Brief for the position of
Head of the School of Life Sciences
University of Sussex
September 2019
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Dear candidate,

The University of Sussex is a remarkable institution. The distinctive ethos on which it was established more than 50 years ago is still very much at the heart of the University.

The traditions of creativity, interdisciplinarity, innovation and intellectual rigour – in both education and research – play an important part in who we are. Building on this and against a backdrop in which English universities will be facing a period of political and economic change, Sussex is forging ahead and creating a new destiny.

We are in strong health. With a reputation for inspirational teaching, we are turning out graduates who are well-rounded global citizens – contributing to the worlds of business, sciences, the arts, academia, government and the third sector. The University is ranked in the top 10 in the UK for graduate employability and in the top 20 for most major UK league tables. Applications and acceptances for study are at an all-time record.

The School of Life Sciences is a diverse, collaborative community with expertise in areas as varied as cancer biology, drug discovery, neuroscience and biodiversity. Research lies at the heart of the School, and underpins our teaching. We strive for our work to have positive, real-world impact across a variety of fields. We endeavour to share our research and engage with people to have thoughtful discussions that shape the work we do. Be that at science festivals, schools and colleges or with businesses.

This is an exciting time in the University’s history as we look to build on the past and redefine Sussex’s distinctiveness for the 21st century.

I hope you will join us in playing a part in shaping the future of a thriving University, with strong values that we believe make Sussex a very special place.

Professor Adam Tickell, Vice-Chancellor
The University of Sussex

Since our foundation in 1961, Sussex has valued – and encourages – a pioneering spirit. We have pushed for change, and demanded more, creating a better future for individuals and communities all over the world.

Our lecturers deliver programmes of study that inspire students to develop the skills that make their education count and that give them the confidence to make their mark in their chosen field.

Our staff conduct original research to explore the great questions of our age. Their findings affect policy and practice for businesses, NGOs and governments ensuring that Sussex students are also at the forefront of knowledge in their subject.

Creative thinking, pedagogic diversity, intellectual challenge and interdisciplinarity have always been fundamental to a Sussex education. The University’s goal is to deliver teaching and learning programmes that are informed by current research, are attractive to students from all socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds, and which deliver skills for life.

The University is committed to widening access for candidates from lower-income families and awards a high number of scholarships and other types of financial support.

In pursuing our mission, we celebrate the values of:

- **excellence**, through a commitment to delivering the highest standards of research, scholarship, teaching and learning in order to provide a dynamic and stimulating environment for students and staff and to maximise their social and economic contribution to societies
- **interdisciplinarity**, through tackling multidimensional problems, while maintaining a strong, broadly based set of disciplines across the arts and humanities, social sciences, sciences and medicine
- **engagement**, by actively seeking an external and international approach to all our activities
- **challenge**, in which all members of the Sussex community are prepared to explore creatively the status quo and alternatives, within the context of excellence and professionalism, and to seek to make positive change in society
- **partnership**, by developing sustained relationships that bring together complementary skills and resources to create mutual benefit and to deliver impact that cannot be achieved by either partner alone
- **professionalism**, by upholding freedom of academic enquiry, undertaking activities in a responsible manner using robust, transparent processes and maintaining professional standards in the conduct of all academic and support activities
- **equality, diversity and inclusion**, by making appointments and developing entry routes to the University based on educational merit and valuing the strengths derived from contributions to our mission by people from different backgrounds, traditions, cultures and perspectives
- **service**, in which members of the Sussex community seek to use their skills and talents to contribute to local, national and international communities and organisations.
School of Life Sciences

We pride ourselves on our world-leading and interdisciplinary research and teaching.

The School of Life Sciences is one of the largest Schools in the University, both in terms of research activity and student and staff population. In the 2018/19 academic year the School will be home to 1,730 students, including 134 PhD students and 116 international students, whilst the staff headcount is approximately 430. We strive to engage with real world problems and produce impact in fields as varied as cancer biology, drug discovery, neuroscience and biodiversity.

Our teaching is strongly research-led and focused on developing the skills and employability needed by the next generation of scientists and innovators.

Our research areas

Our research areas have consistently been ranked highly in league tables and have recently achieved huge momentum in grant funding and critical mass. Our work is divided into several areas:

- Biochemistry and Biomedicine
- Chemistry
- Evolution, Behaviour, Environment
- Genome Damage and Stability
- Neuroscience

Our research is often interdisciplinary in nature, embracing disciplines from within and outside our School at all levels and our collaborations extend to other universities and research institutes across the world. The value of the School’s research is approximately £83.9m.

We are also host to a diverse range of partnerships. For example, the Gene Expression Group comprises eight individual research groups spanning Life Science subject groups and the Brighton and Sussex Medical School, with specialised state-of-the-art school and specific laboratory-based instrumentation underpinning the research. Research in gene expression at Sussex receives large amounts of charity and Research Council funding (Wellcome Trust, MRC, BBSRC, Leukaemia Lymphoma Research) and is carried out by a total of 21 post-doctoral scientists, research assistants and technicians and 23 PhD students.

Research Excellence Framework

87% of our research in biological sciences was rated as internationally excellent or higher in the most recent Research Excellence Framework (REF2014), with 48% rated as world-leading.

Public engagement

Engaging with non-academics is a core component within the School of Life Sciences. We want to share our research with everyone and engage with people to have thoughtful discussions that shape our work. To do this we take part in science festivals, we visit schools and we connect with charities, businesses and the local community.
Research at Sussex

Our research is contributing new knowledge, ideas and solutions, which is leading to real change in the world and making a difference to people’s lives.

University research programmes include:

- The Sussex Sustainability Research Programme, which is delivering research for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and builds on Sussex’s tradition of interdisciplinarity and societal engagement.
- The Sussex Humanities Lab, which is dedicated to developing and expanding research into how digital technologies are shaping our culture and society, as well as the way we go about our research.
- Sussex Neuroscience, which has one of the highest densities of neuroscience faculty of any university in the UK, as well as large numbers of research fellows and doctoral students.
University research spotlights

- **Genome Damage and Stability**
  Professor Laurence Pearl leads the CRUK, Wellcome and BBSRC funded Repair Enzymes Research Group and was awarded the Novartis Medal and Prize by the Biochemical Society in 2018. The Pearl Laboratory seeks to understand the structural basis for assembly, specificity and regulation of the multi-protein complexes involved in the recognition, repair and signalling of DNA damage, and in the chaperone-mediated stabilisation and activation of cellular signalling pathways. These basic studies provide the means for discovery and development of novel small-molecule inhibitors with application as drugs for the treatment of cancer and other diseases.

- **Sustainability**
  Research, led by Professor Jorn Scharlemann, has been instrumental in securing a ban on the international trade of extinction-threatened pangolins, the world’s only scaly mammal. The project uses smallscale data to see bigger patterns in biodiversity loss.

- **Quantum**
  A team, led by Professor Winfried Hensinger, have developed the world’s first blueprint for building a quantum computer. The blueprint has been made public so scientists can further develop the groundbreaking technology.

- **Global health**
  Research by Dr Heike Rabe into the benefits of delayed umbilical cord clamping (DCC) is improving the outcomes for premature babies around the world. The findings have persuaded the World Health Organization to incorporate the use of DCC for pre-term infants in its global guidelines.

- **Inspiring arts and humanities**
  Dr Bethan Stevens has made the artistry of the Dalziel Brothers’ Victorian wood engraving available to wider audiences through online exhibitions and websites, and through educational events and workshops.

- **Neuroscience**
  Professor Sarah Garfinkel is one of the world’s foremost experts on the health consequences of interoception – the sensation of feeling the activities of one’s internal organs. She has been included in the prestigious Nature Index 2018 Rising Stars as one of 11 outstanding early to mid-career scientists from around the world who are bringing fresh ideas to their discipline.

To find out more about our research, visit: [www.sussex.ac.uk/research](http://www.sussex.ac.uk/research)
Sussex 2025

‘Sussex 2025’ is an ambitious, bold and distinctive strategic framework, reflecting a university that has been truly distinctive throughout its history.

Our framework for continuity and change

The University of Sussex has a long tradition of experimentation and innovation that has made a real difference to the lives of many students, and those who benefit from our research and wider endeavours. We will build on these achievements and evolve as a better university, dedicated to making a better world.

Our framework will guide the institution to 2025 and beyond. It is a seven-year transformation – an expression of what we stand for and how we will continue to build on our success while reinventing ourselves for the future.

In uncertain and changing times, we will need to make tough choices if we are to turn our ambitions into reality. By working towards a shared vision, and having an understanding of our common goals, we will prioritise our efforts. Our Strategic Framework is based on four dimensions:

- Research with Impact
- Learn to Transform
- Engage for Change
- Build on Strengths

For details of the full framework please visit: [www.sussex.ac.uk/strategy](http://www.sussex.ac.uk/strategy)
The Role

Job Title: Head of the School of Life Sciences
School: School of Life Sciences
Location: University of Sussex Campus, Falmer
Responsible to: Provost
Responsible for: All members of academic, tutoring and professional services staff within the School.

The Head of School will be a member of the University’s Leadership Team.

Key accountabilities and objectives

Strategy and planning

- Contribute to the strategic planning of the University.
- Develop and ensure the delivery of academic strategy and operational plans for the School in line with University strategy, key performance indicators and operational targets (e.g. student recruitment, student retention, research grant and contract income).
- Ensure the identification and management of key strategic and operational risk.
- Manage the School effectively, working within the financial envelope and meeting targets for student recruitment, research awards and income as agreed.
- Explore relevant new income streams and ensure that colleagues perform to the standards required.
- Exemplify effective performance management and ensure timely implementation of University of Sussex policies and strategies.
- Finalise School Strategy for research, education, engagement and Professional Services, to deliver Sussex 2025. Please follow the link for more information:
  [https://www.sussex.ac.uk/strategy/](https://www.sussex.ac.uk/strategy/)

Education and student experience

- Plan and ensure the highest quality delivery of teaching, learning, assessment and feedback within the School, in line with academic standards, quality assurance and other enhancement measures (e.g., e-learning), in accordance with the teaching and learning strategy.
- Ensure the development, innovation, promotion and delivery of the School’s curriculum, in line with the teaching and learning strategy.
- Recruit quality students at UG and PGT level to the targets agreed, both domestic and international.
- Take a strategic lead on accountability for the School’s TEF-related actions, optimising the UG and PGT student experience, increasing assessment and feedback NSS and other scores.
Ensure the delivery of a high-quality student experience to all students within the School, seeking and achieving enhancement on a continuous basis, in line with University strategies.

Research and enterprise

- Ensure the conduct of the highest-quality research by all levels of academic faculty, to the required volume, in accordance with the research strategy and University policy, e.g., on research ethics.
- Ensure the delivery of a high standard of research student supervision and timely completion.
- Grow research, contract and knowledge transfer income for the School, across all levels of academic faculty, in accordance with University aims and budgetary requirements.
- Develop the School’s enterprise initiatives and productive links/partnerships with businesses and the community, in accordance with the enterprise strategy.
- Implement plans to ensure that grant applications and award targets are met and that improvements are seen in the School’s output predictions and impact preparations for future REFs.

Staff planning and recruitment

- Ensure the appropriate planning for and deployment of staff across the School in accordance with strategic and operational plans.
- Ensure the recruitment and appointment of high calibre staff in accordance with University appointment procedures.

Performance management

Ensure the effective, consistent and fair management and development of individual staff and teams within the School in order to achieve high levels of School and University performance, implementing relevant University policies and procedures for induction, probation, performance and development review, career development, reward and capability management.

Financial control

Plan, manage and control the School’s finances, within allocated budgetary resource, ensuring the effective and efficient allocation of resource and to ensure that funds are assigned and used for the purpose for which they are intended.
Management team

Lead the School management team to ensure optimal performance of the School, liaising with other Schools and with senior management colleagues, as necessary.

Internal and external communications and liaison

Promote a positive image of the School internally and externally and foster positive working relationships for the School within the faculty and across the University.

Equal opportunities, health and safety and data protection

Ensure the School’s compliance with, and promotion of good practice in relation to: University policy, procedure and guidance on equal opportunities, health and safety, and data protection in respect of students, staff and other relevant parties and any other legislative or regulatory obligation.

The Candidate

Essential criteria

- Demonstrates substantial evidence of leadership and achievement within the relevant field.
- Of professorial standing with a sustained track record of achievement gained within higher education.
- An established and active international research profile and a track record of personal excellence in teaching.
- A strong sense of strategic, academic direction linked to success in implementing and managing change and driving organisational achievement.
- Sound understanding of the current HE environment, the student experience and demands of the future.
- Results oriented, with the ability to foster a culture of delivery, responsibility and accountability.
- A personable and professional manner and credibility that commands confidence.
- An inclusive management style, with ability to foster partnerships, build relationships, work collaboratively across boundaries and achieve results.
- Personally committed to ensuring that the University’s policies are reflected in all aspects of work, in particular, those relating to people management, academic standards, equal opportunities and health and safety.
The Sussex campus

Sussex is home to 18,000 students who are based on one of the most beautiful campus locations in Britain. Situated in rolling parkland on the edge of the lively city of Brighton & Hove, the campus combines award-winning architecture with green open spaces.

Designed by Sir Basil Spence, the buildings that make up the heart of the campus were given listed-building status in 1993. Falmer House is one of only two post-war educational buildings in the UK to be Grade I listed in recognition of its exceptional interest.

The campus is undergoing sustained investment and development to support Sussex’s academic mission with new teaching buildings, new student residences, refurbishment of several teaching buildings and the Library, and the reopening of the Attenborough Centre for the Creative Arts.

Take a virtual campus tour at www.sussex.ac.uk/aboutus/campus
Working at Sussex

Childcare

There is a nursery on campus for children aged three months to five years, operated by The Cooperative Childcare. It is open daily from 7.30am–6.30pm.

Library

Library facilities are available to all members of staff. The Library is open around the clock during term time. The Library’s special collections, now housed at The Keep, include the papers of Rudyard Kipling, the New Statesman archive, Virginia Woolf’s Monks house papers, many of Lord Richard Attenborough’s scripts and papers, and the Mass Observation Archive.

Retail

There is a supermarket and post office, the Students’ Union shop, a pharmacy and a bank on campus. In term time, there is also a weekly outdoor market.

Sport

Sports facilities include sports halls, fitness rooms, a dance studio, squash courts and outdoor pitches. There is an extensive drop-in group exercise and courses programme including yoga, dance, pilates, trapeze, circuit training and aerobics. Sussexsport holds an annual boundary walk and boundary run for staff and students around the Sussex campus. It also offers children’s birthday and sports parties from age two upwards and a full programme of sports camps and activities in the school holidays for children aged five–16.

Sussex Centre for Language Studies

The Sussex Centre for Language Studies provides a range of courses throughout the calendar year in English Language and Modern Languages that are open to staff as well as students. You can also use the Language Learning Centre to study over 50 world languages.

Catering and conferences

Sussexfood offers extensive catering facilities in Bramber House, as well as cafés across campus. There are also conference and hospitality services. You can also use the Students’ Union bars and shop.
Sussex lectures

All staff are welcome to attend professorial lectures by Sussex academics and other talks by visiting lecturers and speakers.

Attenborough Centre for the Creative Arts

The Attenborough Centre is a state-of-the-art performance and display space that re-opened in 2016 after extensive refurbishment. The Attenborough Centre has a growing programme of performances and events and is a Brighton Festival Venue.

Teaching and Learning

The University of Sussex has over over 18,000 students, of which 5,000 are postgraduates.

Our Staff

Sussex has developed a reputation for innovation and inspiration, and attracts leading thinkers and researchers.

We have nearly 2,600 staff, including around 1,000 teaching and research staff. We have counted three Nobel Prize winners, 23 Fellows of the Royal Society, 23 Fellows of the Academy of Social Sciences, 14 Fellows of the British Academy, 11 Fellows of the Academy of Medical Sciences and a winner of the prestigious Crafoord Prize on our faculty.
Innovative Research and Scholarship

Sussex is a leading research university, as reflected in the 2014 Research Excellence Framework (REF) where 98% of research activity at Sussex was categorised as world leading, internationally excellent or internationally recognised.

Business and the Community

Sussex has a long tradition of engaging with business and the community, which continues today through activities such as the Sussex Innovation Centre, public lectures and service to the community. Our goal is to help businesses and organisations in the region develop higher staff skill levels through training, and to stimulate innovation through partnership with other institutions outside Sussex to benefit the wider society.

The Sussex Innovation Centre, the University’s business incubator, has recently launched its first off-campus site, in Croydon. To date, the Centre on campus has helped hundreds of businesses to realise their growth potential and raise more than £500-million of cumulative revenue.

For more information, visit www.sussex.ac.uk/business

Flexible working

Sussex has a flexible working strategy, giving employees flexibility on where, when and the hours they work. The University is happy to explore the potential for flexibility in this role. Requests for flexible working options will be considered (subject to business need). The University discusses flexible working with all successful candidates.
Brighton and the local area

The University’s location

The University campus is located at Falmer, on the outskirts of Brighton & Hove, and is just 55 miles (90 km) from London. Frequent trains from central London take as little as 50 minutes to Brighton & Hove, with a quick nine-minute connection to Falmer to reach campus. London Gatwick airport is only 30 minutes from Brighton by car or train, and London Heathrow is just over an hour’s drive away.

Brighton and the wider region

The city of Brighton & Hove has much to offer staff and students, and offers a quality of life for young families that is hard to match. As well as a fabulous variety of shops, restaurants and pubs, the city also has a range of good schools and a very relaxed and tolerant atmosphere. Brighton has a truly diverse cultural scene with a wealth of theatres, cinemas and galleries. From pre-West End premieres at the Theatre Royal to the variety of experimental fringe productions staged throughout the year, and of course the famous Brighton Festival every May, there is plenty on offer.

The historic market town of Lewes is also close to campus, and many members of staff choose to live there because of its wide choice of housing and excellent schools.
How to Apply

Please apply online at www.berwickpartners.co.uk/72472

If you are unable to apply online please email your application to response.manager@berwickpartners.co.uk

All applications will receive an automated response.

All candidates are also requested to complete an online Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form which will be found at the end of the application process.

For detailed information on how we process your personal data, please review our privacy policy on our website https://www.berwickpartners.co.uk/privacy-policy/

In line with GDPR, we ask that you do NOT send us any information that can identify children or any of your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, data concerning health or sex life and sexual orientation, genetic and/or biometric data) in your CV and application documentation. Following this notice, any inclusion of your Sensitive Personal Data in your CV/application documentation will be understood by us as your express consent to process this information going forward. Please also remember to not mention anyone’s information or details (e.g. referees) who have not previously agreed to their inclusion.

If you have any queries or would like more information in regard to this document please contact:

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