experience of students and staff in a rapidly changing environment.

Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg. This document is available in Welsh.

University of South Wales is a major, modern civic university rooted in South Wales, with a proud commitment to, student success, applied research, innovation, partnership working, regional impact and widening access. The University is pursuing omnichannel transformation in response to a challenging and changing higher education environment. The COO will help translate this ambition into effective delivery, building a sustainable integrated, and inclusive institution.

Key responsibilities

The postholder will:

- Contribute as a core member of the Executive to the strategic leadership, performance and sustainability of the University, translating sector, regulatory, financial, technological and demographic insight into institutional action.
- Lead the development and delivery of institutional strategic and operational plans across professional services, ensuring clear alignment between people, infrastructure, services and outcomes.
- Lead the University's people strategy, workforce planning, organisational design, leadership development and talent management, supporting a modern, flexible and high-performing workforce model.
- Drive organisational development, cultural transformation, EDI priorities, wellbeing strategies and staff engagement initiatives, fostering an inclusive, values-driven and high-performing culture.
- Provide strategic oversight of student life and support services, ensuring inclusive, responsive and innovative services that enhance student experience, retention, continuation, wellbeing and success.
- Work closely with academic leadership and the Students' Union to align academic and non-academic student experience and strengthen student engagement and support delivery models.
- Lead digital strategy through the CIO, ensuring technology, data-led decision-making, systems integration, cyber security, data governance and digital infrastructure enable transformation and institutional performance.
- Lead the strategic development, optimisation and sustainability of the University estate, ensuring it supports academic delivery, student experience, commercial opportunities, capital planning, utilisation and cost efficiency.
- Lead the development of a high-performing professional services model focused on customer experience, efficiency, value for money, continuous improvement and effective integration of services across the University.
- Drive organisational transformation programmes, including service redesign and digital enablement, to support an agile, sustainable and outcome-focused operating model.
- Contribute to financial sustainability, in partnership with the DVC and CFO, through operational efficiency, commercial insight, diversified income opportunities, high-quality data and value for money across operational areas.



- Lead institutional approaches to risk management, business continuity, health and safety, compliance and regulatory requirements, ensuring robust and effective governance frameworks aligned with best practice.
- Support the Board of Governors and its committees as required, providing assurance, insight and effective reporting on matters within the COO portfolio.
- Build strong internal partnerships across academic and professional areas and represent the University externally with credibility across sector, civic and commercial contexts.
- Develop strategic partnerships that enhance institutional capability, reputation and impact.

Person specification

To be able to undertake this role effectively you will need the key attributes and skills outlined below. When completing your application ensure you demonstrate how you meet these criteria.

1*	Significant executive-level leadership experience in a large, complex organisation, with a proven track record of leading organisational transformation and delivering measurable impact.
2*	Experience of leading multiple corporate and professional service functions, such as people and organisational development, estates, digital services and student-facing services.
3*	Strong understanding of organisational performance, financial sustainability, operational efficiency and the use of data-informed decision-making to improve outcomes.
4*	Experience of working effectively with Boards, governance structures and senior decision-making forums, with the ability to influence at Executive and Board level.
5*	Understanding of the UK higher education sector and regulatory environment, or the ability to rapidly acquire this understanding.
6*	Outstanding strategic thinking, with the ability to translate strategy into delivery across diverse functions and lead effectively through others.
7*	Strong people leadership, communication and stakeholder engagement skills, with the ability to support, guide and coach managers to fulfil their people management responsibilities.
8*	Ability to solve complex HR/OD and operational challenges, identifying practical, outcome-focused solutions that balance organisational need, risk and good employment practice.
9*	Ability to develop and maintain positive, effective working relationships, influence constructively and take a consultative, risk-aware approach, including where there are differing views or priorities.
10*	Good knowledge of relevant employment legislation, including case law, and the ability to apply this soundly when providing advice, guidance and leadership on complex people matters.



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11*	Ability to work constructively with recognised Trade Unions within USW's partnership approach, supporting effective consultation, engagement and joint problem-solving.
12*	CIPD membership, or willingness to undertake appropriate study.
13	The ability to speak and/or write in Welsh is desirable.

Health and Safety

You must a) familiarise yourself with, and comply with, the organisation's Health and Safety Policies and Procedures which are available on Connect (Intranet); and b) be fully conversant with your health and safety responsibilities outlined in the Faculty/Department Health and Safety Management Arrangements document and implement accordingly.

Disability Confident Committed- Offer of an interview

Professional and Support Services Limited is committed to employing a diverse workforce and creating an inclusive environment where staff can be themselves and every person is treated with dignity, fairness and respect. We welcome applicants from diverse backgrounds and communities, especially with regards to age, disability, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, race and religion or belief. We guarantee that all disabled candidates who meet all the key criteria for the job vacancy they are applying for are offered an interview. Key criteria are identified by * in the person specification above.