

**SCOTLAND'S
UNIVERSITY FOR
SPORTING
EXCELLENCE**

**UNIVERSITY of
STIRLING**



Principal and Vice-Chancellor

Candidate information pack

Saxton Bampfylde

BE THE DIFFERENCE

CONTENTS

- 3 Welcome
- 4 Six decades of success
- 6 Making a difference
- 10 Leadership and governance
- 12 Our people
- 14 Student experience
- 16 Research
- 18 Scotland's University for Sporting Excellence
- 20 Internationalisation and partnerships
- 22 Explore our campus
- 24 The City of Stirling
- 26 The role: Principal and Vice-Chancellor

WELCOME



Thank you for your interest in the role of Principal and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Stirling. This is an outstanding opportunity to lead a distinctive and ambitious university at an exciting moment in its development and at a time of significant change across Scottish and global higher education.

As we approach our 60th anniversary, the University of Stirling continues to be guided by a clear and enduring mission: to deliver education with a purpose and to undertake research that makes a positive difference to society. Since our foundation, we have been recognised for innovation in learning and teaching, including our early leadership in modular provision and interdisciplinary study. That spirit of innovation continues to shape our approach today.

Students are at the heart of everything we do. They shape the distinctive character of the University and embody our belief that ability – not background – is what matters most. With a global community of 17,500 students, we are committed to providing an outstanding educational experience that equips our graduates with the knowledge, skills and confidence to thrive, lead and make a meaningful contribution to society.

Our research is recognised nationally and internationally for its quality and impact, including through the award of two Queen’s Anniversary Prizes for Higher and Further Education. We are strengthening our capability in areas that are transforming society and the economy – in digital health, food security and environmental sustainability – and working in partnership with organisations and communities locally, nationally and globally to ensure our research informs policy and practice and delivers real-world solutions.

Over the past 15 years, the University has grown significantly in scale and reach. More than £100 million has been invested in our campus, including delivery of major capital projects and the refurbishment of learning and teaching spaces.

Our turnover has increased from £100 million to circa £175 million, and our student population has grown by 25 per cent. International students now represent around a third of our community, supported by a substantial expansion of transnational education in Asia and the Middle East.

While our outlook is international, Scotland is our home. We are proud to be an anchor institution for the Forth Valley, where more than £46 million of public investment through the Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Region Deal is strengthening our capacity to address global challenges while contributing to the regional economy.

Stirling is also an exceptional place to live and work. Located at the geographical heart of the nation’s historic past and the gateway to the Scottish Highlands, the city was recently named the happiest place to live in Scotland. The University is widely recognised for its outstanding campus environment and, as Scotland’s University for Sporting Excellence, plays a leading role in nurturing sporting talent, and supporting health and wellbeing across our community.

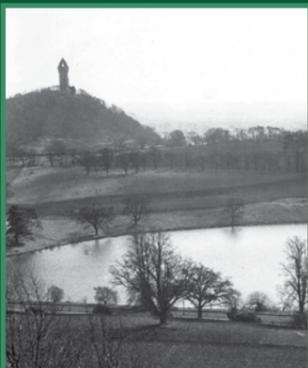
People are our most valuable asset, and Stirling is distinguished by a collegial and deeply committed staff community in which academic and professional services colleagues work in close partnership. Grounded in our institutional values of ambition, integrity and respect, this shared culture fosters a professionalism, generosity of spirit and willingness to go beyond expectations, and is central to who we are and to our success.

The University is now entering its next phase of development. We are implementing a refreshed organisational structure aligned to our ambitions for the future, while focusing on strengthening operational effectiveness and financial sustainability in an increasingly complex external environment. At the same time, the higher education sector is being reshaped by demographic change, geopolitical uncertainties, global competition, and rapid technological advances, including artificial intelligence.

Against this backdrop, the University of Stirling stands out as an exceptional institution, with a clear sense of purpose and ambition. We now seek an exceptional leader to shape our next chapter – someone who will uphold our values, build on our strong foundations and lead the University with the vision and conviction to deliver education and research with purpose for generations to come.

Hamish Grossart
Chair of University Court

SIX DECADES OF SUCCESS



1972

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II officially opens the University. The central courtyard is named Queen's Court.



1991

The University's first aquaculture laboratories open, signalling the start of Stirling's world-class research in this area. The Institute of Aquaculture is now the largest of its kind in the world.



2013

As part of the University's £40 million investment in student residences, the first of the new-style accommodation properties, Willow Court, opens to students.

1967

The University of Stirling opens, following the publication of The Robbins Report four years prior, which proposed a new university in Scotland.



1986

University of Stirling Innovation Park opens, providing an enterprise hub for businesses involved in innovative research and development.



2012

The Institute for Social Marketing and Health is awarded the prestigious Queen's Anniversary Prize in recognition of its groundbreaking research into the effects of marketing on health.



50 YEARS

2019

The Institute of Aquaculture is awarded the prestigious Queen's Anniversary Prize in recognition of its pioneering work in the food production sector to tackle global hunger.



2021

The £23 million Campus Central opens, providing collaborative learning and meeting spaces, shops, cafés, and student support services. Our swimmers achieve five medals at the Tokyo Olympics.



Shortlisted University of the Year



2017

As Stirling celebrates its 50th anniversary, the University is named in the Times Higher Education global list of top universities aged 50 or under.



2020

Stirling is crowned UK Sports University of the Year, and the £20 million Sports Centre opens, providing a world-class training ground for athletes and sports enthusiasts.



2024

Stirling celebrates the 10th anniversary of our partnership with leading pathway provider INTO, and is shortlisted at the Times Higher Education Awards for University of the Year. Our swimmers win three medals at the Paris Olympics.

2025

A new state-of-the-art indoor golf studio is unveiled on campus – enabling golf scholars to use data-driven insights to perfect their game.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Founded by Royal Charter in 1967, the University of Stirling was the first new university in Scotland for more than 400 years. Since its foundation, the University has embraced its role as an innovative, intellectual and cultural institution with a pioneering spirit and a passion for excellence.

What we do here – in the heart of Scotland – is transforming the lives of people locally and globally. We are enriching lives through world-class learning and teaching, delivering positive change through our impactful, mission-focused, applied research, and contributing to economic growth and regeneration across our region.

“Stirling is a place where ability – not background – is valued.”

Our shared vision

Our vision is to make a positive impact on people’s lives and be a force for good in the world. Three key pillars underpin the delivery of our vision:

PEOPLE:

Our community supports one another to deliver excellence in all we do.

PLACE:

From our roots in Stirling, we are making an impact regionally, nationally and globally.

PURPOSE:

We are driven by our ambition to enhance lives and be a force for good in the world.

Our mission

Our mission is to strive for excellence in all we do, delivering world-leading teaching and research, supporting students to discover new knowledge and develop their skills, and making a difference to our region and the wider world.

Our values

To deliver our mission, we will be guided by our institutional values:

AMBITION

for our people, our institution, our city, region and the global community to be the best they can be.

INTEGRITY

in how we behave – being recognised as open, honest and trustworthy.

RESPECT

and care for each other, harnessing inclusivity to enrich what we do and how we do it.

Strategic Plan 2030

To find out more about our Strategic Plan 2030, please visit: stir.ac.uk/strategic-plan

Annual Report and Financial Statements

Our Annual Report and Financial Statements for 2024-2025 can be viewed at: stir.ac.uk/finstatement25

The National Wallace Monument, Stirling



Top 100

in the world for
**Zero Hunger,
Reduced
Inequalities,
Life Below Water
and Life on Land**
THE Impact Rankings 2025



One of five
Scottish
universities with
**Athena Swan
Silver award for
advancing gender
equality**



International
accreditation for
**excellence in
business
education**

(Achieved by only 6% of
global business schools)



1st in the UK

top 10 in the world for
campus environment
International Student Barometer 2024



**Awards
2024**

Shortlisted

Times Higher Education
**University of
the Year 2024**



1st in the UK, for sports facilities

International Student Barometer 2024



THE QUEEN'S
ANNIVERSARY PRIZES
FOR HIGHER AND FURTHER EDUCATION

2 Queen's Anniversary Prizes

for Further and
Higher Education



**£46m
City Region Deal
investment**



17,500
students

1,500
staff

115,000+
alumni

140+
nationalities
represented
on campus



**Campus
investment**

£20m
Sports
Centre

£23m
Campus
Central



LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

University Court

The University of Stirling was established in 1967 by Royal Charter. In accordance with the Charter, University Court is the governing body of the University, with overall responsibility for the management of its resources, ongoing strategic direction and the approval of major developments. It also receives regular reports from Executive Officers on the University's day-to-day operation.

Court has a Statement of Primary Responsibilities which sets out its responsibilities in relation to: mission, vision and strategy; students and staff; financial systems and control environment; corporate governance; and senior management.

The Chair of Court is responsible for the leadership and effectiveness of Court and ensures that the University is well connected with its stakeholders, including its staff and students.

Academic Council

Academic Council is responsible for the academic work of the University across teaching and research, and for the regulation and management of the education, discipline and welfare of students at the University. While Court has the final responsibility for governance, it will normally only act on the recommendation of Academic Council when considering academic matters. Academic Council is chaired by the Principal and Vice-Chancellor.

Committee structure

University Court and Academic Council are supported by a number of committees, from which they receive recommendations about all aspects of University business. Committees meet regularly throughout the year, considering a wide range of issues.

Committees reporting into University Court:

- Joint Policy, Planning and Resources Committee
- Audit Committee
- Academic Promotions Committee
- Governance and Nominations Committee
- University Research Ethics Committee
- Combined Joint Negotiating and Consultation Committee
- Remunerations Committee

Committees reporting into Academic Council:

- Joint Policy, Planning and Resources Committee
- Education Committee
- Research Committee
- Student Experience Committee
- Honorary Degrees Committee





University Strategy and Policy Group

The University Strategy and Policy Group, chaired by the Principal and Vice-Chancellor, is responsible for delivering the strategic direction, effective leadership and management of the University.

Membership comprises:

- Principal and Vice-Chancellor
- Chief Operating Officer and University Secretary
- Senior Deputy Principal (Internationalisation)
- Deputy Principal (Student Experience)
- Deputy Principal (Education)
- Deputy Principal (Research) and Executive Dean, Faculty of Natural Sciences
- Deputy Principal (Academic) and Executive Dean, Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences
- Deputy Principal (Entrepreneurship) and Executive Dean, Stirling Business School
- Deputy Principal (Student Experience) and Executive Dean, Faculty of Health, Sport and Society
- Deputy Secretary and Executive Director of Student Academic and Corporate Services
- Executive Director of Finance
- Executive Director of Communications, Marketing and Recruitment
- Executive Director of Human Resources and Organisation Development

Academic structure

The University is transitioning to a new academic structure, to support our ambitions for the future. The structure comprises three faculties and University of Stirling Business School, with each led by a Deputy Principal and Executive Dean, reporting to the Principal and Vice-Chancellor:

- Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences
- Faculty of Health, Sport and Society
- Faculty of Natural Sciences
- University of Stirling Business School

Professional services

The University has eight professional service functions, with each led by an Executive Director, reporting to the Chief Operating Officer and University Secretary:

- Communications, Marketing and Recruitment
- Estates and Commercial Services
- Finance
- Human Resources and Organisation Development
- Information Services
- Research, Innovation and Business Engagement
- Sport
- Student, Academic and Corporate Services

OUR PEOPLE

The core strength of the University of Stirling is our people. They are at the heart of everything we do: from driving cutting-edge research, educating our students and enhancing the student experience, to developing our international partnerships, engaging our community and maintaining our estate.

In a global marketplace, we continue to be an employer of choice. We are guided by our People Strategy, which ensures our culture remains aligned to our institutional values of ambition, integrity and respect, and empowers our people to make a meaningful impact and achieve their ambitions.





We are committed to creating the conditions where our teams and individual staff members can thrive. We listen to our people and use their feedback to enhance the employee experience, while empowering our leaders to drive change throughout the organisation.

We invest in our people's health and wellbeing, continue to evolve our innovative approach to progressive working practices, and support our staff in developing their skills to adapt to new ways of working. Our Agile Working Framework enables dynamic, progressive working practices that support agility, inclusion, growth, and high performance.

We strongly value our staff and recognise their outstanding achievements and exceptional contributions through our Recognition Award Scheme.

Our sector-leading approach to academic promotions, which has supported a rise in female academic leaders and the narrowing of the gender pay gap, has been recognised with an award from Universities Human Resources. The University holds an institutional Athena Swan Silver award, recognising our commitment to advancing gender equality across the University.

STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Our student community is a vibrant international body of some 17,500 undergraduates and postgraduates, with more than 140 nationalities represented on campus. We are recognised by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education for our approach to enhancing academic standards and the student experience, and prioritise experiential learning in our mission to produce ambitious, career-ready graduates.



We support our students to learn, build resilience and develop the life skills, experience and mindset that will help them make a difference to the communities in which they live and work. We are responding to the needs of employers and our market-led curriculum sees our students learn from world-leading experts and benefit from our strong links to industry.

Our students enjoy an immersive global experience – sharing cultures, traditions and experiences with their peers – and can expand their horizons through life-changing study abroad opportunities.

We focus on employability, offering work-based learning opportunities, and encouraging students to see ongoing skills development as a route to successful careers. Highly valued by employers, a Stirling degree is a passport to a rewarding and successful career, with our global family of 115,000 alumni making a positive impact across the world.

Ninety-three per cent of our graduates are in work or further study 15 months after graduating (Graduate Outcomes Survey 2022-23), and we are top 20 in the UK for postgraduate teaching (Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey 2022).

We offer an extensive range of support services to help our students fulfil their potential and make the most of their time studying with us – including support around learning, mental health and wellbeing, money, and accessibility and inclusion.

At Stirling, we value ability – not background – and are committed to increasing access to education for all. Through our approach to widening participation, access to degree studies programmes and scholarships for those facing barriers to education, we support students to reach their full potential.

The University is ranked 1st in the UK and 2nd in the world for both social facilities and social activities (International Student Barometer 2024). Away from their studies, our students benefit from all our stunning 330-acre campus has to offer – including a state-of-the-art Sports Centre, a theatre and cinema, and a Students' Union comprising more than 120 clubs and societies.

Our Be Connected programme of events brings together students and staff to allow them to explore their interests, focus on their wellbeing, connect with others and have fun. Just a short distance away is Stirling city centre, which offers entertainment, shops and places to eat and drink, while Scotland's biggest cities, Edinburgh and Glasgow, are easily accessible by bus or train.



RESEARCH

Our researchers are making a difference to the world. Their work is improving the lives of people with dementia, feeding communities through sustainable aquaculture research and finding creative ways to inspire better health and wellbeing. Our challenge-led research is conducted to the highest standards of quality and integrity, enabling us to support and improve lives across the world.

The University is ranked 4th in Scotland and 43rd in the UK for research impact, with 87% of our research having an outstanding or very considerable impact on society – and more than 80% rated either world leading or internationally excellent (Research Excellence Framework 2021).

We are ranked among the top 200 institutions in the world for our contribution to meeting the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (Times Higher Education Impact Rankings 2025). Notably, we rank in the top 100 for SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), SDG 14 (Life Below Water) and SDG 15 (Life On Land).

We have twice been recognised with a Queen's Anniversary Prize – the first for our Institute for Social Marketing and Health (2014) and the second for our Institute of Aquaculture (2019).

The University is a key partner in the £214 million Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Region Deal, which provides a £46 million investment package in major University-led projects including the National Aquaculture Technology and Innovation Hub and Scotland's International Environment Centre.

Research culture

Impact is at the heart of our research culture. Our academics collaborate to meet societal needs, enhancing the quality of spaces, places and lives through interdisciplinary research.

We promote a healthy research culture across the University, delivering a wide range of engagement opportunities designed to ensure our staff are heard and their efforts recognised. Our institutional values of ambition, integrity and respect are embedded in our research culture, enabling staff to achieve their full potential. We expect staff to act as role models and demonstrate fair, collaborative and supportive behaviour.



Research and Innovation Strategy 2024-2030

Our Research and Innovation Strategy 2024–2030 underlines our reputation as a research intensive university, and sets out our commitment to continuing to produce world-leading research and innovation with national and global impact.

Our research community will continue to adopt a mission-orientated, interdisciplinary approach in responding to global challenges, including the climate, biodiversity and health emergencies.

By working in partnership with communities, policymakers, governing bodies, business and industry, we will continue to make a significant contribution to societal, environmental and economic development, and to meeting the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Research missions

We take an interdisciplinary approach to addressing global challenges and meeting the needs of society through three interconnected missions:

Spaces: adapting to a changing world

From climate resilience and biodiversity protection to digital transformation and cultural continuity, we work across disciplines to develop solutions that safeguard both heritage and future.

Places: building sustainable and resilient communities

Our researchers work alongside partners to strengthen cohesion, preserve culture and build resilience in the face of change.

Lives: enhancing health and wellbeing for all

Our research recognises the role of active lifestyles and sport, alongside healthcare, culture and education, in fostering healthier, more connected lives.

SCOTLAND'S UNIVERSITY FOR SPORTING EXCELLENCE

**SCOTLAND'S
UNIVERSITY FOR
SPORTING
EXCELLENCE**

The University of Stirling is Scotland's University for Sporting Excellence – a prestigious designation from the Scottish Government which recognises our unrivalled contribution to sports performance, recreational sport, research and education.

Through the powerful and inspirational combination of sport, research and education, we are delivering medals on the world stage, improving the health and wellbeing of the nation, and producing the next generation of leaders within sport.

Our world-class sports facilities – which include a 50-metre pool, state-of-the-art strength and conditioning suites, indoor tennis courts and an immersive indoor golf simulator – provide students, staff and the wider community with the perfect environment to keep healthy, active and well.



Olympic champions Jack McMillan and Duncan Scott won gold at the World Aquatics Championships 2025.



Performance sport

Home to some of the UK's top athletes, the University has a distinguished reputation for sport on the international stage. Our athletes have won 13 medals at Olympic and Paralympic Games since 2012, and many more at Commonwealth Games, World and European Championships.

Stirling is at the heart of Scottish sport – with the National Swimming Academy, National Triathlon Centre and National Tennis Centre all based on campus, as well as the sportscotland institute of sport and Commonwealth Games Council for Scotland. These partnerships strengthen our leadership in performance sport, present new opportunities for our researchers, and provide our students and staff with access to industry experts, networking opportunities and practical experiences.

Our International Sports Scholarship Programme – one of the largest high-performance programmes in the UK – supports students competing in swimming, triathlon, tennis, golf, football, rugby and curling. Individual scholarships cover all Olympic, Paralympic and Commonwealth Games sports – with our students representing their nations in a wide range of sports, including: athletics, judo, hockey and wheelchair basketball.

We also administer Scotland's national scholarship programme Winning Students 100. Available to those enrolled at higher or further education institutions in Scotland, the programme supports students to balance their studies with participating in high-performance sport.

Health and wellbeing

We are committed to enhancing the health and wellbeing of our community and wider society. From our iconic Sports Centre, we promote the benefits of physical activity to our community – providing access to our world-class facilities, offering an extensive fitness class timetable, and hosting introductory exercise sessions and wellness checkups.

Outdoors, our extensive parkland space provides the perfect backdrop for staying active – including at our weekly parkrun, staff and student walks, and the annual Dumyat Hill Race.

Our Be Connected student and staff engagement programme brings together our community to explore shared interests, focus on wellbeing and connect with others. It includes everything from celebrations of key cultural events and relaxed gatherings to creative craft sessions and lively evenings of games and activities. Meanwhile, the Students' Union is a thriving community, with more than 120 societies and clubs.

Education and research

The University's sports courses are in high demand – offering students the opportunity to develop their skills, knowledge and experience across a range of subject areas. Our alumni include those who have gone on to secure high-profile roles at the top of sport, including at English Premier League football clubs and sports governing bodies.

The Centre for Research and Innovation in Sport drives world-class, multidisciplinary research and innovation – working in partnership to deliver tangible benefits for athletes, coaches, organisations and communities globally.

INTERNATIONALISATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

We are an international university and are proud of our diverse population, with 140 nationalities on our Stirling campus. Through our transnational education partnerships, we are taking a Stirling education to the world. Our research networks are helping us deliver positive change and, as we approach our 60th anniversary, we continue to deepen connections with our 115,000-strong alumni family.

In our mission to deliver positive change in our region and the wider world, we have developed strong and successful partnerships in the UK and internationally. Across our education, research and community partnerships, our students and staff are provided with opportunities to learn, collaborate and innovate with institutions and organisations which share our vision and values.

Excellence across the globe

We develop and manage a range of collaborative teaching, education and recruitment partnerships covering: joint and double degrees, split-site degrees, transnational education programmes, and articulations.

As the UK higher education sector continues to navigate a challenging external environment, and aligned with the UK Government's International Education Strategy 2026, we are not only focused on bringing students to Stirling, but also on taking Stirling to the world through our transnational education (TNE) partnerships.

We work with a range of partners across Asia, the Middle East and Europe to offer undergraduate and postgraduate degrees. One of our longest standing partnerships, with the Singapore Institute of Management, saw a record number of students graduate in 2025.

Last year also saw the first students graduate from our partnership with Chengdu University in China. More than 1,000 students are currently enrolled on our joint programmes, from which they graduate

with a degree from each institution. Other partnerships in Asia include: University of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Hebei Normal University in China, and the British University Vietnam.

The University established a new partnership with Planet One International Education in the Emirate of Ras al Khaimah in 2018. Demand to study through the partnership continues to grow, with more than 700 students on the campus today.

As an international university, we are proud to be part of strong networks and programmes which enable our staff and students to remain globally connected. These include the Turing Scheme, which enables students to study abroad; the HERMES network, which fosters academic collaboration through student and staff mobility and interdisciplinary workshops; and the Young European Research University Network, which strengthens cooperation across research and education.



In 2025, the first students graduated from our partnership with Chengdu University, China.

International Study Centre

In partnership with global education leader INTO, the University’s International Study Centre provides pathway programmes for international students planning to study at the University of Stirling. The Centre - located on the University campus - delivers dynamic programmes to support our students’ needs, offering progression to a wide range of undergraduate and postgraduate degrees.

Local partnerships

The University is an anchor institution in our region and a key partner in the Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Region Deal. The Deal will transform the region’s capacity to respond to global challenges while delivering jobs, growth and prosperity.

We are also a central partner in the Forth Valley University College NHS Partnership. Developed to directly respond to the needs of local people, the Partnership between the University, Forth Valley College and NHS Forth Valley will deliver transformational change for health and social care across the region. It focuses on four priority areas – research, innovation, learning and careers – with the ambition of improving patient care and treatment in the years ahead.



University of Stirling International Study Centre

EXPLORE OUR CAMPUS

Set in the shadow of the Ochil Hills, the University of Stirling is located on a stunning 330-acre parkland campus, which includes its own 18th century castle and loch.

Ranked first in the UK and top 10 in the world for its environment (International Student Barometer 2024), the campus offers staff and students everything they need in one location – including student accommodation, world-class sports facilities, a hotel, a medical centre and pharmacy, cinema and theatre, and a variety of shops, restaurants and cafes.

Campus Central – located at the heart of the University – is the ideal place for our community to socialise, dine and study. It is also home to our Student Services Hub, Macrobert Arts Centre, the library and our campus supermarket, as well as our vibrant Students' Union. Campus Central, which overlooks the landscaped Queen's Court, is linked to our Sports Centre by a tree-lined boulevard, ideal for scenic walks by the loch.

Our commercial activities on campus play a key role in driving the University's income growth strategy, enabling reinvestment into our people, facilities and services.

Major income streams include our commercialised research and innovation activity, student accommodation and sports operations, commercial tenants, and our thriving events, conferencing and catering services, delivered through Stirling Venues.

Campus Central

The Sports Centre, which has undergone a £20 million transformation in recent years, offers staff, students and the wider community the perfect place to stay healthy, active and well. In 2025, we enhanced our facilities with a state-of-the-art golf studio, located next to our Golf Pavilion.

We have more than 2,800 rooms in our student accommodation, located both on and off campus. Last year, the £13.75 million refurbishment of our HH Donnelly House and Muirhead House accommodation delivered improved energy efficiency. The projects were part of the University's wider drive to achieve net zero by 2040.

The recently completed, multi-million-pound National Aquaculture Technology and Innovation Hub (NATIH) further underlines the University's position at the forefront of one of the world's fastest growing industries. Our integrated aquaculture estate includes our NATIH Marine facility at Machrihanish, Kintyre, and NATIH Freshwater at Buckieburn, Stirlingshire.

As well as being a research and teaching space, our Category A-listed Pathfoot Building is home to University Collections, comprising Scottish contemporary art and museum objects. It regularly hosts exhibitions, events and lectures for staff, students and the general public.



Airthrey Castle



Sports Centre

THE CITY OF STIRLING

Located in the heart of Scotland and known as the ‘Gateway to the Highlands’, Stirling is the perfect place to work. Set against the backdrop of the Ochil Hills, it combines the charm of a historic city with the buzz of a young community, and benefits from its proximity to the country’s two largest cities, Edinburgh and Glasgow.

Stirling has been voted the happiest place to live in Scotland and top 10 in the UK (Rightmove Happy at Home Index 2025), the best place to visit in the UK (Time Out 2026), the best visitor destination in Scotland (Lonely Planet), the safest city in Scotland and the UK (Complete University Guide 2024), and Scotland’s best city for culture (LNER).

The city has a friendly atmosphere and strong sense of community, and offers a rich variety of shops, bars, restaurants and entertainment.

Declared a Royal Burgh in 1124, Stirling is steeped in history. It was once a key strategic stronghold and royal residence, including for Mary, Queen of Scots, and hosted pivotal Wars of Independence battles, at Stirling Bridge in 1297 and Bannockburn in 1314.

The region’s fascinating history can be explored at local landmarks including Stirling Castle, the National Wallace Monument and the Battle of Bannockburn Visitor Centre.

Stirling and the wider Forth Valley is also benefitting from the Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Region Deal, which offers an unprecedented opportunity for businesses, researchers and innovators to work strategically to unlock productivity and inclusive, sustainable growth for the region.

The University neighbours the Victorian spa town of Bridge of Allan, one of Scotland’s most desirable places to live, offering a mix of independent shops, restaurants and bars, and scenic walks.



Bridge of Allan is perfect for scenic walks, while Stirling has a host of attractions and cafés.



Stirling city centre.

**Happiest place
to live in Scotland
and top 10 in the UK**

Rightmove Happy at Home Index 2025

**Safest city
in Scotland and the UK**

Complete University Guide 2024

**Best visitor
destination
in Scotland**

Lonely Planet

PRINCIPAL AND VICE-CHANCELLOR

Location: University of Stirling, Stirling, Scotland

Reports To: Chair of University Court

Job Summary:

The Principal and Vice-Chancellor is the Chief Executive and academic leader of the University, responsible for shaping and delivering a compelling strategic vision that reflects the institution's values, heritage, and ambition. As the University's principal ambassador, the postholder will provide inspirational leadership and clear strategic direction, ensuring a sustained focus on excellence in teaching, research, and student experience.

The role requires a dynamic and forward-thinking leader who will foster a culture of innovation and excellence, and champion the University's role as a driver of regional, national, and global impact through partnership, influence and collaboration.

In a rapidly evolving higher education landscape, the Principal and Vice-Chancellor will position the University for long-term success by ensuring institutional resilience, sustainability and strategic growth.

Key responsibilities:

Strategic leadership and vision

- Provide strategic leadership for the University, shaping and delivering its long-term strategies, including the delivery of the University Strategic Plan 2030, in alignment with the mission and values of the institution.
- Work in close partnership with the Governing Body (University Court) to ensure effective governance, regulatory compliance, and the achievement of strategic outcomes. Position the University for long-term success by championing innovation, strategic transformation and continuous improvement across academic and professional services.
- Lead and deliver transformational change across the University, ensuring the University remains agile, resilient and well positioned to respond to an evolving sector, societal and technological developments.

Academic excellence

- Champion an ambitious academic agenda that advances research excellence, innovative teaching, and impactful knowledge exchange and enterprise.
- Ensure an outstanding and inclusive student experience, underpinned by meaningful student engagement and supportive, high-quality learning environments.
- Drive academic standards, professional development, enhancing the University's standing and reputation across national and international contexts.

Executive leadership and organisational culture

- Lead, support and develop a high-performing Executive Team (University Strategy and Policy Group), modelling and embedding the institution's values of ambition, integrity and respect to foster excellence, transparency and collaboration.
- Create an inclusive, respectful and high performing culture in which students and staff are empowered to thrive and contribute to the University's success.

Financial and operational stewardship

- Ensure the long-term financial sustainability of the University, overseeing robust financial planning, resource management and risk governance.
- Secure and steward the University's resources to enable strategic investments in people, infrastructure, digital capability and innovation.

External engagement and advocacy

- Serve as the principal ambassador and advocate of the University, building influential relationships with government, industry, and civic partners.
- Enhance the University's profile, impact and partnerships locally, nationally, and internationally.
- Represent the University on national and international forums, contributing to sector leadership and higher education policy development.

Candidate criteria:

- Significant senior, academic leadership experience within the higher education sector including experience of leading transformational change programmes.
- Evidenced success in strategic planning, financial management, and institutional transformation and growth.
- An inclusive leadership style with the ability to unite diverse stakeholders behind a shared vision.
- Effective communication, interpersonal, and diplomatic skills with the ability to influence and advocate effectively.
- A passionate commitment to the mission of higher education, research, and civic engagement.
- Strong national and/or international profile within academia, policy, or industry.
- A track record of leading within the UK higher education policy landscape, including regulatory and funding frameworks.
- Experience in leading or contributing to successful partnerships with public, private, or third-sector organisations.
- A demonstrated ability to lead and inspire successful fundraising and income-generation activities, cultivating major philanthropic, industry, and stakeholder partnerships to advance institutional mission and growth.



HOW TO APPLY

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to the University of Stirling on this appointment.

Candidates should apply for this role through the Saxton Bampfylde website at roles.saxbam.com using code IAMXL.

Click on the 'apply' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter, and complete the online equal opportunities monitoring* form.

The closing date for applications is noon on Wednesday, 22 April, 2026.

*The equal opportunities monitoring online form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. Please complete as part of the application process.

Due diligence

Due diligence will be carried out as part of the application process, which may include searches carried out via internet search engines and any public social media accounts.

Additional information

The University of Stirling recognises that a diverse workforce benefits and enriches the work, learning and research experiences of the entire campus and greater community. We are committed to removing barriers and welcome applications from those who would contribute to the further diversification of our staff and ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion is woven into the substance of the role. We strongly encourage applications from people from diverse backgrounds including gender, identity, race, age, class, and ethnicity.

GDPR personal data notice

According to GDPR guidelines, we are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent. You will be asked to complete a consent form when you apply and please do not include any Sensitive Personal Data within your CV (although this can be included in your cover letter if you wish to do so), remembering also not to include contact details for referees without their prior agreement.





University of Stirling
Airthrey Road
Stirling
FK9 4LA

stir.ac.uk

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