

Introduction

As you will see as you read this review, the University of Sussex has undergone significant development over the last year. Our 12 new schools have come into being. We have welcomed new academic leaders to the University. We have admitted our largest ever student cohort from home and overseas. Our new Chancellor is already a great hit at graduation. And we have seen Sussex rise further up the league tables.

At the same time, the whole higher education sector has moved into challenging financial times, as government looks to rein in public sector funding for the coming years. Sussex is facing those challenges with resolution and confidence, since we have in place the guiding directions set by our strategic plan, *Making the future 2009-2015*.

Under that plan, we continue to be committed firmly to growth – building the strength of our research and teaching in response to academic vision, student demand and economic opportunity.

I said last year that the creation of *Making the future* would represent a significant step forward for the University. It has already provided a clear framework against which to plan all of our activities as an institution. This is all the more important as the University faces a more competitive and financially challenging HE sector.

This review highlights some key recent developments which are laying the foundations for future success:

- In research, our interdisciplinary research themes are creating research agendas that will shape the future. And strong new support and organisational structures will foster excellence in research
- In teaching, we have seen strong new programmes in areas like Business and Management already drawing in high-quality new students from home and overseas, with overseas student numbers up nearly 50 per cent on three years ago

- We are enhancing the student experience with new initiatives like Sussex Plus, which is already helping 600 of our students develop their transferable skills, and increase their employability
- Our management of the University is transformed through the creation of the 12 new schools of studies
- In our engagement with business and community our Enterprise Development Fund is translating great academic ideas into business activity and revenue
- Our staffing has been boosted by the strong new academic appointments we have made as leaders of our new schools, and other new members of our senior management team
- Our partnerships at home and abroad continue to grow, and we have forged further academic links with China and India that will help promote the University around the world
- And our sustainable major new building programme is progressing well, supporting our vision of academic growth and development

My personal highlight of the past year was the summer graduation ceremony. It was the debut for our new Chancellor, Sanjeev Bhaskar, who awarded an honorary degree to one of our most eminent alumni, President Festus Mogae of Botswana. I was particularly inspired to see the next generation of Sussex graduates leaving us to make their mark on the world; proof that nearly 50 years after our founding, we are still making the future.



Professor Michael Farthing
Vice-Chancellor

