

# Executive Assistant to the Vice-Chancellor

Professional Support Services

**Candidate Information Pack – June 2022**





# A Welcome from the Vice-Chancellor

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We have been developing leaders, entrepreneurs and innovators at the Royal Agricultural University ever since 1845. The RAU was established at a time of great famine in Ireland when enlightened individuals, and members of agricultural societies, recognised that the transformation of UK agriculture – needed to increase food production – could only be achieved through education, and the application of science and innovation.

Our mission today bears testament to the foresight of our founders as we aim to equip a new generation of graduates to meet the most pressing challenges that face us in the world today – climate change, food security, sustainable land use, biodiversity loss, heritage management and so on. Put simply, the RAU's *raison d'être* is the survival of humankind, and there is no higher calling than that.

We are currently undertaking a strategy review in which sustainable agriculture will be at the heart of who we are and what we do. If you would like to play a role in shaping the future development of the RAU and you share our passion and commitment to the land-based sector – to agriculture, food and the environment; real estate land management; rural business and entrepreneurship; cultural heritage and equine management and science – then we would be delighted to hear from you as a prospective member of our staff.

Thank you for your interest in the Royal Agricultural University.

Best wishes

Professor Peter McCaffery  
Vice Chancellor

# About the Royal Agricultural University

The Royal Agricultural University has been at the forefront of agricultural education and a key contributor to the land-based sector for over 175 years.

## Our heritage

The Royal Agricultural University (RAU), formerly the Royal Agricultural College, was the first agricultural college in the English-speaking world. The first 25 students were admitted in September 1845.

From its early days, the College was staffed with innovators and pioneers and made a considerable impact on farming practice and agricultural science. In 2013, the Privy Council awarded the College full University Status with Taught Degree Awarding Powers, in recognition of its long record in the provision of higher education.

## The present

The RAU has some 1,200 students studying a range of subjects, including agriculture, animal science, business, environment, equine science, farm management, food, real estate and rural land management. Set on the edge of Cirencester in the beautiful Cotswold countryside, its small size provides an exceptional sense of community amongst students and staff, which supports, develops and encourages students from all backgrounds to achieve their ambitions.

The University motto is 'Arvorum Cultus Pecorumque', a quotation from Virgil's Georgics, meaning 'Caring for the Fields and the Beasts'. This maxim has been enduringly relevant for a University which, in every area of its activity, has worked to promote sustainable use of the land, safeguard the environment and animal welfare and the wellbeing of rural communities. The RAU prides itself on combining subject expertise with industry connectivity and an innovative, forward thinking, enterprising approach. This opens doors for students, and RAU graduates are well prepared for successful careers in their chosen field, whether that be leading innovation and change in industry, informing future land-based policy, or setting up their own businesses. [rau.ac.uk](http://rau.ac.uk)



## The future

Since 2016, the RAU has achieved significant progress against its strategic plan and has delivered transformation and change. The RAU has redefined its purpose as "to cultivate care for the land and all that depend on it".

Core elements of the strategy include:

- Growing and diversifying the student community by providing an outstanding student experience and excellent employment outcomes. Innovative programmes will be informed by the evolving needs of industry and designed for learners at all stages of life, delivered via traditional and online learning platforms.
- Establishing a Knowledge Hub that will help industry navigate change and uncertainty making it possible to tackle big challenges more effectively, thereby delivering societal benefit and impact. The Hub will provide a focus to catalyse farmer led innovation, act as an accelerator of rural enterprise and become a centre for thought leadership for development of evidence-based policy and strategic thinking.
- Becoming a sustainable, efficient organisation that can fund a continuing investment in its physical, digital and human infrastructure, ensuring a continually improving and excellent experience for students and staff.
- Partnering with land-based colleges and schools to extend and diversify the student community. The University will foster thriving linkages to a variety of localities and communities across the UK, thereby extending the reach of learning opportunities it offers and the impact of its research.
- Developing sustainable partnerships with industry and research-leading institutions to provide a wider perspective, ensuring that what it teaches is relevant, improves student employment outcomes and enables sustainability-oriented innovation.
- Building on existing and successful international partnerships, among which a prominent feature has been teaching partnerships with Chinese universities.





## Select highlights

The RAU has achieved significant progress against its strategic plan. Recent successes include:

- Ranked one of the UK's Top Ten Universities. Whatuni Student Choice Awards, both 2019 and 2020 <https://www.whatuni.com/student-awards-winners/university-of-the-year/>. We were also top 10 for job prospects in both years.
- Enterprising Learning Provider of the Year 2019: IOEE Celebrating Enterprise Awards 2019 <http://ioee.uk/2019/10/07/celebrating-enterprise-awards-2019/> . Awarded Centre of Excellence by the Institute of Enterprise and Entrepreneurs (IOEE) in the same year.
- Winning £1.1m of Catalyst funding to develop the next generation of agri-food/ tech leaders and to create new industry- led programmes that aim to position the RAU as a thought leader post-Brexit.
- Addressing highly relevant global grand challenges – such as climate change, food security and urbanisation– through the [Rural Knowledge Hub](#), which initiates thought leadership activities and accelerates the growth of rural enterprises through the Farm 491 agri-tech business incubator based in the new Alliston Centre and also the new [National Innovation Centre for Rural Enterprise](#).
- Increasing the percentage of state - school entrants launching two new funds with a specific focus on widening participation and getting involved in two national outreach programmes and the Agrespect rural LGBT+ network.
- Securing a £2.2 million endowment from the John Oldacre Foundation to support research students. Current PhD projects include crop science, land values in London boroughs, and equine nutrition.
- Expanding its CPD offer via the [John Oldacre Rural Innovation Centre](#), which is based at Harnhill and offers a large range of practical, industry-facing courses that teach rural skills.
- Establishing new and mutually beneficial academic partnerships with further education providers, such as the validation arrangement with Plumpton College and the urban farming focus afforded by the link with Capel Manor College in London.

Further information on other initiatives and successes can be found [here](#).



# About the Department

The Institutional Planning & Governance Directorate, takes ownership for the development and implementation of the University's planning and performance cycle. Institutional Planning & Governance influences and informs key business decision making, organisational planning and performance, underpinning organisational strategy. Responding to sector intelligence, and understanding market trends and changes, the Directorate manages University key performance indicators (KPI's), supporting the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Operating Officer. University growth is central to the Directorate and balanced against our accountability for strategic risk management.

The Directorate leads business planning, develops strategic plans that align activities, risks and resources against corporate strategy. The Directorate serves as the focal point for the provision of strategic management information, business processes, data governance and statutory return compliance. Policy management and the continuation of strong University Governance are core to the Directorate, supporting the Governing Council, and assist the University on legal, constitutional, and regulatory requirements. Institutional Planning & Governance is also the central home for the administration team, ensuring key outputs are delivered on time to a high standard.

## The Role

**Job title:** Executive Assistant to the Vice-Chancellor

**Department:** Institutional Planning & Governance

**Responsible to:** Director of Institutional Planning & Policy

**Location:** Cirencester

**Salary:** Grade 8: £34,304 - £40,927 per annum

**Term:** Maternity cover - Fixed Term contract until 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023

**Relationships with:** Vice-Chancellor, CEO, Executive directors, staff, students, governors, alumni, other HEIs, external organisations and agencies

We have a number of different ways to work flexibly, so at your interview feel free to talk about what flexibility means to you. There are no guarantees, however, examples of how our employees already work flexibly include part-time, job share, hybrid-working and compressed hours.



# The Purpose

To partner and provide fundamental support to the Vice-Chancellor. Working together closely, this role acts as a first point of contact with internal and external stakeholders. Supporting the Vice-Chancellor, through the provision of pro-active and flexible confidential support.

## Key Responsibilities

1. Providing full executive and administrative support to the Vice-Chancellor
2. Pro-active daily management of emails for the Vice-Chancellor, prioritising, briefing and responding as appropriate. Management of the Vice-Chancellor Comms email account
3. Receiving and processing all communications to the Vice-Chancellor
4. Managing projects assigned by the Vice-Chancellor, including the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Commission
5. Management, oversight and co-ordination of events, including recruitment panels for the Vice-Chancellor; liaison with external and internal colleagues, organisation of arrangements, scheduling, invitations, venues, catering, speakers etc
6. Ensuring data and information required to deal with correspondence is collated and available in a timely manner
7. Ensuring the Vice-Chancellor is briefed appropriately for all meetings and engagements; including co-ordinating information from across the university and from external partners
8. Comprehensive, creative and complex diary management; prioritising as necessary, with a flexible approach to changing plans
9. Liaison and communication with members of the Governing Council
10. Arranging and prioritising internal and external meetings and attendance at functions and events including travel and accommodation
11. Providing support as required to the Vice-Chancellor's meetings, including arranging meetings and venues, compiling agenda, sourcing papers, taking minutes and circulating papers & information
12. Providing secretariat support for the Vice-Chancellor's Executive Group and approximately monthly Senior Leadership Team meetings as necessary
13. Monitoring action points from committees and meetings ensuring these are completed
14. Minuting other meetings as required
15. Proof reading draft communications and documents for the Vice-Chancellor. Assisting with drafting communications on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor
16. Liaison with the Executive Directors' PAs
17. Managing and process the Vice-Chancellor's expenses according to the University's policies
18. Maintaining efficient paper and electronic filing systems
19. Being available for potential ad-hoc travel with the Vice-Chancellor
20. Such other reasonable tasks as may be required by the Vice-Chancellor



## General Responsibilities

- The University is committed to equality of opportunity. All staff are required to comply with current legislation, University policies and good practice guidance.
- All staff are required to act in a way that safeguards the health and wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults at all times. The post holder must be familiar with and adhere to appropriate safeguarding policies and guidance and participate in related mandatory/statutory training. Managers have a responsibility to ensure their team members understand their individual responsibilities with regard to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.
- All staff are required to participate in the University appraisal process and should ensure they are familiar with the process and plan time to prepare for their appraisal. Following the appraisal, staff are expected to undertake in any necessary learning and development and work towards the objectives that have been set.
- The University expects staff to attend any training designated as mandatory and to undertake learning and development activities to support their role. Managers must facilitate learning and development within their teams.
- It is a condition of employment that staff will not disclose any information obtained in the course of their duties other than to those entitled to receive it. The post holder must ensure that the confidentiality of personal data remains secure and that restricted information or highly restricted information to which they have access remains confidential during and after their employment at Royal Agricultural University. All staff must undergo appropriate data protection training as required.
- All absence from work must be reported in accordance with the University's absence procedures and recorded on iTrent.
- The University acknowledges its responsibility to provide a safe, smoke free environment, to its employees, service users and visitors. It is the policy of the University not to allow smoking on University premises other than in specifically designated areas.

## Person Specification

<b>Requirements</b> The post holder must be able to demonstrate:	<b>Essential or Desirable</b>	<b>Measured By</b> A) Application Form B) Interview C) Presentation
<b>Qualifications:</b>		
Relevant degree	D	A
Relevant Professional Qualifications (or equivalent experience)	D	A



<b>Requirements</b> The post holder must be able to demonstrate:	<b>Essential or Desirable</b>	<b>Measured By</b> A) Application Form B) Interview C) Presentation
<b>Knowledge, Experience and Skills:</b>		
Extensive experience of providing Executive Assistant or Personal Assistant support at Senior Executive/Board level	E	A,B
Excellent IT skills - Microsoft Outlook, Word (including mail merge), Excel, PowerPoint, intranet and internet, and prepared to use other in-house ICT systems	E	A,C
Minute taking experience	E	A,B
Excellent organisational skills- having the ability to manage own workload, and that of the Vice-Chancellor, and to prioritise and progress a range of tasks.	E	B
Excellent interpersonal, verbal and written communication skills, with the ability to draft letters, communications and correct documents	E	B,C
Must be prepared to work flexible hours to meet the business needs – occasional early start or later finish.	E	A,B
Proven ability to build good working relationships	E	B
Maintain confidentiality at all times	E	A,B
Flexibility to travel with the Vice-Chancellor within the UK on an ad-hoc basis	E	A,B
Experience in managing projects	E	A,B
Experience in managing and co-ordinating events	D	A,B
Proof reading skills	D	A,B
Understand the principles of Data Protection, freedom of information and other relevant legal obligations to support the Vice-Chancellor's responsibilities in this respect.	D	A,B
Short hand/ note-taking	D	A,B

# General Terms and Conditions of Employment

- This post is a full-time appointment, offered on a fixed-term. It will be remunerated on the single pay spine, at Grade 8 £34,304 - £40,927 per annum. The appointment is normally made at the minimum of the pay scale and is subject to meeting all pre-employment clearances and requirements of the Person Specification.
- All new employees undergo a period of 6 months' probation in accordance with the terms and conditions of employment confirmation of employment is dependent on the satisfactory completion of that probationary period.
- The standard hours of work are based on 35 hours per week, although some flexibility may be required depending on the post. Your line manager will discuss with you the required working hours.
- The University holiday year runs from January to December. The post carries an entitlement to 30 working days (for a full-time position, otherwise pro rata) of paid leave during the course of the holiday year (pro rata if the appointment is made during the holiday year), in addition to Statutory Bank Holidays. There may also be discretionary days and days when the University is closed on particular dates in the interests of efficiency.
- It is a condition of employment that all relevant posts are vetted by the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) and if it applies to this appointment you will be required to undertake a DBS check. The University will pay the fee for this service. Any false declarations or any findings from the Disclosure could affect the suitability for employment.

## Pensions and Auto Enrolment

If you meet the criteria set out below, and are not already an active member of any of our pension schemes, the University is required to auto-enrol you into a suitable pension scheme. The criteria for auto-enrolment is:

- Age - if you are 22 or over but no more than State Pension Age
- Earnings - a minimum of £10,000 per year
- Working in the UK

The pension schemes supported by the RAU are:

**AVIVA CATEGORY X** - all eligible RAU employees (except teachers) are automatically enrolled

- 5% (minimum) contribution by employee and
- 3% contribution by RAU

**AVIVA CATEGORY Y1** - RAU Group Pension Scheme (defined contribution) - employees are able to upgrade to this scheme before their 6-month probation.

- 6.5% (minimum) contribution by employee and
- 6.5% contribution by RAU



- life assurance is an additional benefit (two times annual salary)

#### **TEACHERS' PENSION** (for teaching staff)

- employee contribution according to salary scale – between 7.4% and 11.7%
- 23.68% contribution by RAU
- life assurance is an additional benefit (three times annual salary)

## Staff Benefits

We offer a range of Staff Benefits including a 35-hour working week, a generous 30 days annual leave entitlement plus bank holidays (pro rata for part time posts), pension scheme, free and guaranteed parking on campus and free shuttle bus from campus to Cirencester town centre, discounted catering facilities, discounted onsite gym, free library services, employee assistance programme, occupational health and counselling services, cycle to work scheme and staff development opportunities.

Further details of the full range of staff benefits available can be found on our [website](#).

## Application Procedure

If you are interested in applying for this role, please send:

- University [Application Form](#) together with the [Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form](#) available on the University website [www.rau.ac.uk](http://www.rau.ac.uk)) – you may attach your up to date CV if you wish to add additional information.
- Details of two referees who must be people who can comment authoritatively on you as a person and as an employee in relation to the level of the post, and must include your current or most recent employer or their representative.
- Please forward to the HR Team, Royal Agricultural University, Cirencester, Gloucestershire, GL7 6JS or via email to [jobs@rau.ac.uk](mailto:jobs@rau.ac.uk) stating where you saw the advert for the role
- Informal enquiries can be made to **Matt Jones, Director of Institutional Planning & Policy** – [Matt.Jones@rau.ac.uk](mailto:Matt.Jones@rau.ac.uk)
- **Closing date:** 26<sup>th</sup> June 2022 with **Interviews on:** 5<sup>th</sup> July, 2022.
- Should you be selected for interview please be aware that we are unable to reimburse interview expenses.

**The RAU is an equal opportunities employer and we particularly welcome applications from black and minority ethnic candidates as they are underrepresented within the RAU at this level.**

# General Data Protection Regulations: Applicant Privacy Notice

The Royal Agricultural University collects and processes your personal data so that it can meet its statutory and legal obligations, and when it has a legitimate interest in processing personal data before, during and after the end of the employment relationship.

The data which forms part of your job application (for example, application form, CV, references, Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form, shortlisting and interview records) will be stored in a range of different places, which will include the University's HR and recruitment management systems (electronic and paper based), and in IT systems (including the University's email system). Your information may be shared internally with the HR Department and with employees who are involved in the recruitment and selection process, but only if access to your data is absolutely necessary for the performance of those roles.

The University may share your data with third parties in certain circumstances. Personal data that the University uses for the purposes of equal opportunities monitoring and reporting is anonymised or is collected with the express consent of applicants, which can be withdrawn at any time. Applicants are entirely free to decide whether to provide such data and there are no consequences of failing to do so.

The University takes the security of your data seriously and has internal controls in place to try to ensure that your data is not lost, accidentally destroyed, misused or disclosed, and is not accessed except by the above employees in the performance of their duties. If your application is unsuccessful, your applicant data will be destroyed 6 months following the advertised closing date of the post you have applied for. If your application is successful, your applicant data will be retained during your employment and for 6 years following your leaving date. You can access and obtain a copy of your data on request and you can ask the University to change incorrect or incomplete data.

In certain circumstances you can ask the University to stop processing your data, or you can object to the processing of your data. If you believe that the University has not complied with your data protection rights, you can complain to the Information Commissioner. Further information about your rights in accordance with Data Protection and the GDPR Regulations can be obtained from the University Data Protection Officer. A detailed Employee Privacy Notice is available to view [here](#).

