



Mardyke Arena

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE CORK

Commercial Finance Manager

About Mardyke Arena UCC

Mardyke Arena UCC is a leading multi-sport and fitness facility at the heart of University College Cork. The Arena delivers a diverse range of services across fitness, sport, high performance, and community programmes, operating as a dynamic student led and commercially focused organisation within the UCC group.

The Opportunity

We are seeking a commercially focused and ambitious Commercial & Finance Manager to join our senior leadership team.

This is a high-impact leadership role that goes beyond traditional finance. While you will lead the finance function and a small team, your primary focus will be on partnering with managers across the business to drive performance, improve decision-making, and support the delivery of commercial objectives.

Reporting to the CEO, you will play a central role in shaping how the business is managed, ensuring that financial insight directly informs operational decisions across all profit centres.

You will also contribute to the long-term financial sustainability of the organisation through strategic planning, commercial analysis, governance oversight, and operational support.

What Makes This Role Different

- You will not be sitting behind reports — you will be working alongside managers across the organisation
- You will influence how budgets are managed, not just track them
- You will help turn financial data into real operational and commercial decisions
- You will operate as a key partner to the CEO and leadership team, with visibility at Board level
- You will support managers in understanding the financial and people-related impact of operational decisions

- You will lead a team
- You will play an active role in shaping financial sustainability, commercial performance, and operational efficiency across the organisation

Key Responsibilities

Business Partnering & Commercial Performance

- Act as a trusted advisor to operational managers across all areas of the business
- Support and challenge budget holders to improve financial performance
- Analyse revenue, costs, and activity to identify opportunities for improvement
- Provide clear, actionable insights that influence day-to-day and strategic decisions
- Drive a culture of financial accountability and ownership across the organisation
- Support managers in workforce planning, staffing cost management, and operational resource decisions across profit centres
- Analyse membership, programme, and commercial revenue performance to support growth and yield optimisation
- Support operational managers in evaluating programme profitability and commercial viability

Financial Planning, Strategy & Insight

- Lead budgeting, forecasting, and financial planning processes across all profit centres
- Develop meaningful performance metrics and KPIs that support decision-making
- Translate financial data into practical recommendations for the leadership team
- Support pricing, investment, and commercial decision-making
- Monitor payroll and staffing-related costs to support operational and financial sustainability
- Support development of long-term financial strategy and sustainability planning
- Contribute to capital planning, investment appraisal, and business case development
- Support scenario planning and strategic modelling for future growth initiatives

Finance Function Leadership

- Lead and develop a small finance team (2 staff)
- Ensure high-quality financial reporting, controls, and compliance
- Deliver monthly management accounts with clear commentary and insight
- Oversee audit, statutory reporting, and financial governance compliance requirements
- Manage payroll processes and ensure accurate and timely payroll administration
- Ensure compliance with payroll-related statutory obligations, including PAYE, PRSI, pension, and reporting requirements
- Drive continuous improvement in financial systems, reporting tools, and data quality
- Support development of accessible performance dashboards for operational managers

Governance, Risk & Stakeholder Engagement

- Act as the primary finance liaison with University College Cork
- Support Board and UCC Committee reporting with clear, strategic financial insight
- Ensure alignment with UCC governance and financial policies
- Work closely with the CEO and management team on workforce-related financial planning and resource management
- Maintain a practical working knowledge of employment legislation and HR-related compliance requirements relevant to payroll, workforce planning, and financial operations
- Support procurement and contract evaluation processes to ensure value for money and financial compliance
- Support organisational risk management processes from a financial and operational perspective
- Support the organisation in maintaining appropriate financial and governance controls relating to staffing and employment practices

🔗 About You

You are a commercially minded finance professional who is as comfortable working with people as you are with numbers.

You will bring:

- A professional accounting qualification (ACA, ACCA, CIMA or equivalent)
- Strong experience in a finance role with exposure to budgeting, reporting, payroll management, and operational finance
- Proven ability to work with and influence non-finance managers
- Commercial awareness and the ability to link financial data to business performance
- Experience managing payroll and an understanding of payroll compliance obligations
- Practical knowledge of employment legislation and HR-related compliance requirements relevant to finance operations
- Demonstrated ability to influence operational decision-making through financial insight
- Strong interpersonal and stakeholder management skills
- Experience leading, mentoring, or developing finance staff
- Confidence to challenge constructively and support better decision-making
- Ability to operate independently while building strong collaborative relationships across the organisation

You may also have:

- Experience in a business partnering or commercial finance role
- Exposure to complex or multi-stakeholder environments (e.g. university, public sector, SME)
- Experience working in a standalone or small-team finance function
- Experience supporting operational managers with staffing budgets and workforce planning

Why Join Mardyke Arena?

- Opportunity to play a central role in how the business is run and managed
- Direct partnership with the CEO and leadership team
- A broad, varied role with real ownership and impact
- A purpose-driven environment focused on sport, health, and community
- Strong links to University College Cork

- Opportunity to shape financial performance and operational decision-making across multiple business areas
 - Opportunity to contribute to the long-term strategic and financial sustainability of a high-profile organisation
 - Generous company pension scheme
 - Company Sick Pay Scheme
 - Contribution towards health insurance
 - Friends & family access to Mardyke Arena facilities
 - Additional 2 Christmas leave days
 - Bike to Work Scheme
 - Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)
 - Group discounts including cinema tickets and retail/shopping discounts
 - Regular fun-filled activities and social gatherings across the wider group
 - Ongoing training, professional development, and career growth opportunities
 - Competitive salary and 25 days
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Requirements added by the job poster

- Authorized to work in Ireland
- 5+ years of experience in Accounting/Auditing
- 1+ years of work experience with Budgeting & Forecasting

Interested candidates are invited to submit their CV and cover letter to Sheila O'Mahony, Executive Assistant, at sheilaomahony@ucc.ie