

1. Advertisement

Post Title: Senior Lecturer/Reader in the Psychology of Kindness

School/department: School of Psychology

Hours: Full time or part time up to a maximum of 1FTE

Requests for flexible working options will be considered (subject to business needs)

Contract: Permanent

Reference: 5948

Placed on: 16 June 2021

Salary: Grade 9 starting at £51,034 to £59,135 per annum

Closing date: 30 July 2021. Applications must be received by midnight of this date.

Expected interview date: w/c 6 September 2021

Expected start date: 01 October 2021 or as soon as possible thereafter

The School of Psychology is looking to recruit a **full-time faculty member at Senior Lecturer/Reader level, with specific expertise in the psychology of kindness, empathy, compassion, or related areas.** The School of Psychology has led the development of an interdisciplinary network to promote the exploration and investigation of kindness and its impacts on people and communities. With generous support from the Pears Foundation, we are now seeking to appoint a Senior Lecturer/Reader, with an active research interest and track record in this area, who is motivated to work with colleagues from different disciplines to establish and grow this interdisciplinary network as a formal research centre. This is a tremendously exciting opportunity for a successful researcher to build an innovative programme of collaborative research in an area of rapidly growing academic and societal interest. There will also be expectations that the postholder will contribute to innovative educational provisions being developed on the topic of kindness and wellbeing.

The University of Sussex is a leading teaching and research institution and is ranked within the top 160 in the world. The School of Psychology at the University of Sussex is one of the most academically diverse and influential centres for the study of psychology in the UK with considerable strengths in both research and teaching. We have a longstanding commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, and we are proud to hold an Athena SWAN Silver Award (2020) for our work promoting gender equality. In the latest World University Rankings, the School is placed within the top 20 nationally. Psychology at Sussex was ranked 10th in the 2014 Research Excellence Framework and receives excellent student ratings for its undergraduate and postgraduate teaching. We offer a very highly regarded undergraduate degree course and a suite of PGT courses, and we have a substantial group of doctoral students, supported in part by ESRC and Leverhulme Trust funded doctoral training programmes.

Informal enquiries may be made with the Head of School, Professor Robin Banerjee (robinb@sussex.ac.uk).

The University of Sussex is committed to equality of opportunity.

For full details and how to apply see our [vacancies page](#)

The University of Sussex believes that the diversity of its staff and student community is fundamental to creative thinking, pedagogic innovation, intellectual challenge, and our interdisciplinary approach to research and learning. We celebrate and promote diversity, equality and inclusion amongst our staff and students. As such, we welcome applications



from all, regardless of personal characteristics or background. All roles are open to flexible work arrangements as part of the university's commitment to be flexible by default. Applications for a job share are welcome and would be considered fully for this role.

2. The School of Psychology

Psychology at Sussex combines cutting-edge, discovery-oriented research and strong engagement with policy-makers in health and social care, non-governmental organisations and the private sector. In this way we tackle contemporary challenges in mental and physical health, social inclusion and well-being. Psychology at Sussex ranked 10th out of 82 in REF 2014 (7th for impact), with 100% of research rated as internationally recognized or better, and 45% of research recognized as world-leading. Detailed information about the School is available at www.sussex.ac.uk/psychology.

Our flagship undergraduate programme is the BSc in Psychology, which takes approximately 400-500 students per annum. We also offer a number of major/minor degree programmes via the University's pathway system. In order to expand, diversify, and secure the excellence of our undergraduate body, we launched a highly successful Foundation Year in 2016. Indeed, the central Foundation Year team were awarded a Collaborative Award for Teaching Excellence in 2019. We also recruit students to a number of high-quality postgraduate taught courses, and we have a vibrant community of doctoral students.

The School of Psychology has four research groups with a total of over 70 teaching faculty and a large number of PhD students. The research groups are:

- *Developmental and Clinical Psychology*: the core objective of the group is to translate research in human development to clinical, policy and public contexts. The group's work includes cognitive development, behaviour genetics, socio-emotional development, developmental and experimental psychopathology, and research on mental health in a variety of clinical and community settings.
- *Social and Applied Psychology*: the group focuses on group and intergroup processes, identity processes, culture, well-being and health psychology. It uses a range of methodologies in laboratory and field settings, with a focus on applied relevance.
- *Behavioural and Clinical Neuroscience*: the research interests of this group include addictions, aging/dementia, affect/emotion, learning/memory, reward/motivation, decision making. The group conducts non-human animal, human and clinical research, emphasising translational links.
- *Cognitive Psychology*: the group has broad interests in language and communication, learning, memory, attention, perception, problem-solving and consciousness, with approaches that range from classic experimental psychology through to cutting-edge cognitive neuroscience techniques.

These research groups are the primary vehicles for the exchange of new research ideas, the development and informal peer review of new grant applications and articles, and the mentoring and appraisal of staff. Typically, groups meet fortnightly to discuss forthcoming conference presentations, ideas for new projects and work-in-progress. All grant applications are reviewed by senior colleagues to increase their quality and likely success rates.

All research and teaching faculty have one primary research-group affiliation. However, consistent with the interdisciplinary and collaborative ethos of the School, in practice many actively participate in more than one grouping. Indeed, the five Strategic Focus Areas of

research within the School span across these groups: 1) Neuroscience, 2) Mental Health, 3) Sensory Systems, 4) Applied Behavioural Science, and 5) Psychological Methods.

The quality of our research is evident from outputs in premier journals across neuroscience and medicine, through experimental psychology to social psychology, while also encompassing quantitative-behaviour genetics and developmental psychopathology. Reflecting their international prominence in their respective fields, researchers in these four groups published over 700 articles and 17 books, and won research grants and consultancies to a value in excess of £12m over the census period for REF 2014. These numbers have already been greatly exceeded in the period since 2014.

Cross-School and cross-university research centres facilitate interactions between these research groups and with other researchers in the University. Such centres are established to nurture new research activity, build more effectively on areas of academic strength and enhance the vitality of our research environment. They run research colloquia and facilitate shared access to important research populations (e.g. clinical samples, children and young people, participants in disasters and emergencies) and major items of equipment. Centres in which members of the School of Psychology play a prominent role include the following:

- *Centre for Innovation and Research in Childhood and Youth (CIRCY)*: based in the School of Education and Social Work, but with strong links to Psychology.
- *Rudd Centre for Adoption Research and Practice*: developing new insights into the cultural, social-relational, cognitive and emotional processes in the development of adopted children.
- *Clinical Imaging Sciences Centre (CISC)*: provision of multimodal imaging facilities, including an on-site Siemens 3T MRI scanner, with an emphasis on quantifying the function and structure of the brain.
- *Sackler Centre for Consciousness Science*: a unique interdisciplinary centre spanning informatics, engineering, psychiatry, psychology and cognitive science.
- *Sussex Addiction Research and Intervention Centre (SARIC)*: a merger of pre-clinical, clinical, and psychological research in drug addiction to pursue translational projects.
- *Sussex Neuroscience* pursues basic, translational and clinical neuroscience within the context of a vibrant collaborative research culture across Schools and Departments of the University of Sussex. It was established in 2013 following a £3M investment from the University of Sussex to unite neuroscience activities across campus, distributed across four Schools. It organizes various events, provides some advanced technical support, and funds a 4-year PhD program.

We work strategically and in close collaboration with the Brighton and Sussex Medical School on many of these research enterprises. In addition, the School has extensive and diverse links in the area of mental health with the Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, including numerous research collaborations and clinical trials, as well as a portfolio of professional postgraduate courses.

The School has excellent laboratory facilities to support its research. Specialist facilities include:

- *Sussex Child Research Hub*: The hub comprises ten research rooms, including a child-interaction observation unit with one-way mirror, a room with CCTV for videoing child sessions, two rooms for experimental infant techniques with coding facilities, and a developmental psychophysics and eye-tracking room. The suite also includes multiple waiting and play areas appropriate for infants, toddlers and older children, and tea/coffee facilities for visiting parents.
- *Behavioural Neuroscience laboratories*: sole use of a microscopy and histological suite and two laboratories dedicated to electrophysiological studies in brain slices; shared use of molecular biology laboratories, all of which have seen significant recent investment. We are a major user of the University's animal unit, which comprises breeding, holding and experimental facilities for rodents and includes a surgery equipped with digital stereotaxic equipment for both rats and mice. The behavioural laboratories are equipped for sophisticated operant and observational studies with rats and mice.
- *Clinical Imaging Sciences Centre*: CISC is a research facility that houses 3T and 1.5T MRI Siemens scanners and a PET/CT scanner. CISC is staffed by a full complement of radiographers with on-site medical cover and capacity for experimental medical investigations. Structural, diffusion, neurochemical and functional MRI is supported by ancillary equipment that includes world-leading capacity for integrating functional MRI with multi-axis physiological and neurophysiological measurements. It is also a centre for scanning patients enrolled into Phase II and III interventional treatment trials for neurodegenerative and neuro-inflammatory disorders and, through clinical scanning of patients from memory clinics across Sussex, is building the UK's largest high-quality neuroimaging research dataset of patients at the onset of dementia.
- *Human Psychopharmacology laboratory*: two medical rooms, a wet lab, 12 specialised testing cubicles, Eyelink eye-trackers, and a fully equipped kitchen for the preparation of food for research on human ingestion.
- *Human Psychophysiology and Psychoacoustic laboratories (129 m²)*: six cubicles, two acoustic booths and a reception area. Equipment includes both Neuroscan and EGI rigs for EEG/ERP, a Magstim TMS rig, and three Eyelink II eye-trackers.
- *Vision laboratories*: A suite of six rooms – of which some are designed to exclude all natural light – include specialist equipment for presenting visual stimuli.
- In addition to these dedicated facilities, Psychology also has 85m² of new general-facility, bookable lab space, including 11 test cubicles for faculty and student research projects and other research, a meeting-room, waiting area and kitchen facility.

3. Sussex Kindness Research

Kindness is an exciting, innovative and growing field of research that is intimately connected with people's wellbeing and mental health, with the potential to positively impact policy and practice across society.

A recent interdisciplinary research focus on the topic of kindness at Sussex has been led by Professor Robin Banerjee, Head of the School of Psychology and Professor of Developmental Psychology. Over recent years, Professor Banerjee and numerous colleagues across a wide range of disciplines at Sussex – not just in psychology, but also in business, education, social work, healthcare, and international aid – have been working to scrutinise and explore diverse topics through the lens of kindness. [This interdisciplinary network](#), labelled Sussex Kindness Research, has undertaken a wide range of research and knowledge exchange activity relating to kindness. Specific activities have included annual research-related events to support World Kindness Day, including the 'Thinking Kindness' tent at the 'Kindfest 2020' virtual festival, which attracted over 6000 ticket sales from over 38 countries, in support of charities. The network, with support from the non-profit organisation, Kindness UK, has also had a particular focus on facilitating the career development of early career researchers, sponsoring numerous PhD students to attend international conferences to disseminate a diverse body of work concerned with the impact of kindness on people and communities.

The School of Psychology's new strategic plan, "Sussex Psychology 2025: Psychology for a Better World", commits to transform the existing interdisciplinary research network on kindness into a formal University Research Centre. With generous support from the Pears Foundation, we are now very excited to recruit an experienced researcher who is motivated to take Sussex Kindness Research to a new level, collaboratively designing, launching, and realising a new vision for research in the area of kindness, altruism, empathy, compassion, and/or cognate areas. In addition, a complementary programme of educational provision focused on kindness and wellbeing is being developed (including online distance learning), and we would expect the postholder to contribute to this.

Sussex Kindness Research not only has a strong interdisciplinary base at Sussex, but also has an extensive external network of academic and non-academic partners. The work of the postholder will be crucial in pulling all of these connections together, and extending them further, enabling bigger and more impactful research programmes and public engagement activities. The postholder would also be expected to design and implement an exciting agenda of cutting-edge applied research into the social, cultural, and psychological factors that influence people's experience of kindness in diverse settings. Depending on the postholder's particular area(s) of expertise, this could involve work with specific institutions and settings in education, health, business and enterprise, justice systems, or even politics. The fundamental focus in all cases would be on rigorously developing insights into the mechanisms underpinning acts of kindness and their benefits for individuals and groups. Crucially, by harnessing the power of our existing interdisciplinary networks, the postholder will help us translate and scale up these insights in order to realise Sussex's vision of a kinder world.

4. Job Descriptions and Person Specifications

Job Title:	Senior Lecturer/Reader in Psychology
Grade:	Grade 9 (Research & Education focussed)
School:	School of Psychology
Responsible to:	Head of School
Direct reports:	n/a
Key contacts:	Students, other members of Faculty within the School and University, School Officers, academics in the field in other institutions.
Role description:	Senior Lecturer is a senior career-grade teaching and research position. You will be expected to show academic leadership in both teaching and research, and to support the management and strategic planning processes of the School and the University.

Note that candidates appointed with the title of Reader will be expected to have achieved an exceptional level in research, with a sustained and independent research reputation that is acknowledged nationally and internationally.

PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES

1. To provide academic leadership in the design and delivery of high-quality teaching programmes.
2. To engage in high-quality research activity resulting in high-quality publications to be submitted to the REF at acceptable levels of volume and academic excellence; to lead research projects or research initiatives in the School; to secure research funding and third-stream income; and to contribute to the School's research strategy.
3. To support the management activities of the School and University, and undertake a key role in School or University working groups or committees, as required.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Teaching & Student Support

Lead the innovative design, development and delivery of a range of programmes of study at various levels.

Ensure that course design and delivery comply with the University quality standard and regulations, and take responsibility for the quality of programme units.

Regularly review and update course content and teaching materials, ensuring that they remain up-to-date and relevant, incorporating advances in the subject area and utilising appropriate technology, and ensuring inclusivity for diverse groups of students.

Set, mark, and assess coursework and examinations; select appropriate assessment instruments and assessment criteria; and provide constructive and comprehensive feedback to students.

Actively maintain an understanding of appropriate pedagogy in the subject area.

Provide academic leadership to those working within programme areas, e.g. as a course leader.

Supervise taught postgraduate students, providing advice on study skills.

Undertake and complete administrative duties required in the professional delivery of teaching.

Undertake academic advising duties, and provide first-line support for sensitive issues, referring on as appropriate to services providing further assistance.

Adopt an approachable and accessible attitude towards students, offering office hours, informal advice etc.

2. Research, Scholarship & Enterprise

Contribute to the development of School research strategies and themes.

Identify and develop research objectives, and proposals for own or joint research.

Carry out independent research and act as a Principal Investigator or project leader on major research projects. This may involve leading and line-managing the staff including their recruitment, probation, mentoring, performance review and staff development; managing the budget, and taking responsibility for the delivery of the programme.

Define research objectives and questions, review and synthesise the outcomes of research studies, and develop ideas for application of research outcomes.

Develop proposals for major research projects which will make a significant impact, and lead to an increase in knowledge or understanding or the development of new explanations, insights, concepts or processes.

Produce high-quality research outputs that have significant impact in the field, for publication in monographs or recognised high-quality journals, or performance/exhibition, as appropriate, and make a significant contribution to the School's REF submission at acceptable levels of volume and academic excellence.

Make presentations at national or international conferences or exhibit work in other appropriate events of a similar standing, and identify ways to disseminate research outputs informally via the internet, the media and other forms of public engagement.

Develop and maintain an independent research reputation by, for example, serving on peer review committees, and acting as a referee for journal articles and research grant applications.

Contribute to the internal management of the REF assessment exercise.

Provide academic leadership to those working within relevant research areas.

Play an influential role in identifying sources of funding and secure and/or contribute to the process of securing bids.

Play a leading role in identifying and securing opportunities for enterprise activity, knowledge exchange income and/or consultancy.

Actively build internal and external contacts, and play a key role in internal networks and relevant external networks in order to, for example, identify sources of funding, secure student placements, and build relationships for future activities.

Develop links with external contacts such as other educational bodies, businesses, the public sector, and professional bodies to foster collaboration and potentially generate a source of income.

Play a role in a relevant national professional body or recognised events.

Continually update knowledge and understanding in field or specialism, and engage in continuous professional development.

Conduct risk assessments and take responsibility for the health and safety of others, if required.

3. Contribution to School & University

Attend and contribute to School meetings.

Demonstrate an understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion, and how these principles can be applied in a higher education setting.

Contribute to the overall management of the School in areas such as budget management and business planning, as required.

Contribute to School-level strategic planning, and University-level strategic planning processes if required.

Engage in activities beyond day-to-day teaching duties, for example Admissions Days.

Chair and/or play a key role in School or University working groups or committees, as required.

Undertake an administrative or organisational role within the School e.g. Library Representative, Year Tutor, Exam Board Chair, or personal/academic tutoring.

Advise and provide support to less experienced colleagues, and conduct Performance and Development Reviews, as required.

Undertake additional administrative duties, as required by the Head of School.

4. Role-specific duties

Research: Design, leadership, and coordination of psychological research relating to kindness, altruism, empathy, compassion, and/or cognate areas.

Teaching: You should be able to demonstrate that you will make a significant contribution to undergraduate and/or postgraduate teaching within the School at a level appropriate to the grade, including specialist provision concerning the psychology of kindness and related areas.

This Job Description sets out current duties of the post that may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the post or level of responsibility entailed.

INDICATIVE PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- Evidence of novel or innovative approaches to teaching supervision or assessment, including appropriate uses of technology.
- Sustained high-quality teaching across both undergraduate and postgraduate portfolios, as evidenced by surveys, questionnaires and peer review.
- Evidence of the integration of research, scholarship and professional practice with teaching activities.
- Regular published output of original research, with a significant proportion at international level (referred journal papers, monographs, book chapters, text books).
- Responsible for leading and managing a major research group.
- Sustained success in obtaining competitively awarded research and knowledge exchange grants and contracts, with evidence of leadership in securing such awards (for example, as Principal Investigator).
- A successful track record of completed postgraduate research supervision at MPhil and PhD level.
- Significant involvement in knowledge exchange in conjunction with partner organisations in industry, commerce, government or NGOs. This could be in the form of externally funded research and/or consultancy.
- Evidence of external profile, such as membership of professional body, editorial board or similar.
- Successful prosecution of a major task which facilitates School or organisational unit performance or business.
- Evidence of a capacity to contribute creatively and constructively to the management of School business.
- Evidence of successful management of more junior and/or support staff where such opportunities exist.
- Responsible and effective involvement in the broader arena of the School and/or University including, where appropriate, a role providing support, pastoral care and guidance to students or colleagues.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA

1. Normally educated to doctoral level, or other equivalent qualification, or appropriate level of experience, as appropriate to the discipline (see role-specific criteria below).
2. Excellent interpersonal skills, with the proven ability to engage with students using a variety of different methods.
3. Significant experience of high-quality teaching at undergraduate and postgraduate level.
4. Experience of successful curriculum design or re-design.
5. Ability to lead and manage a major research programme.
6. Track record of significant and high-quality publications in reputable journals and other appropriate media of similar standing.
7. Successful track record of generating research and knowledge exchange income, and the translation of research results into practice.
8. Significant experience of supervising postgraduate students.
9. An emerging international reputation in the field of study.
10. Evidence of proactive contribution to School and/or University.
11. Excellent presentation skills, with the proven ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing, with students, colleagues and external audiences.
12. Leadership and people management skills.
13. Ability to exercise a high degree of innovation and creative problem-solving.
14. Excellent organisational and administrative skills.
15. Ability to prioritise and meet deadlines.
16. A willingness to participate in support activities beyond normal teaching duties.
17. Excellent IT skills, with the ability to produce high-quality learning support materials.

ESSENTIAL ROLE-SPECIFIC CRITERIA

1. Research: Significant expertise and experience, at a level appropriate to the grade, in the psychology of kindness, altruism, empathy, compassion, or cognate areas.

2. Teaching: Ability to make a significant contribution to undergraduate and/or postgraduate teaching at a level appropriate to the grade.

DESIRABLE CRITERIA

1. A recognised higher education teaching qualification.
2. Experience of successful interdisciplinary research collaborations.
3. A track record of successful impact, knowledge exchange, and/or engagement activities with policymakers, practitioners, and non-academic organisations.
4. Experience of teaching on the topic of kindness, altruism, empathy, compassion, or cognate areas.
5. Advanced knowledge of, and experience of using, qualitative methods or quantitative methods (preferably including R and R Studio for the latter).