

Role Profile

Role title:	General Manager
Salary:	£40,000 - £50,000pa
Full/Part Time:	Full-Time
Contract term:	Permanent
Accountable to:	Operations Director
Accountable for:	Head Chef, Sous Chef, Assistant Managers and Casual Team
Hours:	40 hours per week
Location:	Usually located at University Green, Oxford Road, occasionally at the main Students' Union Building
Eligibility:	Open to applicants with relevant skills and experience who are eligible to work in the UK. A Personal Licence is essential.
Benefits:	We offer a great range of benefits. You can see them here .

Our Organisation

We are Manchester Students' Union, a large charity and commercial operation based on Oxford Road, supporting more than 48,000 students at the University of Manchester throughout their time here. Alongside our advice, representation and student activities work, we are a serious hospitality operator, running Manchester Academy Venues, Bar 532 & Kitchen and Corridor Coffee.

In 2026 we are opening a new all-day bar at University Green in partnership with Bruntwood. The new venture is designed to trade from morning coffee through to late-night drinks, serving students, University staff, Academy gig attendees and the wider general public. It is the flagship of our commercial growth plan and the first step in a longer-term ambition for UMSU to become a significant operator across the city centre.

We employ around 90 permanent staff and around 400 part-time studying staff and believe in the importance of great employment opportunities to equip our students for their future work-life. When you join UMSU, you'll be immersed in an environment that empowers staff to make great things happen and we are always looking for innovative, passionate and proactive people to join us.

Our Organisational Values

Our values are foundational to us and shape the work that we do every day. As part of our recruitment process, we want you to demonstrate how your experiences, behaviours and skills align with our values.

Our values are

- We put students at the heart of what we do
- We provide a 'great experience' service
- We believe in improvement and progression

- We are a community
- We are open and transparent
- We are inclusive

You can find more detailed explanations of our values on [our website](#).

Role Overview

This new venture is our most significant commercial launch in a decade, and as General Manager you will play the lead role in making it a success.

Starting shortly before launch you will open the venue, set its standards, build its team and help shape its identity as a high-quality Oxford Road bar and social venue trading from morning coffee through to late-night drinks. Every commercial pound the venue generates goes back into supporting students at the University of Manchester, making this one of the few General Manager roles where the P&L has a purpose beyond profit alone.

The role sits within the Commercial team, working alongside colleagues responsible for Manchester Academy Venues, Bar 532 & Kitchen and Corridor Coffee. Together, the team generates the trading income that supports the Union's student-facing work while delivering first-class hospitality experiences for students, staff, gig-goers and the wider Oxford Road community.

You will lead the P&L for the site, keeping sales, gross profit, labour and controllable costs on track and taking swift action where needed. In practice, this means clear weekly targets, tight control of wet and dry margins, effective rota planning, strong stock management and a relentless focus on the guest experience.

You will build and lead the newly recruited team of Assistant Managers, Head Chef, Sous Chef, kitchen colleagues and casual bar and floor staff. Developing that team into confident, capable hospitality leaders will be a core part of the role, supported by in-house HR, learning and development, and the wider Commercial leadership team.

You will act as Designated Premises Supervisor, taking responsibility for safe and compliant trading, including licensing, health and safety, food safety, staff training, incident management and responsible alcohol retailing.

You will also lead and shape the venue's events and programming calendar, working with colleagues and student groups to create the moments that give the venue its identity. Quiz nights, acoustic sessions, Welcome Week takeovers, society activity, University-linked activations and pre-gig trading will all form part of building a venue with community, energy and long-term success.

This role strongly reflects our values of delivering great experiences and building community. It is a rare and exciting opportunity for an experienced and passionate hospitality leader to take the reins at a major new hospitality venue while directly contributing to the student experience at one of the UK's largest and most diverse universities.

Key Result Areas

Responsible for	Contributor to
Pre-opening mobilisation. Preparing the venue for successful opening, including operating routines, team onboarding, training, stock controls, supplier setup, compliance records, service standards, EPOS processes and soft launch activity.	Wider project delivery across lease/legal, capital works, IT, finance setup, marketing launch and organisational readiness.
Commercial P&L performance and accountability. Delivery of site sales, gross profit, wage cost, controllable spend, stock results, waste control and ultimately contribution targets.	Wider Commercial Department income targets and long-term financial sustainability of the Students' Union commercial services.
Operational Standards. Daily venue standards across bar, floor, kitchen coordination, cellar, cleanliness, service speed, guest flow, opening/closing routines and shift management.	Wider Union standards for customer experience, accessibility, safety and professional service delivery.
Food and Drink offer. Delivery of the agreed food and drink offer, product availability, quality, consistency, range control, margin protection and service execution.	Development of the wider Union food and beverage strategy across Oxford Road venue, Bar 532 & Kitchen, Corridor Coffee and other commercial outlets.
People and Team Leadership. Recruitment, induction, training, rota planning, performance management, team culture, student staff experience and development of Assistant Managers/Supervisors.	Wider Union people strategy, student employment offer, talent development, retention and succession planning.
Compliance. Acting as DPS and ensuring safe, legal and responsible trading, including licensing, responsible alcohol retailing, health and safety, food safety, allergens, incident records, refusals and due diligence.	Wider organisational risk management, safeguarding escalation, reputation management and compliance culture.
Events and sales. Building and delivering the venue-level programme, including quizzes, acoustic sessions, society activity, Welcome Week activity, group bookings, pre-gig trade and local sales plans.	Wider Union events calendar, Manchester Academy activity, University-linked activations, student group engagement and commercial campaigns.
Student Impact. Ensuring the venue delivers student value, creates quality student jobs, supports student activity, builds strong supplier/partner relationships and improves through sales data, feedback and operational learning.	The Union's charitable purpose, student-facing services, campus community impact, cross-site learning and future commercial development.

This is not an exhaustive list of responsibilities and you may be asked to carry out other duties appropriate to the role.

Organisational Stewardship & Leadership Responsibilities

- You'll guide the work of the team, participating in the development of annual operating plans to support the achievement of strategic aims, holding teams accountable for delivery against these plans
- You'll contribute to the development and delivery of risk mitigating strategies as they relate to departments area of work
- You'll ensure all team are assisting in key students' union events throughout the year such as Welcome week and elections and proactively identify opportunities to support the officers in delivering their plans
- You'll lead teams acting as an exemplar of the Union behaviours ensuring all staff are given appropriate support in line with the Union management framework and teams are consistently held accountable for delivering against expected performance standards (both role performance and behaviours)
- You'll be accountable for the financial performance of area of responsibility taking prompt action where financial targets are at risk. Contribute to the forecasting & budgeting exercises in line with the organisational framework
- You'll own the policy as it relates to departmental activity, have good working knowledge of the Union policy and procedure framework as it relates to the team's function and ensure that all teams activities are conducted in line with this framework
- You'll proactively contribute to maintaining the communal spaces and ensuring whole team share responsibility for managing team stores and keeping areas clean and tidy

Person Specification

Criteria	Assessed at:			
	Application Form	Interview	Interview Task	All
Education				
We accept candidates from any educational background.				
Skills				
Strong commercial and financial management skills, including the ability to understand what drives sales, delivery of gross profit, wage percentage, stock, waste and controllable costs, and turn performance data into clear actions that influence the P&L.	x	x	x	
Operational leadership skills, including the ability to set standards, lead service, manage peak trading and maintain	x	x	x	

consistent bar, floor and kitchen coordination.				
People leadership and coaching skills, including recruitment, induction, rota planning, performance management and development of diverse teams, including studying staff.	x	x		
Customer-focused approach, with the ability to create a welcoming, inclusive and high-quality hospitality experience that encourages repeat visits.	x	x		
Ability to build and sustain a strong safety culture within the venue, ensuring that colleagues understand their responsibilities, feel confident to challenge unsafe practice, and consistently prioritise safe, legal and responsible trading.	x	x	x	
Planning, prioritisation and problem-solving skills, with the ability to launch and improve a complex venue while staying calm under pressure.		x	x	
Strong communication and stakeholder management skills, with the ability to work effectively with colleagues, suppliers, University partners, student groups and customers.	x	x		
Experience/Knowledge				
Significant experience managing a high-volume bar, pub, restaurant, venue or hospitality operation, preferably with a large young audience.	x	x		
Proven responsibility for P&L performance, including delivery of sales, gross profit, labour and cost-control targets.	x	x	x	
Strong wet-led/bar knowledge, including stock control, cellar standards, responsible alcohol retailing, licensing compliance and peak service delivery.	x	x		
Experience managing food operations and working with kitchen teams to deliver quality, speed of service, consistency and margin.	x	x		

Personal Licence holder, with the ability to act as Designated Premises Supervisor.	x	x		
Strong knowledge of licensing, health and safety, food safety, allergens, incident management, due diligence and safe operating procedures.	x	x		
Personal Attributes				
Hands-on and visible: leads from the floor, role models standards and takes ownership of the customer and colleague experience.		x	x	
Commercially curious and action-oriented: challenges performance, spots opportunities and acts quickly when targets or standards are at risk.		x	x	
Resilient and calm under pressure, particularly during launch, events, busy trading sessions and periods of change.		x		
Flexible and reliable, with the ability to work regular evenings, weekends, events and peak periods in line with the needs of the venue. With strong understanding of the local area and market.	x	x		
Values & Behaviours				
Align with the SU's values and behaviours both personally and professionally				x
Insight driven – always looking for ways to collect data from a range of sources to measure the impact of your work on the student community or to inform your work				x
Collaborative – great at working collaboratively with team members, seeks ways to ensure all voices are heard, works with colleagues to problem solve				x
Active Bystander – continually seeks to dismantle barriers, ensures all working practises are accessible, seeks to ensure all voices are heard and factored in when making decisions				x

Please note that all of the above criteria are desirable unless marked with an asterisk (), which indicates essential requirements.*

Our Recruitment Process

The way that we recruit is designed to be fair, transparent, and inclusive as well as being an enjoyable experience for everyone involved. You should expect to receive great communication and a warm, welcoming experience.

Every member of staff is recruited exactly the same way, by submitting an application form and attending an interview. We use a recruitment platform called StaffSavvy where you'll submit your application and book interviews, if successful.

Our process allows you to show us your authentic self, gives you a platform to display your skills and knowledge in relaxed and welcoming setting. We'll never put you under any necessary pressure on you, ask you trick questions or interrogate you in an interview and we'll support you all the way through our process.

Top Tip: our roles can be quite competitive, so we recommend applying as soon as possible as we often close applications early!

If you'd like further information or support regarding our recruitment process, we recommend that you read our full recruitment guide for applicants [here](#).