



Isle of Man
Public Service
Careers



Chief Officer

Department of Education,
Sport and Culture

Inspiring, empowering and **providing** learning, sporting and cultural opportunities that support all children, young people and adults.

Salary up to £152,000 | Pension | Relocation Package





Introduction

As Chief Officer, you will lead one of the Isle of Man Government's most visible and influential Departments, shaping the strategic direction of education, sport and culture across the Island and ensuring it delivers effectively for its communities.

Reporting directly to the Chief Executive, you will provide clear, visible and values-led leadership, exercising sound judgement and driving meaningful progress across a complex public service portfolio. You will be accountable for departmental strategy and performance, ensuring the delivery of high-quality public services aligned with wider Government ambitions.

You will act as a trusted adviser to the Minister and Department Members, providing clear advice, assurance and oversight while strengthening performance standards and reporting. You will represent the Island's education, sport and culture interests locally, nationally and internationally, acting as the senior official voice for the Island. As a member of the Chief Officer Group, you will help shape the future direction of the public service and champion innovation across government.

Leading over 2,000 staff and managing an annual budget in excess of £150m, you will oversee one of Government's largest and most complex portfolios, including 32 primary schools, 5 secondary schools, University College Isle of Man, and the Island's sport, leisure and cultural services. You will also be accountable for ensuring services are sustainable, high-performing and responsive to Government priorities across the whole department.

Our recruitment partners, Tile Hill, are on hand to answer any questions you may have about this role, please get in touch with Anita Denton – 07725 554802 / anita.denton@tile-hill.co.uk or Amin Aziz – 07436 146281 / amin.aziz@tile-hill.co.uk. For further information please visit: <https://www.tile-hill.co.uk/jobs>.



The Slieu Whallian, sustainability award winning Department Headquarters



Villa Marina, the Isle of Man's premier entertainment venue



Mark Cavendish Raceway, opened in 2025 at the National Sports Centre



About the role

The role combines departmental leadership, strategic policy advice, system improvement, financial stewardship and corporate leadership. The successful candidate will balance long term strategic thinking with a strong focus on delivery, ensuring that the Department is well positioned to respond to changing needs and future challenges.

Leadership, Strategic Direction and Priorities

- Set the strategic direction for the Department, leading the development and delivery of departmental strategies, business plans and service priorities across education, sport and culture.
- Provide trusted, impartial and evidence informed policy advice to the Minister and Department Members, ensuring that decisions are supported by clear analysis, professional expertise and a sound understanding of their implications.
- Work with the Minister and Members to translate political priorities into clear strategic direction, effective delivery and measurable outcomes.
- Lead and develop the Department's Senior Leadership Team, fostering a culture of collaboration, accountability and continuous improvement.
- Build strong and constructive relationships with head teachers, staff, unions, partners and other key stakeholders across the Island.



Performance Management and Improvement

- Drive effective delivery of departmental programmes and services in alignment with departmental strategy and agreed delivery priorities.
- Develop and enhance performance standards, quality assurance, reporting and improvement mechanisms.
- Ensure effective staff learning, development, performance management and succession planning.

Resource Management

- Provide strong financial leadership, overseeing strategic financial planning and budget management while safeguarding assets and ensuring financial integrity.
- Lead the effective planning and delivery of the Department's capital programme.
- Ensure that services are financially sustainable, high performing and responsive to changing needs and Government priorities.

Corporate Contribution and Representation

- Make an active contribution to the Chief Officer Group and the wider strategic leadership of the Isle of Man Public Service.
- Provide senior representation for the Island's education, sport and culture interests locally, nationally and internationally, building effective relationships.
- Appear before Select and Standing Committees of the Legislature when required and support the Minister in public-facing and off-Island duties.



Department Overview

The Department has established a strong foundation for continued improvement, with significant progress already made across schools and services. The incoming Chief Officer will build on this platform, sustaining momentum while leading the next phase of development and improvement.

Key foundations include:

- A bespoke Isle of Man quality assurance and validation process, which validates school self improvement plans, identifies opportunities for growth and promotes a supportive coaching approach to improvement.
- Strong leadership development programmes, strengthening system leadership capability, supporting succession planning and building professional confidence across schools and services.
- A new staff performance framework, providing greater clarity around expectations, accountability, professional development and consistency.
- A working time agreement for teaching staff, establishing clearer expectations and providing a stronger foundation for constructive professional dialogue.

The next phase will require an executive leader who can build on this progress, strengthen evidence informed approaches to improvement, enable schools and services to continue developing, and provide confident leadership across a complex stakeholder environment. The Chief Officer will work collaboratively with elected Members, unions, partners, schools, services and communities to translate strategic priorities into sustained improvement and positive outcomes.



Strategic Priorities

The successful candidate will inherit a Department with a clear improvement platform and significant opportunities and challenges ahead. The priority will be to sustain the progress already made while using the scale and flexibility of the Isle of Man to develop practical, innovative and sustainable approaches for the future.

Budget sustainability

Lead the Department through a period of significant financial and demographic change and increasing demand for SEND provision. Maintain a clear focus on outcomes, value for money, long term sustainability of services and public confidence.

Inclusion, SEND and complex medical needs

Provide strategic leadership for the continued development of inclusive education and the management of complex medical needs. Ensure that policy, practice, resources and partnership arrangements are aligned, sustainable and centred on the needs and outcomes of children and young people.

Continuous service improvement

Embed a culture of continuous improvement across education, UCM, sport, recreation, youth and culture. Use evidence, assurance, performance insight and leadership development to strengthen practice, improve outcomes and ensure services continue to respond effectively to changing needs.

Wider public service reform

Make a strong contribution to wider Isle of Man Government reform as a member of the Chief Officer Group. Bring an education, sport and culture perspective to whole Government strategy, corporate reform and cross departmental priorities, contributing actively to effective and joined up public service delivery.



A special place to live and work

The Isle of Man occupies a central position in the Irish Sea and the British Isles - between England and Ireland and is accessible by sea and by air, with over 200 weekly flights off Island.

We are blessed with an extensive coastline, stunning natural landscapes and unspoilt beaches and it is a popular holiday destination. Measuring 33 miles long and 13 miles wide, with a population of approximately 85,000 people, the Island has a diverse landscape, including glens, rolling hills and beaches.

The Isle of Man is a self-governing Crown Dependency, but has always had and continues to have very strong ties to the UK. The Island offers an excellent education and an NHS style free healthcare system.

The Island has a strong national Manx identity and culture that is community spirited and celebrated with cultural, food and drink and sporting festivals throughout the year including the world renowned TT races and the Manx Telecom Parish Walk.

Those living in the Island benefit from an unbeatable quality of life and great lifestyle opportunities. We are one of the safest places to live in Europe and are the only Island nation in the world to be awarded UNESCO Biosphere status, making it a truly unique location to live and work.

All the information you could need on your new life in the Isle of Man is available for you at www.locate.im.

LOCATE
ISLE OF MAN



Person Specification

Appendix 1

Chief Officer | Department of Education, Sport and Culture

Attribute	Essential or Desirable	Method of Assessment
Credibility		
Relevant degree or professional/management qualification, or equivalent senior leadership experience	Essential	CV
Significant experience as an excellent, visible and inspirational senior leader in a complex organisation	Essential	CV/Assessment
Significant experience operating strategically at an executive level	Essential	CV/Assessment
Credibility to lead a national education, sport and culture portfolio, including the ability to work effectively with schools, unions, Ministers, senior officials and stakeholders	Essential	CV/Assessment
Experience of setting and delivering the strategic direction for a large and complex organisation	Essential	CV/Assessment
Experience in leading teams and managing people from a range of different disciplines across multiple sites	Essential	CV/Assessment
Experience of robust financial planning, expenditure management and budget sustainability	Essential	CV/Assessment
Experience implementing continuous improvement, performance standards, measures and monitoring to improve organisational performance	Essential	CV/Assessment
Direct senior leadership experience within education, a MAT, school system, local authority education service or comparable public-service setting	Essential	CV/Assessment
Lead in a manner that supports a positive culture with clear values and beliefs	Essential	CV/Assessment
Experience in building and maintaining effective public and media relationships	Essential	CV/Assessment
Experience working with and consulting a range of stakeholders in developing policy and strategy	Essential	CV

Capability		
Exceptional communication and interpersonal skills, including influencing, negotiating, presenting, listening, coaching and facilitation.	Essential	Assessment
Ability to motivate, challenge and engage individuals and teams while addressing behaviours and culture that hinder improvement	Essential	Assessment
Understand the public sector, particularly the education landscape	Desirable	CV/Assessment
Analytical, critical thinking and pragmatic approach to complex financial, operational and political situations	Essential	CV/Assessment
Able to make difficult and unpopular decisions when needed	Essential	CV/Assessment
Experience of managing a political interface and providing balanced advice to elected Members or equivalent governance bodies	Essential	CV/Assessment
Future-focused leader who encourages innovation, supports change and provides clear advice on organisational priorities	Essential	Assessment
Able to build effective and collaborative working relationships/ partnerships	Essential	Assessment
Character		
Dynamic, open, participative and supportive leadership style	Essential	Assessment
Demonstrate the ability to work calmly and effectively under pressure	Essential	Assessment
Demonstrates self-motivation, persistence, resilience and drive	Essential	Assessment
Trusts and is trusted – gains trust and respect, communicates in a truthful, straightforward way	Essential	Assessment
Other Requirements		
Satisfactory security clearance check	Essential	Pre employment checks
Isle of Man Worker	Desirable	Application