



## Job Description

<b>Job Title:</b>	Head of Operations
<b>Accountable to:</b>	Bursar
<b>Accountable for:</b>	Accommodation Manager Head Chef Steward (front of house) Events Coordinators
<b>Grade</b>	9

### Job Summary

St Antony's College is a registered charity and a constituent college of the University of Oxford (one of seven graduate-only colleges). The College, situated in north Oxford, is home to a community of graduate students and scholars, with a total student body of c. 550+.

The Head of Operations is responsible for the leadership and management of the College's catering, events and accommodation teams. You will be an exceptional operational leader and people manager with the ability to lead high-performing service teams, drive operational improvement and build a culture of accountability, professionalism and continuous improvement. You will work confidently at strategic and delivery levels, supporting operational teams directly during peak periods, staff absence or complex activity. You will bring strong operational and commercial acumen, with the ability to analyse performance data, identify inefficiencies and implement improvements to processes and systems. An early focus of the role is the review, optimisation and integration of operational processes and systems, ensuring that ways of working and staffing arrangements are efficient and effective.

The Head of Operations is the Premises Licence Holder for the College, and shares responsibility for safeguarding with the Head of the Academic Office. As well as providing leadership to your teams, you will support and guide senior academic colleagues, including the Warden (the Head of the College), the Directors of our Regional Study Centres, and the [Management Executive Team \(MET\)](#) on a range of operational and compliance matters, demonstrating sensitivity to their perspectives and objectives while balancing these against the regulatory environment.

The Head of Operations is a member of the College's senior management team (known as 'Senior Administrative Officers') and will be expected to work proactively and collaboratively with this team

and a range of colleagues from across our operational departments (student services, Accounts, HR, etc) as well as our Centres and the student body, principally via the [Graduate Common Room \(GCR\)](#).

The role requires an experienced and highly capable operational leader with strong emotional intelligence, excellent judgement and the ability to build credibility and trust in an academic community. You will balance operational rigour with a collaborative and collegiate approach, leading through visibility, responsiveness and engagement with both staff and stakeholders.

### **Main Duties and Responsibilities**

#### **Leadership and management**

- Lead and inspire operational teams through a visible and engaged management style, fostering accountability, effective teamwork, continuous improvement and high service standards.
- Develop your teams through clear expectations, coaching and constructive challenge, building resilient and customer-focused teams.
- Drive improvements in efficiency, resilience and value for money.
- Build strong working relationships across the College community, using sound judgement, emotional intelligence and excellent communication skills.
- Contribute actively to the work of the College's Senior Administrative Team and represent the College externally as required.

#### **Departmental operations**

Ensure that the services provided are delivered to a consistently high standard, with effective collaboration between departments and a strong focus on efficiency, customer experience and value for money.

In line with the [Vision and Mission](#) of the College, you will:

- Oversee the effective operation of the College's accommodation and housekeeping, catering, hospitality and events functions, ensuring services are professional, efficient, compliant and responsive to community needs.
- Work closely with the operational teams to deliver conferences, seminars and events to a high standard. Support delivery directly during periods of peak demand or staff absence, and act as a senior operational point of contact for stakeholders and clients.
- Ensure that College rooms and facilities are serviced, equipped, cleaned and maintained to a consistently high standard, meeting the community's expectations and regulatory requirements.
- Review and improve operational processes, systems and workflows, ensuring efficient ways of working, effective resource deployment and a strong customer experience.
- Lead the effective use of operational systems, including accommodation and event booking platforms and catering/EPOS systems, ensuring accurate reporting, operational continuity and informed decision-making.
- Provide strong operational leadership to the College's catering and front of house teams, working closely with the Head Chef and Steward to develop a high-performing hospitality

operation that balances service quality, financial sustainability and the evolving needs of the College community.

- Ensure staffing structures, rotas and use of agency or casual staffing arrangements are operationally effective and financially sustainable.
- Develop clear reporting mechanisms for monitoring profitability, using data to support planning and decision-making. Annually review rates for catering, room hire and accommodation in line with quality of services and facilities provided by the College and in line with local market rate.

### **Compliance**

- Hold the Premises Licence for the College and ensure that all events taking place on the College site (including student events) are operated within all relevant legislative and regulatory requirements.
- Ensure all operational activity complies with relevant licensing, regulatory, health and safety and environmental requirements, including appropriate risk assessment, staff training and effective fire safety and evacuation procedures, working closely with the Head of Estates as required
- Lead the College's work to meet the requirements of the Accommodation Code of Practice (ACOP) and champion these throughout the College.
- Lead on emergency response and business continuity planning, including out-of-hours protocols, supported by the Head of Estates.
- Hold joint responsibility with the Head of the Academic Office for safeguarding matters within the College, ensuring policies and procedures are reviewed in line with insurance requirements and that training is delivered as necessary.

### **Budgeting and financial control**

- Support your Heads of Department to manage their budgets effectively, ensuring strong financial control and cost effectiveness .
- Maintain oversight of the salaries of the domestic staff, and make recommendations for annual pay reviews.

### **Student services**

- Work supportively with the student body, particularly in relation to student events, providing guidance as appropriate.
- Support your team to manage student complaints proactively in line with the College's Complaints Policy and Procedure.
- Ensure any changes in arrangements affecting students or other members of the community are clearly and effectively communicated in good time via the appropriate channel, ensuring that your teams keep the relevant pages of the College website up to date.

### **Other duties**

- Keep up to date with legislation and guidance relating to the work of operational teams and ensure that all staff receive appropriate training and guidance on any relevant new or emerging issues.

- Periodically review and revise as required relevant policies and procedures, ensuring that these reflect University requirements and relevant legislation and guidance as appropriate. Produce and secure agreement on new policies as required. Ensure your teams understand and work within the policies relevant to their roles.
- Provide information and reports/returns as required to the University, local authority, NHS and other agencies.
- Respond promptly to emergency and out of hours situations.
- Such other duties as your line manager may from time-to-time request, commensurate with the grade and responsibilities of the post.

## Person Specification

### Essential

- Excellent team performance management skills, with experience of leading customer-facing service teams.
- Senior management experience, with an excellent understanding of directly managing operational delivery.
- Comfortable operating at both strategic and operational levels within a small organisation.
- Strong problem-solving skills and the ability to think in a clear and structured fashion.
- Exceptional interpersonal and communication skills, with a diplomatic approach.
- Customer-oriented with a commitment to delivering an excellent experience for all stakeholders.
- Demonstrable ability to analyse operational and financial data and use insight to improve efficiency, service delivery and financial performance.
- Financially literate with experience of managing budgets.
- Proficient with IT systems, with an interest in technology and digital experiences and experience of using or overseeing operational IT systems relevant to domestic services (e.g. room booking, catering/EPOS, accommodation and housekeeping reporting tools).
- Experience of managing compliance requirements within an academic or similar environment.
- Proven ability to work under pressure and manage competing demands.
- Holder of personal alcohol licence, or willingness to become one.
- Flexible and positive attitude; an ability to adapt positively as priorities change and a willingness to work outside of core hours as needed.

### Desirable

- Strong knowledge of relevant licencing and compliance requirements.
- Substantial experience of hospitality, catering and/or events operations.
- Sympathy with the values, ethos and objectives of a collegiate and academic environment.