ACTIVITIES & ATHLETICS DIRECTOR

Job Profile | 2026-2027

Philosophy and Program

The Harare International School has a rich, vibrant and competitive Activities and Athletic program. Individuals interested in this role will have a proven track record for growing and maintaining safe, engaging and competitive programs. HIS is a member of the International Schools of Southern & Eastern Africa (ISSEA) and competes in Soccer, Basketball, Volleyball, Swimming and Tennis. Other activities include numerous athletic and creative experiences such as, but not limited to chess, STEM, theatrical arts, archery, equestrian, karate, ballet, robotics, BMX, etc.

1. Role Purpose

To provide strategic and operational leadership for the School's athletics and activities program across Elementary, Middle, and High School, ensuring that opportunities are safe, inclusive, engaging, and student-centred, and contribute meaningfully to the educational experience and development of students.

The Activities & Athletics Director leads the ongoing development of a program that enables students to explore their interests, challenge themselves, develop confidence and resilience, build relationships across a diverse community, and experience a strong sense of belonging and personal growth.

2. Scope of Leadership

- Provides school-wide leadership and direction for athletics, activities and enrichment opportunities across all divisions.
- Develops a coherent program vision that balances participation, personal growth, student leadership, wellbeing and competitive excellence, while providing opportunities for students to explore, challenge themselves and contribute to the wider community.
- Builds systems and structures that enable divisional coordinators, coaches, teachers and external providers to deliver high-quality programs.
- Leads continuous program development using student voice, participation data, feedback and emerging opportunities.
- Represents HIS in ISSEA, inter-school, community and external athletics and activities settings.
- Creates a culture in which students are encouraged to get involved, get active and get inspired.

3. Key Areas of Responsibility

A. STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP & PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

- Develops and communicates a clear vision and direction for the HIS Athletics & Activities program.
- Leads annual and longer-term program planning in alignment with the School's mission, strategic priorities and student needs.
- Identifies opportunities to broaden participation, introduce innovative programs and create new ways for students to explore interests, develop skills and challenge themselves across Elementary, Middle and High School.
- Uses participation data, student and parent feedback, program evaluation and operational information to inform strategic decisions.
- Establishes meaningful program goals and measures of success and regularly evaluates progress.
- Advocates for athletics and activities as an integral part of student development, wellbeing, belonging and school culture.

B. ATHLETICS & COMPETITIVE SPORT

- Provides leadership for the School's competitive athletics program, including school teams, ISSEA participation, competitions and tournaments.

- Develops a positive athletics culture built around commitment, effort, consistency, sportsmanship, resilience, personal growth and student leadership.
- Develops appropriate athlete pathways from introductory participation through competitive sport, providing students with appropriate opportunities to challenge themselves and develop their potential.
- Leads the development of coaching expectations, team structures, training programs and competition opportunities.
- Supports coaches in developing student-athletes as performers and responsible members of the HIS community.
- Evaluates competitive programs and leads initiatives to improve participation, athlete experience, coaching quality and performance.

C. CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES & STUDENT EXPERIENCE

- Leads the development of a broad, relevant and age-appropriate co-curricular program across all divisions.
- Ensures program offerings reflect student interests while supporting creativity, wellbeing, service, leadership, personal growth and a strong sense of belonging.
- Develops systems that make participation accessible, engaging and equitable.
- Creates opportunities for students to explore new interests, embrace appropriate challenges, develop skills and take leadership roles.
- Uses student voice and participation trends to shape and refine the activities program.
- Builds a strong culture of participation in which students see athletics and activities as an important part of life at HIS.

D. PEOPLE & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Leads and develops the team of divisional coordinators, coaches, activity leaders and other program personnel.
- Establishes clear expectations for program quality, student relationships, safeguarding, reliability and professional conduct.
- Recruits and selects appropriately qualified personnel in collaboration with Human Resources.
- Provides coaching, feedback, professional development and opportunities for staff to grow in their roles.
- Builds a collaborative professional culture in which staff share ideas, solve problems, and contribute to program development.
- Develops leadership capacity within the Athletics & Activities team rather than relying solely on direct oversight.

E. EXTERNAL PROVIDERS & PARTNERSHIPS

- Develops and maintains productive relationships with external activity providers, coaches, associations, organizers and partner schools.
- Identifies high-quality providers and opportunities that add value to the HIS program.
- Establishes clear expectations, service standards, safeguarding requirements and performance measures for external providers.
- Evaluates provider performance and makes recommendations regarding continuation, development or replacement.
- Strengthens HIS partnerships within ISSEA and the wider school and community sports network.

F. EVENTS, TOURNAMENTS & SPORTING TRAVEL

- Provides leadership for the planning and delivery of major athletics and activities events, tournaments, competitions and performances.
- Leads the development of effective systems for sporting travel, including itineraries, accommodation, transport, supervision, documentation and communication.
- Coordinates with internal departments, host schools, organizers and service providers to deliver high-quality experiences.
- Ensures events and travel reflect HIS expectations for student experience, safety, professionalism and school representation.
- Reviews major events and travel programs and uses learning from each experience to improve future delivery.

G. FACILITIES, FINANCE & RESOURCES

- Provides strategic direction for the development and effective use of athletics and activities facilities, equipment and resources.
- Advocates for facility and infrastructure improvements that support program growth and student experience.
- Develops and manages the annual Athletics & Activities budget within delegated authority and School priorities.
- Makes evidence-based recommendations regarding investment, procurement, replacement and resource allocation.
- Promotes efficient and sustainable use of School resources while protecting program quality and student access.

H. SAFETY, SAFEGUARDING & RISK LEADERSHIP

- Provides leadership in maintaining a culture where student safety, wellbeing, dignity and safeguarding are central to all athletics and activities.
- Ensures programs, events, competitions and travel operate within HIS safeguarding, health and safety and risk-management expectations.
- Establishes and reviews appropriate risk-management, emergency, first-aid and incident-reporting procedures.
- Ensures coaches, providers and program personnel meet required safeguarding, qualification and certification standards.
- Uses incidents, near misses and emerging risks as opportunities for organisational learning and improvement.

I. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT & ADVOCACY

- Builds strong relationships with students, families, teachers, administrators, coaches, providers and external partners.
- Communicates a clear vision and value proposition for athletics and activities across the School community.
- Ensures timely and accessible communication about programs, opportunities, schedules, expectations, events, and travel.
- Represents HIS professionally and positively in external settings.
- Listens to stakeholder perspectives while maintaining clear professional judgment and School priorities.

4. Leadership & Decision-Making

- Sets direction and establishes priorities for the Athletics & Activities program within the School's strategic framework.
- Makes program and operational decisions within delegated authority and recommends strategic investments and changes to School leadership.
- Prioritizes initiatives based on student impact, educational value, participation, safety, staffing, facilities and available resources.
- Empowers coordinators, coaches and activity leaders to make appropriate decisions within clear expectations and systems.
- Identifies emerging needs and opportunities and leads the implementation of agreed changes.
- Makes and maintains difficult decisions fairly, transparently and in the best interests of students and the School.

5. Key Accountabilities

- A coherent, forward-looking and high-quality Athletics & Activities program across Elementary, Middle and High School.
- Strong student participation, engagement, belonging and personal growth.
- A positive culture of commitment, effort, consistency, sportsmanship and personal growth.
- Effective development and leadership of coaches, coordinators, activity leaders and external providers.
- Safe, well-governed and appropriately risk-managed programs, events and travel.
- Effective stewardship of facilities, equipment, resources and the approved budget.
- Strong ISSEA and inter-school relationships and effective representation of HIS.
- Continuous improvement and innovation across the Athletics & Activities program.

6. Qualifications, Experience & Leadership Attributes

- Relevant degree or professional qualification in sports management, physical education, sports science, education or a related field.
- Significant experience in school athletics, activities, sports administration or a comparable leadership role.
- Experience leading competitive school sport, inter-school programs, tournaments and sporting travel.
- Experience recruiting, developing and evaluating coaches, coordinators and external providers.
- Experience developing and managing budgets, facilities and program resources.
- Experience working in an international school environment is preferred.
- Strong strategic thinking, communication, organisation, relationship-building and problem-solving skills.
- Strong understanding of safeguarding, health and safety and risk management in school sport and activities.
- Demonstrated ability to build teams, empower others, lead change and develop programs rather than simply maintain existing systems.

7. Guiding Leadership Philosophy

The Activities & Athletics Director leads through vision, relationships, systems and examples. The role is not simply to ensure that programs operate; it is to continually ask how the School can create better opportunities for students to explore, challenge themselves, grow and contribute, develop the people delivering those opportunities, strengthen the culture around participation, and build a program that continues to evolve with the needs of the HIS community.

8. Package:

Competitive salary and benefits to include housing, medical insurance, travel, tuition for two children.

9. Process and Timeline:

This position will be hosted for one month, from September 16 to October 16 2026.
Long list interviews will begin after the first two weeks.
Short list interviews will begin soon after all long list candidates are interviewed.