

Head of Student Services

Professional Support Services

Candidate Information Pack – April 2021



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



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.

“The RAU’s mission is to equip a new generation to thrive through change”

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 agritech 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 applied research, and PhD 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](#).



The Role

Job title:	Head of Student Services
Department:	Academic Services
Responsible to:	Registrar and Director of Academic Services
Responsible for:	Student Support Services team
Location:	Cirencester, Gloucestershire
Salary:	Grade 9: £39,152 - £49,553 per annum
Term:	Permanent, full time
Relationships with:	staff, students, guests, contractors and suppliers

The Purpose

The post holder will work closely with senior managers and other key colleagues to support the enhancement of the student experience across the student lifecycle.

The Head of Student Services manages the Student Services team, including the Disability and Inclusive Learning Officer, Disability and Inclusive Learning Assistant, Student Welfare Officer, Careers & Employability Officer, Placements Administrator, the Counsellor and contracted service providers and is responsible for the Student Hub. They will work closely with colleagues in developing work and initiatives that enhance the student experience, student wellbeing, student representation and graduate outcomes. They will also support the University in a number of areas including student surveys and other feedback mechanisms, Access and Participation, Safeguarding and Prevent, developing consistent standards for our student facing services, equality, diversity and inclusion, and sustainability. The Head of Student Services will also need to be familiar with the Office for Students (OfS) Ongoing Conditions of Registration and ensure that these are met with regard to areas within their remit.

The post holder will be committed to developing the student experience and working with students and be familiar with the HE sector, having knowledge of and disseminating best practice, including an understanding of the specific issues that impact upon small, specialist institutions. Ideally, the post holder will have experience of the land-based sector. They will have significant leadership and management experience and excellent interpersonal skills, with the ability to work effectively with academic, professional and support staff colleagues. They will also be data literate and have the ability to support the external reporting requirements of the OfS and for the measuring of impact and evaluation of projects to meet the objectives of the Access and Participation Plan and can assist in the submission of other external returns and submissions, such as the TEF.

As a member of its leadership team, the post holder will also make a general contribution to the running of the wider Academic Services Directorate, including the support to be provided by Student Services to other Academic Services teams at peak periods as necessary and practicable.

Key Responsibilities

- 1 To work with the Vice Chancellor's Executive Group, Senior Leadership Team, Academic Services teams and other colleagues to actively support and develop the student experience across the RAU across the student lifecycle.
- 2 To provide leadership and line management to the Disability and Inclusive Learning Officer, Disability and Inclusive Learning Assistant, Student Welfare Officer, Careers & Employability Officer, Placements Administrator, the Counsellor, contracted service providers, STARS, and Chaplaincy as well as being the main point of liaison with the University Health Centre and Student Assistance Provider; ensuring that these areas provide a high level of customer service to students and other stakeholders and that all appropriate HR procedures are followed, with service and personal objectives aligning to the University's strategy.
- 3 To oversee the continuing development of the Student Hub as a one stop shop, working with the Academic Services team to provide enhanced information and advice to students via the Hub and online.
- 4 Support the delivery, monitoring and the evaluation of initiatives, policies and procedures across the RAU to support the Access and Participation Plan, the student voice, personal tutoring, employability, start of year, student wellbeing, student conduct & discipline and related areas, which contribute to positive outcomes for our students as well as for the RAU, indicated via, amongst other things, the NSS and the Teaching Excellence Framework. To develop and lead on initiatives where required.
- 5 Work collaboratively with key stakeholders to ensure the University meets its obligations under the OfS Regulatory Framework, ensuring success for all students from all backgrounds.
- 6 To support the Student Voice, working with key colleagues, including the RAUSU, to deliver: training, support and development for effective student representation, the NSS and other student surveys and feedback mechanisms and to ensure that student feedback is effectively responded to and that response communicated, in both the short and longer term.
- 7 To provide, or contribute to, reports to internal and external bodies as required.
- 8 Making use of relevant data, including student feedback data, identify outcomes, themes and trends in respect of student success, progression and satisfaction and develop strategies which influence change across the University and create positive outcomes.
- 9 In collaboration with colleagues, provide training and staff development to University staff in respect of the student experience and student success.
- 10 Contribute to external and internal reviews and audits, preparations for the TEF, other statutory or professional body reviews, and the University's internal review mechanisms, and use outcomes to drive continuous improvements.
- 11 To be responsible for personal professional development and that of the Student Services team, representing the University as required on national bodies/conferences in respect of areas relevant to the role and participating in national networks and other fora to keep

abreast of national and sector developments and best practice, ensuring the dissemination of this to the Student Services team, University leadership and wider community

- 12 To develop and maintain effective working relationships with colleagues in the University and other academic and administrative colleagues, Governing Council, the RAUSU and external organisations.
- 13 To comply with all University policies and procedures relevant to this role.
- 14 To be part of the out of hours Duty Manager rota system
- 15 To make a general contribution to the running of the wider Academic Services Directorate, including support to be provided by Student Services to other Directorate teams at peak periods.
- 16 To undertake such other duties as may be reasonably requested commensurate to the level of experience and responsibilities expected.

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

Requirements The post holder must be able to demonstrate:	Essential or Desirable	Measured By A) Application Form B) Interview C) Presentation
Relevant academic/professional qualifications and/or experience to at least first degree level and ideally to postgraduate level.	E	A/B
Demonstrable and recent experience of leading multi-disciplinary professional teams in a HE student services setting, designing and effecting organisational change and achieving strategic outcomes.	E	A/B/C
Proven excellent and effective leadership and team working skills, including the ability to inspire and motivate others to develop and excel	E	A/B/C
Awareness and understanding of national policy developments in HE and in particular regarding student support services, student representation, the Office for Students and the wider student experience.	E	A/B/C
Excellent communication skills both oral and written with an ability to effectively communicate at all levels and to a range of audiences.	E	A/B/C
Ability to interpret data and produce relevant statistical information, business reports and make presentations as required.	E	A/B/C
Excellent interpersonal skills with an ability to build effective working relationships at and across all levels.	E	A/B/C
Ability to effectively collaborate and network internally and externally to pursue shared interest and benefit the University	E	A/B/C
High level of initiative, personal judgement, resourcefulness, flexibility and a self-motivating approach.	E	A/B/C
Ability to ensure high levels of service and a focus on the student experience within a resource constrained environment.	E	A/B/C
Awareness of relevant legislation and regulation impacting student services activities	E	A/B/C

Demonstrably strong commitment to supporting and developing the student experience and to equality, diversity and inclusion.	E	A/B/C
Ability to work under pressure and deliver to deadlines, including a willingness to work flexible hours including evenings, weekends and public holidays.	E	A/C
Willingness to be part of the out of hours rota system in the event of emergencies or significant welfare concerns	E	A/C

General Terms and Conditions of Employment

- This post is a full time appointment, offered on a permanent. It will be remunerated on the single pay spine, at Grade 9 £39,152-£49,553 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 nature of this post is such that it is expected that you will respond to the operational requirements of the University in order to fulfil your duties in a professional manner. You will be required to work such hours as are reasonably required to discharge your duties effectively and competently. The exact number of hours in any week will vary in accordance with institutional requirements, but will not be less than 35 hours a week.
- 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 only)

- 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 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, free gym, discounted catering facilities, 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 [Professional Services Application Form](#) together with the [Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form](#) available on the University website 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 stating where you saw the advert for the role
- **Closing date:** 30 April 2021 with **Interviews** : week/commencing 10 May 2021
- Should you be selected for interview please be aware that we are unable to reimburse interview expenses.

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](#).

