SHAPE
OUR
SUCCESS

JOIN OUR REMARKABLE COMMUNITY
Thank you for your interest in the Executive Director of Finance position at the University of Southampton.

This key leadership role is responsible for leading, developing, and implementing a strategic approach to the University and its subsidiary companies’ financial management to enable us to achieve our ambitions. It will play an essential part in championing our University Strategy.

The need for internationally excellent, research-intensive universities like Southampton to help tackle some of the world’s biggest challenges has never been more important and urgent. At the University of Southampton, our aim is to change the world for the better. Bringing together realms of research, creativity, and knowledge, we focus on creating a truly collaborative, immersive, and ground-breaking impact.

We care about the challenges that humanity is facing and work to support others on both a local and global scale. Join us in this work as the Executive Director of Finance, and you will have the opportunity to help us make a tangible difference to future generations.

Our Strategy, with people at its heart, encapsulates the Triple Helix of excellence that is research-education-knowledge exchange and enterprise, which makes the Southampton offer distinctive.

Since the launch of our Strategy in January 2021, we have seen an increase in momentum towards our goals. We have launched significant investment projects on our campuses to develop our estate, provided more support to students and staff, and are working towards greater recognition for successes within our community.

Currently ranked 81st in the world*, we have bold ambitions to advance this position and as the Executive Director of Finance, you will be key to achieving this. We are already known as a founding member of both the UK’s prestigious Russell Group of leading research-intensive universities and the Worldwide Universities Network (WUN). With campus operations in Malaysia and China, as well as major partnerships across the world, we have a global outlook that attracts the most talented staff and students from around the world.

This is a fantastic opportunity to take your career to new heights. As the Executive Director, you will help keep us on track to deliver, but also evolve, our Strategy, you will lead a high-quality, effective, and customer-focused finance function that ensures a sound financial control environment across the University and its subsidiary activities and supports the University to make the best decisions.

*QS World University Rankings, 2023
Our influential research is leading the way to a sustainable future that puts the world’s most vulnerable children at the heart of policy. Craig Hutton, Professor of Sustainability Science, and his team produced the first comprehensive worldwide analysis of the climate risks to children. The Children’s Climate Risk Index (CCRI) has been supported by the Data for Children Collaborative, which includes UNICEF and Save the Children, plus a multi-university team led by the University of Southampton.

The results were presented at the UN Climate Change Conference, COP26.

Researchers at Southampton are encouraging schoolgirls to become scientists when they are older through in-person events and hands-on activities, thus reducing the gender gap in science, technology, engineering, and maths (STEM).

On 29 March 2023, a group of 15 Shirley Infant School six- and seven-year-old schoolgirls came to the University’s high-voltage lab to learn about electricity. The activities the girls engaged in involved batteries, wires, copper wire, and magnets. They were able to create circuits and learn about conductors and insulators.

Our exceptional students share in the journeys of discovery and become confident thinkers who can realise their full potential. We attract high-quality students from over 130 countries, and educate students through University of Southampton Malaysia and collaborations with prestigious partners globally.

As our students become graduates of the University, they join our wider global community of over 265,000 alumni, with access to a network that can provide further opportunities across the world.

As a forward-thinking institution, we will strengthen our reputation, increasing our national and international rankings to secure a position in the top 10 in the UK and strengthen our position in the top 100 internationally.

Our strong research partnerships, public engagement and achievements in entrepreneurial activities have been recognised in our very strong all-round performance in the first and second Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF) exercises.

Collaborate with us: together we advance.

Find out more
The University Strategy

People are at the core of our Triple Helix

Our highly-ranked education, research and knowledge exchange and enterprise (KEE) are already distinctively intertwined.

By strengthening and increasing these links, our Triple Helix approach will achieve greater impact and accelerate new ways to tackle the world’s most complex problems.

This scaling up is a challenging goal we commit to achieve; its reach and ambition sets us apart.

Our values in action

Our annual Vice-Chancellor’s Awards recognise and celebrate the exceptional contributions made by our staff during the academic year.

Our staff and students at Winchester School of Art collaborated with fashion designer Liang Minyu for her sustainability sculpture, ‘Masai Mara’, as part of their ‘Itinerant Objects’ programme for Tate Exchange.

Dr Kamil Zwolski, Associate Professor in International Politics, was awarded a prestigious National Teaching Fellowship in 2022 for his innovative approach to teaching.

Collaborations with prestigious partners such as Xiamen University in China, Singapore Institute of Management and Nanyang Technological University allow students to study a wide range of subjects and undertake research in an international environment.
As the Associate Vice-President, ED&I and Social Justice, I believe this important role is a signal of our University’s real commitment to become a more accountable and inclusive community, and to embrace a culture that reflects all students, staff and employees.”

Pascal Matthias
Associate Vice-President, ED&I and Social Justice
This is an exciting time to join the University of Southampton. While maintaining our status as a remarkable global institution for education, research and knowledge, exchange and enterprise, we continue to develop our goals by putting our people at the heart of everything we do.

This role is critical to advancing our position as one of the world’s top 100 universities and gives you an exceptional opportunity to help the University achieve its strategic goals through its financial resources.

Reporting directly to the President and Vice-Chancellor and as a key member of the University’s Executive Board, you will partner with executive and senior leaders at the University, providing leadership, and direction for the University’s financial functions.

As the new Executive Director of Finance, you will ensure the University and its subsidiaries operate financially effectively, efficiently, and sustainably by leading the development of the financial strategy and effective financial management framework. You will also provide strategic and professional advice to the executive team in the development and implementation of the financial and treasury management strategy, annual and long-term plans, policies, processes, and procedures.

Accountable for the overall financial performance of the University, this role provides leadership of the financial governance and stewardship of the University with an annual turnover of £750M, and a yearly capital spend of typically £50M.

At the University of Southampton, we are committed to building a safe, supportive community where we can truly be ourselves. We are passionate about creating a diverse environment because we believe we can only truly meet our objectives if we reflect society. Therefore, we particularly encourage applications that will continue to strengthen the diversity of our executive management team.

We welcome applications from individuals who offer a blend of technical financial management knowledge and proven senior leadership experience in complex and diverse organisations. The successful candidate will share our values, vision, and commitment to excellence in all we do, with an ability to engage, motivate and lead others.

How to apply
For a conversation in confidence or details of how to apply, please contact Mark Holleran southampton@talentedu.co.uk 020 3290 2907

The closing date for receipt of applications is midnight (GMT) on Monday 11 September 2023.

Following a longlist meeting of the Search Committee, successful candidates will be invited to attend a virtual Engagement Day on Monday 9 October 2023.

Interviews are scheduled to take place in person on Wednesday 25 October 2023.
Role of the Executive Director of Finance

Job Purpose
- Provide leadership and management of the institution as a member of the University executive team.
- Lead, develop and implement a strategic approach to financial management that enables the vision and strategy of the University.
- Lead the development of the financial framework to enable the University to achieve its strategic goals through its financial resources.
- Advise Council on its financial strategy to include an appropriate level of risk to ensure financial sustainability.
- The position is accountable for delivering and overseeing multi-year business planning, treasury management, capital investment programme, debt management, and performance analysis and monitoring for the University and its subsidiary companies.
- Lead a high-quality, effective and customer-focused finance function which ensures that a sound financial control environment exists across the University and its subsidiary activities and delivers excellent decision support.
- Ensure external and internal financial compliance and best practice in all finance areas.
- Leadership of University financial governance and stewardship with a turnover of £50m and annual capital spend typically of £50m pa.

Key Responsibilities
- To provide strategic, professional advice to Council, Vice-Chancellor, Vice-President Operations, Executive, Senior Management and Treasurer in shaping and implementing the financial and treasury management strategy of the University and its subsidiary companies and to develop and implement long-term business plans, budget, and investment plans that enable the achievement of the University's goals.
- To lead the Finance Department (approx. 240 staff) in providing financial services across the University, to establish and embed strategic financial management and business partnership support to the faculties and professional services to enable the delivery of their objectives.
- To develop the University's strategic forecasts as part of the University strategic planning process, including the Off five-year financial forecasts, treasury management strategy, and annual University budgets, and providing performance monitoring and analysis to the senior team.
- To produce and review statutory accounts for the University and its subsidiary companies. Maintain a sound system of internal financial control that gives the University's management and University Audit Committee appropriate assurance that University resources are used in the proper and appropriate manner, interpreting the information and making recommendations for change. Maintaining external auditor relationships.
- To identify opportunities to increase University income, reduce costs of activities and increase overall University productivity. Helping to shape the key elements of the University's financial strategy.
- To ensure business cases are effectively made and prioritised for major investment requirements to develop the University’s business and strategy setting a clear framework for risk management.
- To support the Head of Procurement in developing the optimum procurement practices for the University. Evaluate with the Head of Procurement and others, opportunities for shared services and cost savings/service improvement.
- To maintain the core University financial systems and continue their development to meet the needs of the Finance Department and the University.
- To provide regular and timely management accounting information to key decision makers and budget holders across the institution.
- To lead the employer’s consideration of pension schemes and act as the employer liaison role with the Trustees of the self-administered trust PASNHS scheme.

Internal and External Relationships
- Internal: President and Vice-Chancellor, Vice-President Operations and other member of the University Executive Board, other executive directors and directors of professional services, staff across finance directorate, Council, and particularly the University's Treasurer and Chair of Audit Committee, Finance Committee, Directors of subsidiary companies.
- External: Internal and External Auditors, banks and investment advisors, OFS for assurance and other financial issues, HMRC for tax compliance issues.

CANDIDATE PROFILE

Qualifications, knowledge and experience
- Member of ACCA institution.
- Skillset equivalent to a Chartered Accountant or a Postgraduate degree.
- Successful record of leading and managing a large finance department with a complex multi-faceted operation, in a large scale, internationally-recognised and knowledge-led organisation.
- High-level development project management skills able to successfully manage impactful strategic projects.
- Ability to understand complex technical issues and fully engage in technical discussions.

Management and teamwork
- Substantial leadership experience at senior level of financial management in a large and complex organisation.
- Ability to lead and develop diverse teams, empowering and supporting people, creating effective organisational structures and managing through influence as well as through executive authority.
- Able to demonstrate effective leadership and to raise performance standards throughout own work areas.
- Able to recognise and deal with obstacles and difficulties so that teams can deliver.
- Proven ability to make judgements on significant new problems, particularly line management authority over them.
- The behaviour and attitudes of others without having line management authority over them.
- Proven ability to communicate clearly with financial and non-financial staff.

Other skills and behaviours
- Able to demonstrate alignment with the University’s core values in all areas of work, and champion those behaviours in the Department.
- Intellectual capacity, stamina and agility to deal with a broad span of duties, to gain the respect of a wider range of people and to balance internal and external demands.
- Personal presence and able to project and inspire confidence at all levels.
- High-level of emotional intelligence with excellent judgement.
- Resilient, adaptable and clear minded, accepting of differing views whilst achieving results.

Expected behaviours
- Apply and actively promote equality, diversity and inclusion principles to the responsibilities of the role.
- A spider manager and senior leader role model the Southampton Behaviours and work with the management team to embed them as a way of working within the directorate.

Communicating and influencing
- Proven ability to establish and build major relationships with stakeholders. Able to articulate ideas and messages with clarity and consistency to diverse audiences.
- Proven ability to influence to develop positions or strategies and able to influence the behaviour and attitudes of others without having line management authority over them.
- Proven ability to communicate clearly with financial and non-financial staff.

Problem solving and initiative
- Proven ability to develop innovative solutions and practical implementations for strategic change.
- Able to identify financial risks and options, developing strategies to manage and mitigate them.
- Able to implement successful change management initiatives and formulate strategic plans that reflect and support the priority needs of the University.
- Proven ability of preparing and presenting annual budgets and longer term financial forecasts and investment plans across the University.

Planning and organising
- Ability to think and operate at a strategic level to maximise opportunities, articulate and pursue a long-term vision while meeting daily demands.
- Ability to champion and oversee the Department’s contribution to the University’s strategy and to lead on the development and implementation of the Department’s strategies and plans.
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We are very excited to be investing over £40m in our sports facilities.

The new building has been designed to be inclusive to all potential users, to connect to the outdoors, increase natural light, and to help meet our Low Carbon Target. The new sports facility is due to be open to users in 2024.
We have five campuses in Southampton, one in Winchester and one in Malaysia. Each has its own personality, world-leading facilities and specialisms.

Highfield Campus
Our main campus, Highfield, is the largest of our campuses, and the heart of the University. It is home to many of our state-of-the-art research and teaching facilities, and combines a lively and exciting atmosphere with calm, green surroundings.

With cafes, shops, concert halls, gyms and even a student cinema alongside academic facilities, Highfield is a hub of activity.

This is also where we are planning significant improvements to our student sports facilities, including a major expansion of the popular Jubilee Sports Centre.

University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust (UHS)
UHS is the main site for the study of medicine and healthcare. It hosts a purpose-built research hub, and is also home to the University’s dedicated Centre for Cancer Immunology – the first of its kind in the UK. This site will soon see the development of a new medical health research building.

Boldrewood Innovation Campus
Boldrewood is the base for engineering studies and research. Facilities include laboratories for studying unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), fluid dynamics and high-performance sports, a driving simulator, flight simulators, design studios, a 138m towing tank and our £48m National Infrastructure Laboratory (NIL). The NIL houses five new engineering laboratories, including a 30m x 15m large structures testing laboratory and a cutting-edge geotechnical centrifuge.

National Oceanography Centre Southampton (NOCS)
Our unique waterfront campus, based at NOCS, is one of the world’s leading research centres for the study of ocean and Earth science, with facilities including the Coral Reef Laboratory, a multi-user research aquarium, our 19.75m purpose-built catamaran and the National Oceanographic Library.

Avenue Campus
Just a few minutes’ walk from Highfield, and on the edge of Southampton Common, Avenue Campus is the base for our humanities subjects. Avenue has its own lecture theatres and catering facilities, plus a purpose-built Egm archaeology building and a new interactive digital humanities hub.

Southampton city centre
In the heart of the Cultural Quarter in the city centre, our Sir James Matthews Building offers updated teaching and learning spaces alongside facilities for meeting local and regional civic partners. The Building also includes a student enterprise zone and an artisan cafe.

A short walk across Guildhall Square from the Sir James Matthews Building is the University’s John Hansard Gallery, one of the UK’s leading contemporary art galleries, which plays a dynamic role in the cultural life of Southampton and the region.

Winchester School of Art (WSA)
Based in the historic city of Winchester, our specialist arts campus is home to a vibrant community of over 1,300 art and design students. With creative ambition at its core, WSA offers cutting-edge resources and facilities including specialist computer suites, photography studios, laser cutting, 3D printing and more.

The University is planning to expand its presence in Winchester, with an exciting opportunity from Winchester City Council.

University of Southampton Malaysia
In 2021, we relocated our campus in Malaysia to a brand new estate with state-of-the-art laboratories, upgraded facilities, and improved learning and recreational spaces.
Our foundations and heritage make the University a gateway to the world and our Strategy emphasises our commitment to ‘place’ and being a civic university. We are deeply committed to Southampton as a city of culture and across the region will further develop our civic role of making a positive impact.

Being a civic university allows us to rethink how we contribute to our region, so that civic engagement can become hardwired into institutional culture.

Articulation of the benefit the University brings to the region through the productive relationships we have with local and regional government, will help mobilise a community of supporters to benefit all communities. Over 50 per cent of our UK-based alumni (over 80,000 people) live within 50 miles of the University alongside ‘friends’ who support us philanthropically and through collaboration.

Underpinned by the four pillars of the Civic Charter – Place, People, Partnerships and Impact – we will work together with our friends and civic partnerships to improve the lives and environment of people across diverse communities in a just and responsible way. The University will become a truly integrated part of its local communities.

Southampton

Southampton is a fantastic place in which to live, work and socialise. Regardless of what life stage you are at, you will find a dynamic and vibrant city that caters for all. With an enviable location on the coast, yet just over an hour from London, the region combines incredible natural beauty with a thriving social scene – making it a desirable place to live! As an ethnically rich city that is growing rapidly, Southampton is benefiting from considerable investments in the region.

The city centre is currently thriving thanks to over £600m of regeneration plans and projects, including the historic Bargate Quarter, with new hotels, homes and transport links. This is a city of growth and transformation, and it is an exciting time to be here.

There is something for everyone in Southampton and the surrounding areas. For outdoor enthusiasts, water sports, sailing and ocean racing are easily available, while the beautiful New Forest National Park is just 30 minutes away. With many excellent local schools and nurseries, families will find a fantastic quality of life, while there’s a thriving LGBTQ+ social scene. Multiple faiths are celebrated in the city, and the rich cultural heritage of Winchester is just on our doorstep.

Winchester

On the edge of the South Downs National Park, England’s ancient capital, Winchester, is steeped in history and is complemented by a lively atmosphere and a wide variety of pubs and restaurants, museums, theatres and galleries. With direct rail links to London, our Winchester School of Art campus is one of the UK’s leading art and design institutions.

3rd best place to live and work in the UK*

*Good Growth for Cities Index, January 2021, DEMOS-PwC