

Head of Operations

Department	Strathclyde Sport (www.strath.ac.uk/strathclydesport/)		
Directorate	Campus Services Directorate		
Staff Category	Administrative and Professional	**Reference No**	862938
Reports To	Director of Sport & Active Health	**Grade**	8
Salary Range	£48,337 - £59,390	**Contract Type**	Open Contract
FTE	1 (35 hours/week)	**Closing Date**	22/11/2026
Working Arrangements	Hybrid. The standard requirement across the University is that at least three days per week (based on 1FTE) will be spent working on-site (with flexibility as appropriate).		
Work Location	Strathclyde Sport		

Job Advert

Strathclyde Sport is the heart of sport and active health at the University of Strathclyde, with the vision of being the most active city centre campus in the UK. Since opening in September 2018, its impact on delivering an outstanding student experience has been incredible, annually attracting more than 7,500 members and over 450,000 visits across the sporting estate. We are continually growing our profile to not only create the Strathclyde Sport identity but to also provide further strategic support to the wider University mission.

To continue doing so, the University of Strathclyde seeks to appoint a dynamic and visionary leader with the ability to inspire others to continue to deliver excellence in Strathclyde Sport operational services. The Head of Operations is a new role and will be a pivotal member of Strathclyde Sport Senior Management Team and will contribute to the departments' leadership to deliver its strategy for the benefit of the whole university sport and active health community. The role will lead the formation, management and activation of capital planning, commercial opportunities,

operational systems and activity programming, whilst ensuring throughout, the provision of an outstanding user experience.

To be considered for the role, you are expected to be degree qualified and have substantial experience in a similar specialist role along with demonstrable track record of managing specialist teams and associated financial resources whilst having a visionary outlook to seek out new innovative and commercial opportunities to engage the Strathclyde community. You should have excellent interpersonal and communication skills, with the ability to unlock people's potential and contribute to department strategy planning, business case preparation and complex decision making.

Applicants may use tools such as AI to support their application; however, all submissions must accurately reflect their own experience and understanding. The University reserves the right to verify the authenticity of application materials and may reject applications where concerns arise.

Job Description

Brief Outline of Job:

The Head of Operations will lead the strategic development, management and effective delivery of Strathclyde Sport's operations, income generation through membership and commercial opportunities and facility utilisation. The role will also contribute to the development of capital opportunities to continue to drive investment in the sporting estate at Strathclyde. The role will lead shaping the already excellent customer experience built on our growing reputation in sport and active health, anticipate and serve the growth in demand of the diversity of service expected from a leading technological university. Line management duties will include leading the Facilities and Active Health managers. The Head of Operations will be responsible for driving forwards the service delivery in these portfolios of work whilst actively contributing to the overall strategic leadership and development of the department. The Head of Operations shall be the key liaison with the University's Marketing and Communications department ensuring wide reach of our offering and impactful campaigns to promote active wellbeing and sport across our community and beyond.

Main Activities/Responsibilities:

1.	Lead and drive forwards the development and safe delivery pro-active programming of all Strathclyde Sport's facilities and services - including active health initiatives, group exercise programme, sports club training, recreational access and special events, to ensure optimal space utilisation, customer satisfaction, reputation and business performance. Engage with, and influence, Sport Union, stakeholders and industry experts to shape plans. Manage stakeholders through changes to programming to maximise facilities use and customer expectations.
2.	Take a leading role alongside the Director of Sport & Active Health in department strategy planning, budgetary preparation, business case preparation and complex decision making, shaping the strategic direction of the department delivering both sport and active health opportunities. Represent the department on University Committees and participate in University wide project teams, task groups and working groups.
3.	Manage, motivate, mentor, and develop managers and their respective teams, to deliver a high quality, efficient and effective service in accordance with Strathclyde Sports requirements and University policies and legislative responsibilities. Interpret relevant policies, legislations and regulations to ensure all facilities are presented to a high standard, ensuring an effective and robust health & safety programme is in place, including the appropriate training of all staff, risk assessments, COSHH & emergency procedures.
4.	Actively contribute to the senior leadership team, taking a role in strategic development through a proactive and innovative approach to the initiation and management of change, planning and setting team objectives and instilling a culture of continuous improvement, promoting a culture of professional and personal development to ensure Strathclyde Sport delivers best value.
5.	Manage financial performance and business planning of Strathclyde Sport operational services ensuring income generation (eg membership & let income) and spend targets are optimised and managed in line with university financial policies. Produce detailed reports and analysis to inform business policy and decision making.

6.	Lead managing, maintaining, procuring and developing Strathclyde Sport's operational infrastructure to ensure optimal service delivery, efficiency and effectiveness. Manage service level agreements with key business suppliers and client groups to define commitments, expectations and instigate measures to mitigate business disruption due to emergencies, breakdowns and failures.
7.	Analysing large data sets extracted from leisure management software, evaluate existing service provision across mandated areas, liaise with users, anticipate customer demand, identify opportunities and facilitate change management. Determine/challenge the economic value of new programmes/services and how to accommodate them within existing/new facilities, advising the Director on options/preferences.
8.	Responsible for the development of marketing and design projects, across Strathclyde Sport. Working in partnership with the University Communications & Marketing team and other key stakeholders.
9.	Build and maintain a key strategic relationship with the Sport Union based on trust, openness and ambition to achieve common objective to service the student community.
10.	Develop within the teams, a culture that promotes equality of opportunity and supports diversity and inclusion, whilst taking into account the University's commitment to environmental sustainability.
11.	Propose new products, suppliers and services to grow and improve business performance (reputation; income generation; member recruitment and retention), create new income streams and drive efficiency gains; develop innovative solutions to significant problems (staffing and operational).
12.	Within the sector and industry, develop and maintain an extensive professional network with individuals, strategic stakeholders and industry experts with the objective of maintaining the department at the cutting edge.
13.	Deputise (along with the Head of Sport Development) for the Director as required.
14.	To carry out any other duties as appropriate in line with the grade of the role that may be requested by the Director.

Person Specification

Educational and/or Professional Qualifications

(E=Essential, i.e. a candidate must meet all essential criteria to be considered for selection, D=Desirable)

E1 Degree qualification in sport or leisure, ideally to post-graduate level and substantial experience in similar specialist roles at this grade

D1 Membership or qualification of relevant industry body (ie Cimspa, IOSH Managing Safely)

D2 Evidence of ongoing professional development

Experience

E2 Extensive experience in senior management of multi-disciplinary teams in the leisure industry (sport, facilities, active health).

E3 Experience of managing and reporting on complex budgets, with demonstrable business acumen and ability to create new commercial income streams and drive efficiency gains.

E4 Demonstrable experience in project management and expertise in capital projects (new builds and/or building refurbishments; and equipment procurement), covering small to large developments.

E5 Proven capability to lead, manage, inspire and develop staff in a complex organisation and deliver high levels of team working, professional performance and customer service.

E6 Experience and knowledge of leisure based client records management packages and innovative digital solutions to support service delivery.

E7 Experience leading and monitoring robust infrastructure solutions (IT systems; client records management; HR procedures) to optimise efficiency and effectiveness.

D3 Experience and Knowledge of issues and challenges in the HE Sector and understanding of their impact.

D4 Vision and awareness of local and national framework for sports / active health provision and their opportunities; outward-facing approach; understanding of HE sector / industry trends

D5 Experience of communicating and influencing at senior levels in large units or complex organisations

Job Related Skills and Achievements

E8 Demonstrably strong management skills, in particular working and delivering successfully as a multi-disciplinary team leader, team member and autonomously.

E9 Excellent planning and organisational skills with demonstrable abilities in prioritising, delegation, compiling effective strategy & business plans and delivering quality output against them, to deadlines.

E10 High level IT skills for a broad range of purposes together with excellent analytical skills and the ability to present data clearly.

E11 Ability to problem solve and resolve challenges that maximise effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery.

E12 Thorough understanding of complex organisations financial procedures, systems and legislative responsibilities.

Personal Attributes

E13 Ability to lead, manage, inspire and develop staff to deliver high levels of customer service and performance; high level diplomacy, negotiating and influencing skills

E14 Strategic thinker, planner, sport developer; able to build relationships, work under pressure in a fast paced environment, meet tight deadlines and cope with complex issues.

E15 Good presentational and inter-personal skills; developed ability to write reports, chair meetings, manage relationships, connect professionally and communicate at all levels.

E16 Ability to propose bold and innovative user engagement opportunities and bring substantial strategic concepts to fruition that form part of a facilities core offering.

E17 Excellent ability to inspire and empower others to drive change, whilst building a constructive & effective team culture.

D6 Ability to negotiate and persuade, and to explain potentially complex financial issues to non-finance colleagues.

Other Relevant Factors

E18 Flexible approach to working arrangements and travel to fulfil the requirements of the post – available to work outside normal hours are required

Application Procedure

Applicants should visit Strathclyde's vacancies portal and complete an online application form including the name of three referees who will be contacted without further permission, unless you indicate you would prefer otherwise. Applicants should also submit a Curriculum Vitae and a covering letter detailing the knowledge, skills and experience you think make you the right candidate for the job. Applicants should also complete the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form.

The University of Strathclyde encourages the recruitment of disabled and neurodivergent candidates. If you require any reasonable adjustments or support at any stage of the recruitment or application process, please contact us at

humanresources@strath.ac.uk, and we will be happy to assist you. This includes supporting you with the option to submit a paper application or a CV instead of completing the online application form.

Interviews

Interviews are scheduled to take place on 10 December 2026.

The University is a Disability Confident Employer and operates a guaranteed interview scheme for disabled candidates who meet all the essential criteria for the post that they are applying for.

Other Information

Further information on the application process and working at Strathclyde can be found on our website (http://www.strath.ac.uk/hr/workforus).

Informal enquiries about the post can be directed to Neil Brown, Director of Sport & Active Health (neil.f.brown@strath.ac.uk).

Conditions of Employment

Conditions of employment relating to the Administrative and Professional staff category can be found at: Conditions of Employment.

Rewards and Benefits

Our comprehensive benefits package, including generous annual leave, family-friendly benefits, flexible work options, and a commitment to continuous learning, reflects our appreciation for the valuable contributions of our colleagues.

We understand that each staff member has unique priorities and lifestyles, so our diverse benefits ensure there is something for everyone, details of which can be found on our Rewards and Benefits webpage.

- **Financial Rewards:** We provide attractive financial packages, including competitive salaries, relocation support for employees and a generous pension scheme, with university contributions of 14.5%.
- **Work-Life Balance:** We are dedicated to enhancing healthy work-life balance for our employees. We offer generous annual leave, an additional annual leave purchase option, flexible and agile work arrangements.
    - Annual Leave: Generous entitlement of 31 days, in addition to 11 public holidays and University closure days.
    - Additional annual leave purchase: Option to request purchase of 2 weeks' additional annual leave per year.
    - Flexible and agile working: The University provides flexible work arrangements. You can request arrangements that fit you and your role, such as hybrid, part-time, compressed hours, term-time, adjusted shifts, staggered hours. These requests can be made from the first day of your employment.
- **Family Friendly Benefits:** We offer a variety of enhanced family-friendly benefits to support our employees in balancing work and family responsibilities. These include Maternity Leave, Paternity/Maternity Support, Adoption Leave, Shared Parental Leave, Parental Leave, Carers Leave and support, Family Friendly Research & Scholarship Leave, and access to our on-campus nursery.
- **Career Development:** Our commitment to personal development is reflected in initiatives such as professional courses, subsidised educational programs, coaching and mentoring, leadership development, secondment opportunities, and access to our library.
- **Health & Wellbeing:** We place high importance on the safety, wellbeing, and health of all our staff and offer discounted Strathclyde Sport membership, an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), Occupational Health Service, and Cycle to Work scheme.

- **Recognition Awards:** At Strathclyde, we place a strong emphasis on acknowledging and rewarding our staff's commitment and exceptional contributions. This is demonstrated through our Long-Service Awards and our Values-based Strathclyde Medals.

Pre-Placement Health Screening

If you are offered a job with us, you'll be encouraged to let us know about any disability, medical condition, or neurodivergence you have by completing a confidential pre-placement health questionnaire. Completing the questionnaire is entirely voluntary but by doing so we can put in place the right support and make any reasonable adjustments before you start.

Probation

Where applicable, the successful applicant will be required to serve a 12 month probationary period.

Pension

The successful applicant will be eligible to join Universities' Superannuation Scheme. Further information regarding this scheme is available from Payroll and Pensions.

Relocation

Where applicable, the University offers a relocation package to support new employees who meet the eligibility criteria. The relocation package is offered as a contribution towards costs incurred, and is designed to be flexible, allowing staff to use the financial support available in the way that will be most helpful to them. Further details are outlined in the Relocation Policy.

Equality and Diversity

The University of Strathclyde is a socially progressive institution that strives to ensure equality of opportunity and celebrates the diversity of its student and staff community. Strathclyde is people-oriented and collaborative, offering a supportive and flexible working culture with a deep commitment to our equality, diversity and inclusion charters, initiatives, groups and networks.

We strongly encourage applications from Black, Asian and minority ethnicity, women, LGBT+, disabled candidates and candidates from lower socio-economic groups and care-experienced backgrounds.

The University currently holds an Athena Swan **Silver award**, recognising our commitment to support and transform gender equality within higher education and research.

University Values

The University's Values capture what we're all about: who we are, what we believe in and what we stand for. Our Values have been derived from how we act and how we expect to be treated as part of Strathclyde.

In delivering **our People Strategy**, we will contribute, act, and make decisions guided by these values.

- **People-oriented:** committed to our staff and students, providing opportunities, and investing in their development.
- **Bold:** confident and challenging in what we do, and supportive of embracing appropriate and managed risk in our decision-making.

- **Innovative:** focused on discovering and applying knowledge with impact and encouraging creative thinking and new ideas.
- **Collaborative:** working together, with our colleagues and external partners, with integrity and in an open, respectful way.
- **Ambitious:** for our institution, staff and students as well as supporting the ambitions of our partners.

