

# Head of Operations

Candidate Pack

March 2026



# INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your interest in the role of **Head of Operations** at SUSU. This is a new role that is key to delivering the range of daily activity that takes place at SUSU.

The successful applicant will be our lead competent person for Health & Safety at SUSU, in addition to being responsible for maintaining the standards and operational running of the three SUSU buildings on Highfield Campus at the University of Southampton.





## ABOUT SUSU

The University of Southampton Students' Union (SUSU) is one of the leading students' unions in the country. We represent Southampton's 25,000+ students, helping them make their voices heard locally and nationally on issues like housing, fees, and much more.

We provide over 380 sports clubs and student interest societies for our members to find their passion. We also run bars, catering, and retail outlets on campus as well as a range of events during the year.

Our vision for the future is that **every student loves their time at Southampton.**

# OUR SPACES

We primarily operate in three buildings (B40/42/57) on the main University of Southampton Highfield Campus. The buildings are owned by the University, who are responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of them.

SUSU is the primary user of the buildings and act as the building manager for the spaces, working with the University Estates & Facilities team for maintenance and projects.

The Head of Operations role will largely be responsible for soft facilities management aspect of the buildings, with the University responsible for hard facilities management.





# WORKING AT SUSU

Every day at SUSU is different thanks to the diversity & variety of our student body and the activities they deliver. This can range from lectures by day to cinema and club nights in the evening, whilst band practice and dance sessions take place, with yoga and table tennis bookings also happening around the building.

We support over 1,500 bookings a year ranging from student clubs & societies activity to external bookings like our weekly Monday market or graduate recruiter stands.

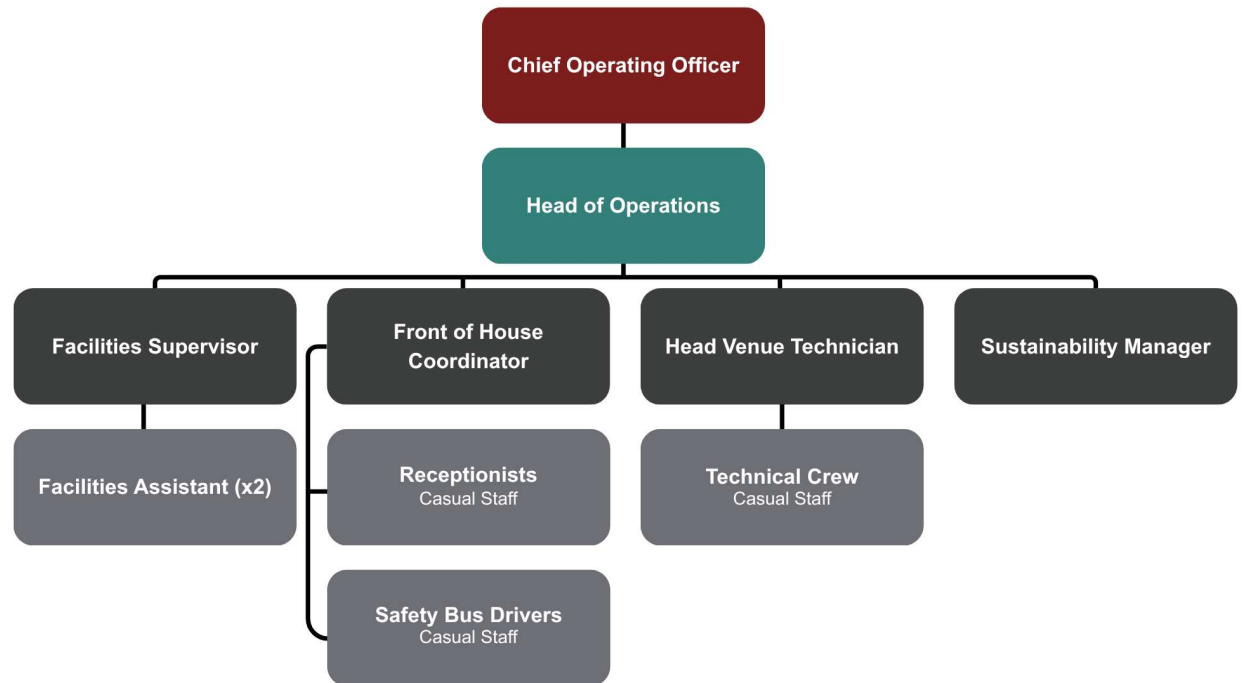
None of this would be possible without the efforts of our full-time staff team of 70 colleagues and up to 150 further casual staff, mostly students.

We have a range of office and meeting environments for our staff, plus a dedicated staff room and a vibrant staff community with regular social activities.

# STAFF STRUCTURE

Reporting to the Chief Operating Officer, the Head of Operations has 4 direct reports to line manage.

It is indirectly responsible for the supervision of 2 Facilities Assistants plus receptionists, safety bus drivers, and technical crew



# MAIN DUTIES OF THE ROLE

## Operational Leadership

- Provide day to day leadership of the team
- Set clear objectives, performance standards and service expectations, reviewing systems and processes to improve efficiency and service quality
- Develop and monitor operational KPIs and service standards and levels
- Ensure effective rotas, staffing levels, operating hours, and contingency planning
- Establish and maintain positive working relationships with the University Estates & Facilities and Health & Safety teams and other relevant University colleagues
- Lead operational planning for peak periods and major events

## Health and Safety Management

- Act as the organisation's operational lead for health & safety
- Ensure compliance with all relevant legislation and regulatory requirements
- Oversee risk assessments, incident reporting, fire safety, first aid provision and emergency procedures
- Lead on health & safety audits and continuous improvement initiatives
- Promote a positive health & safety culture across SUSU
- Regularly report on Health & Safety data and progress on continuous improvement to SLT and the SUSU Health & Safety Committee

## Facilities and Cleaning Management

- Oversee building management, cleaning standards and cleaning contractor performance, ensuring facilities are safe, clean, compliant and fit for purpose
- Manage planned preventative maintenance schedules, and develop both short- and long-term facilities improvement plans
- Coordinate small maintenance works and oversee contractors where required, following applicable University processes and procedures
- Regularly review the usage and configuration of spaces to ensure we provide the right spaces for the right use
- Work with colleagues, external contractors and the University to ensure appropriate security arrangements are in place for SUSU facilities and events

## Room Bookings and Reception Management

- Oversee the effective management of SUSU room bookings systems and processes
- Ensure SUSU Reception provides a professional and welcoming experience
- Maintain efficient processes for enquiries, confirmations, invoicing and customer communication
- Ensure relevant booking information is communicated and coordinated with relevant internal and external stakeholders
- Identify opportunities to maximise the use of our facilities available for hire throughout the year



# MAIN DUTIES OF THE ROLE

## Technical and Event Support Management

- Oversee Audio Visual and technical provision for internal and external events, and SUSU meeting rooms and venues
- Ensure SUSU technical and related equipment is maintained, compliant and fit for purpose
- Support in planning and delivering event production requirements
- Develop and maintain service standards for clients and event organisers
- Develop and continually improve an external technical hires service

## Transport Service Management

- Oversee the safe and compliant operation of all SUSU owned and leased vehicles
- Ensure driver compliance, vehicle maintenance, insurance and licensing requirements are met
- Monitor vehicle scheduling and usage to maximise value for money
- Ensure appropriate training, risk management and documentation is in place

## Sustainability Management

- Identify opportunities to improve the sustainability of SUSU facilities
- Ensure ongoing compliance with ISO 14001 requirements, including internal audits, management reviews, corrective actions and continual improvement processes
- Promote sustainable procurement, waste reduction, recycling and responsible resource management across SUSU
- Ensure sustainability objectives and training are embedded across all areas of SUSU



# ROLE EXPECTATIONS

## People Management

- Managing your staff team to unlock their full potential, in line with policies and procedures covering the wide range of staff management issues, including recruitment, induction & probation, personal development, performance management, disciplinary & grievance, holidays and absence management
- Occasionally undertake operational management/supervision of student people (both staff and volunteers) taking the responsibility to allocate routine tasks and rotas, and monitoring progress

## Financial Resource Management

- Responsible for budgeting and monitoring expenditure for activities/projects/campaigns within an annual budget of up to £500,000
- Preparing and managing the relevant budget(s), using resources effectively and efficiently, acting upon variances and taking account of financial procedures

## Management

- Supporting the implementation of the current approved strategic plan and promoting our core values and organisational priorities through the departmental operational plan
- Using robust and effective approaches and methodology to plan work (tasks, projects) for self and the team
- Taking responsibility for overall outcomes of a function(s), outlet or department
- Ensuring the SUSU team meets the highest standards of service and is focused on responding to member/customer needs and demands, constantly seeking ways to improve student feedback
- Identifying and developing solutions to address operational and situation challenges using rigorous analysis and sound judgement



# CONTRIBUTE TO SUSU

## **Contribute to the overall effectiveness of SUSU**

- Developing and maintaining relationships with key internal and external stakeholders
- Ensuring personal knowledge and skills are updated to ensure effectiveness in meeting work objectives
- Contributing to the positive image of SUSU with students, the University and the local community by working with the team to ensure a full service is always delivered, providing cover as necessary
- Ensuring that all statutory and legal obligations are met
- Promoting SUSU's various policies and commitments within your work, in particular Health & Safety, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion, and Sustainability
- Participating in and driving personal learning and development
- Attending all meetings and training events, as required
- Completing such other duties as may be reasonably prescribed by SUSU, appropriate to the grade and responsibilities of the post



# PERSON SPECIFICATION

Assessed at: Application / Interview / Task or Presentation

KEY REQUIREMENTS	A	I	T/P
<b>Knowledge/Qualifications</b>			
NEBOSH diploma / equivalent level health and safety qualification / significant previous experience of health & safety management	✓		
Hold a clean UK driving licence (preferably including D1)	✓		
<b>Experience</b>			
Significant experience in operational or facilities management.	✓	✓	
Experience overseeing multi-functional operational services	✓	✓	
Experience managing teams and supervising managers and staff	✓	✓	
Experience of developing a planned, preventative maintenance programme	✓	✓	✓
Experience of managing projects, including evaluating and reporting on project results	✓	✓	✓
Experience of managing contracts and service level agreements with external organisations	✓	✓	
Experience of managing budgets up to £1m	✓	✓	✓



# PERSON SPECIFICATION

KEY REQUIREMENTS	A	I	T/P
<b>Skills</b>			
Strong organisational and problem-solving skills		✓	✓
Excellent communication skills, with the ability to relate to and communicate effectively with people at all levels		✓	✓
Strong analytical skills with the ability to interpret data and identify improvement opportunities		✓	✓
Strong IT skills – familiar with Office 365 applications and ability to learn new systems	✓	✓	
Able to work flexibly, including occasionally working weekends and nights	✓		



# BENEFITS



30 days of holiday, plus a further 16 public holiday & closure days annually



Generous pension scheme with 10% employer contribution and flexible employee contributions



Hybrid working – up to 2 days a week from home plus a range of further flexible working options

*Eligibility criteria may apply to some benefits*



# BENEFITS



Interest free staff loan scheme of £750



Access to free eye tests and Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)



Generous volunteering, compassionate and family leave options


*Eligibility criteria may apply to some benefits*



We look forward to receiving your application.

If you would like to find out more about SUSU, please see:

 LinkedIn (*For what it's like to work at SUSU*)

 Instagram (*For SUSU activities*)

If you have any questions about the role, please contact Paul Davie (Chief Operating Officer) on [p.davie@soton.ac.uk](mailto:p.davie@soton.ac.uk), or the People Team on [suhr@soton.ac.uk](mailto:suhr@soton.ac.uk)

