



# Executive Dean of School of Life Sciences and the Environment

**Candidate pack**



**ROYAL  
HOLLOWAY  
UNIVERSITY  
OF LONDON**



## Royal Holloway, University of London

Royal Holloway, University of London, is ranked in the top 30 universities in the UK\*. Through world-class research that expands minds and changes lives, the dedication of our teachers and the feel of the Royal Holloway experience, ours is a community that inspires individuals to succeed academically, socially and personally.

The university was founded by two social reformers who pioneered the ideal of education and knowledge for all who could benefit. Their vision lives on today. As one of the UK's leading research-intensive universities we are home to some of the world's foremost authorities in the sciences, arts, business, economics and law. We are strengthened by diversity, and welcome students and academics who travel from all over the world to study and work here, ensuring an international and multicultural perspective within a close-knit and historic campus.

\*Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide, 2023

# Key facts

- Royal Holloway is currently ranked in the top 30 in the UK in the Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide, 2023. We are also ranked in the top 400 in the world and 41st overall in the UK in the Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings 2023. In its category 'International Outlook', Royal Holloway is ranked in the UK's top 40 universities.
- Royal Holloway sits within the top 25% of universities in the UK for research rated 'world-leading' or 'internationally excellent' by the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021. Five submissions were ranked in the top 10 for 4\* outputs.
- The National Student Survey (NSS) 2022 revealed that Royal Holloway, with a rating of 79%, remains above the sector average.
- Our world-leading researchers continue to address global challenges, including the development of treatments and therapies for rare diseases and life-limiting conditions, the rapid decline of bees and protecting the UK's national infrastructure from cyber-attack.
- Recognised as world-class experts in the arts, humanities and sciences, many Royal Holloway academics act as advisors to policy-makers and the Government on a wide range of issues, such as combating radicalisation and terrorism.
- Royal Holloway has a total of 11,844 students (FTE, at December 2022). Of these 9,421 are from the UK, 601 are from the EU and 2,002 are from further afield internationally. We currently have 9,943 undergraduates, 1,308 postgraduate taught and 595 postgraduate research students.
- In addition to the main campus in Egham, Surrey we also have a growing campus at Bedford Square in central London where over 300 of our postgraduate students are taught.
- We have 1,671 FTE of staff working at Royal Holloway across academic, professional services and support areas.
- Royal Holloway has an annual income of around £201 million (2021/22). We estimate that in the same year, we contributed c.£657.1m to the UK economy\*.
- There are over 95,000 alumni of Bedford College, Royal Holloway College and Royal Holloway and Bedford New College worldwide. Notable alumni include novelist George Eliot, suffragette Emily Davison, the first woman doctor in the west Dr Elizabeth Blackwell, actor Mark Strong, EU Foreign Minister Baroness Cathy Ashton, writer, actor and campaigner Sir Lenny Henry, and Paralympic triple gold medallist Sophie Christiansen.

\*Biggar Economics



# Our strategic plan, 2021-2024

We have a bold vision for Royal Holloway's future and a clear strategy for how to make this happen.

The strategic plan considers how we can meet the needs of our modern times in terms of the provision of higher education and research based innovation. By building on our well regarded academic strengths, and by aligning to needs, for example in graduate employability, programme portfolio, access, civic influence, partnership and knowledge exchange, we can deliver on our purpose as a university.

Our three year strategic plan, covering 2021 to 2024, was inspired by the Deed of Foundation which established Royal Holloway College in 1886. Royal Holloway College merged with Bedford College in 1985, providing the foundations of the university we are today.

Our strategic plan has three strategic priority pillars:

- Respond to the higher education needs and ambitions of an expanding London population.
- Build strong and sustainable international partnerships that expand the horizons of all our students.
- Develop strengths in challenge-led research and contribute to addressing key issues of our modern time.

## Vision for the future

Throughout the plan is a strong focus on managing our resources effectively and efficiently. In doing so we protect the legacy of our founders and enable Royal Holloway to meet the modern needs of future generations.

Equality, diversity and inclusion are a central part of our efforts to realise this future. As a university we are ambitious to cultivate an inclusive environment which supports excellence in teaching, research and student and colleague experience.



## Our strategic plan, 2021-2024

“The Founder believes that the education of women should not be exclusively regulated by the tradition and method of former ages; but that it should be founded on those studies and sciences which the experience of modern times has shown to be the most valuable, and the best adapted to meet the intellectual and social requirements of the students.”

**Deed of  
Foundation,  
1883**

Aligning to the opportunities and requirements of our modern times to address local and global needs

**Strategic  
ambition**

Respond to the higher education needs and ambitions of an expanding London population

Build strong and sustainable international partnerships that expand the horizons of all our students

Develop strengths in challenge-led research and contribute to addressing key issues of our modern time

**Strategic  
priority  
pillars**

Manage resources effectively and efficiently to ensure a financially sustainable future, creating value through and for our people.

**Operational routes to delivery**

**Academic routes to delivery**

Simplify and rationalise professional services / processes / procedures

Strengthen employability, inclusion, reasons for firm choice student recruitment

Maximise benefits of information technology and digitisation

Grow international experiences for our students

Relentless focus on service / continuous improvement / partnership working

Expand challenge-led research from investigator-led research basis

**Strategy  
to action:  
academy and  
professional  
services**

# About the School of Life Sciences and the Environment

Royal Holloway has six schools in total: Business and Management; Performing and Digital Arts; Engineering, Physical and Mathematical Sciences; Humanities; Law and Social Science; and Life Sciences and the Environment.

Schools have clear authority to successfully manage teaching and research development. Executive Deans of School have a prominent role in institutional decision-making. Other members of the Executive include the Senior Vice-Principals who cover Education, Academic Strategy and Research, and Student and Staff Experience, along with senior Directors of Professional Services. The Executive Dean of School of Life Sciences and the Environment will report to the Senior Vice-Principal (Academic Strategy and Research).

In 2019, a restructure of the wider university saw the establishment of the School of Life Sciences and the Environment. The school is composed of five academic departments – Biological Sciences, Earth Sciences, Geography, Health Studies, and Psychology – and our research and teaching embrace the challenges of today, and the intersectional challenges of living sustainably in tomorrow's world. The school is committed to excellence in education, research and practice.



## Strategy

To succeed it is imperative that the school community is both ambitious and inclusive, committed to inspired teaching, and allowing our students to take advantage of high-quality employability opportunities. Engagement with our external partners enhances knowledge generation and impactful dissemination of our research outputs. Our school industry advisory board and health studies advisory board provide us with enrichment opportunities, including opportunities for knowledge exchange, and the generation of placements and secondments for students and staff. As a school we influence scientific audiences, engage with civil society, work with policymakers, and communicate with the public on biodiversity and conservation, climate change, health, neuroscience and biomedicine, resource management and societal challenges ranging from energy provision to sustainable transport.

We recognise and promote the civic role of the university, building on our contributions to the economic, cultural, environmental, and social diversity of our region while recognising our reach and impact are both national and global.

Our strategy is designed to:

- enable a school which fosters equality, diversity, and inclusion
- support the personal well-being and career development of our staff and students
- aspire to the highest standards of academic, ethical, and professional integrity, including a commitment to adopt sustainable working practices and compliance with Concordats to support research integrity
- capitalise on face-to-face and digital opportunities that enhance our teaching and learning
- collaborate with our external partners in a manner that enhances the accessibility and dissemination of our expertise and research findings
- fulfil our civic purpose by engaging with our communities locally, nationally, and globally
- work closely with the wider university community to advance our sustainability agenda and contribute our experience to the university's sustainability strategy.



## Research and scholarship

As a school, we address problems and challenges of great societal and economic importance. The expansion of our research strengths needs to be informed by research integrity, quality, and impact on the national and international stage. Our aim is to enhance our challenge-led research funding portfolio by working closely with the university's challenge-led research themes, notably Living Sustainably.

Under the aegis of Living Sustainably, we expect the school to lead in cross-disciplinary initiatives in four notable areas: health and wellbeing; sustainable cities; energy futures and bio-technical innovations in agriculture. The university's commitment to our research has been recently demonstrated by the investment of £1m to establish a drone facility, Omnidrone, with funding for a hanger, equipment, training, computational infrastructure, and support vehicle, to enhance cross-school research collaboration.

## Partnerships

The school's partnerships across our region, as well as nationally and internationally, underpin our vision of a civic university. Innovation and enterprise are stimulated by a responsible exchange of ideas and knowledge through collaboration and partnership at all scales. Our relationships are reciprocally beneficial and mutually respectful. Developing partnerships is a dynamic and growing area in the school, with the ambition to establish strong employability links and skills development through student placements.

The school has led on the development of several multifaceted university-wide partnerships, including:

- Runnymede Borough Council, our local planning authority. This partnership was cemented with a Memorandum of Understanding in spring 2022. Initial activities centre around student placements, joint research bids and the upcoming River Thames Scheme to avert flooding
- diverse collaborations with Royal Botanical Garden, Kew, including the school's new MSc in Global Health: Food Security, Sustainability and Biodiversity
- relationship-building with Surrey County Council on behalf of the university
- developing a valuable partnership with the Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce based on Royal Holloway's membership. We are contributing to their new Sustainability Working Group, which is focusing on the small and medium enterprise sector of the Chamber's membership.

School-level partnerships have also recently been established with:

- Jacobs Engineering, to collaborate on transport and place-making contracts with local authorities
- Surrey Wildlife Trust, to provide an umbrella and new opportunities in our school's departments for joint research and advisory work previously undertaken principally at the departmental level.



## Education

The school aspires to educational excellence. A diverse portfolio of degrees is taught across a wide range of academic departments, and all of these courses are united by a strong commitment to the student experience, an inclusive community and to student success. Students experience innovative teaching approaches using dedicated learning and research facilities and innovative approaches to education using state of the art technology and e-learning. This has recently been augmented by the launch of a new video studio, featuring a lightboard and a greenscreen, to help colleagues record high quality content for students.

Our degrees teach our students the skills necessary for success in an increasingly unpredictable future, encouraging interpersonal communication, self-management and critical thinking. Employability is embedded throughout our degree courses through authentic assessments, placements and apprenticeships. The success of the school's educational landscape is based on both the continued excellence of well-established degree courses as well as the diversification and enrichment of our portfolio in new academic areas such as global health, clinical associate psychologists, occupational therapy, sustainable cities and sustainable energy to meet the needs of the changing student population.



# Departments in the school

## Department of Biological Sciences

The Department of Biological Sciences offers a broad range of undergraduate degree programmes, from biomedical sciences to zoology, and a research portfolio to match. The quality of teaching was recognised by a top 30 place in the 2022 Guardian League Table, where the department was also placed third in the country for graduate career prospects. All bioscience degrees are fully accredited by the Royal Society of Biology and the department provides a flexible curriculum that delivers an excellent practical training. Over 30 permanent members of academic staff, alongside postdocs, postgraduate students and technicians address global research challenges in a well-equipped research environment, benefiting from recent investments into the mass spectrometry suite and a new super-resolution confocal laser microscope. 85% of the department's output was rated 3\* and 4\* in REF 2021, and departmental research groups have been awarded over £9M in funding over the last five years.



## Department of Earth Sciences

One of the UK's leading centres for research and teaching in Earth and Environmental Sciences. The REF 2021 rated 100% of the department's research output as 3\* and 4\*. We are proud to have a long history in global monitoring of greenhouse gas emissions, volcanic geohazards, and of our industry relationships that support research in sustainable energy, engineering and the environment. We are a close-knit department; our staff are dedicated to passing on their expertise through teaching. In the 2022 NSS, 89% of our students felt they had been challenged to achieve their best work and 94% said that they'd been able to contact staff when they wanted to. We train our undergraduates and postgraduates to understand the complexity of our planet and its relationship to human resources and activities – including those beyond the Earth, helping us to achieve our ranking of seventh in the UK for graduate prospects.

## Department of Geography

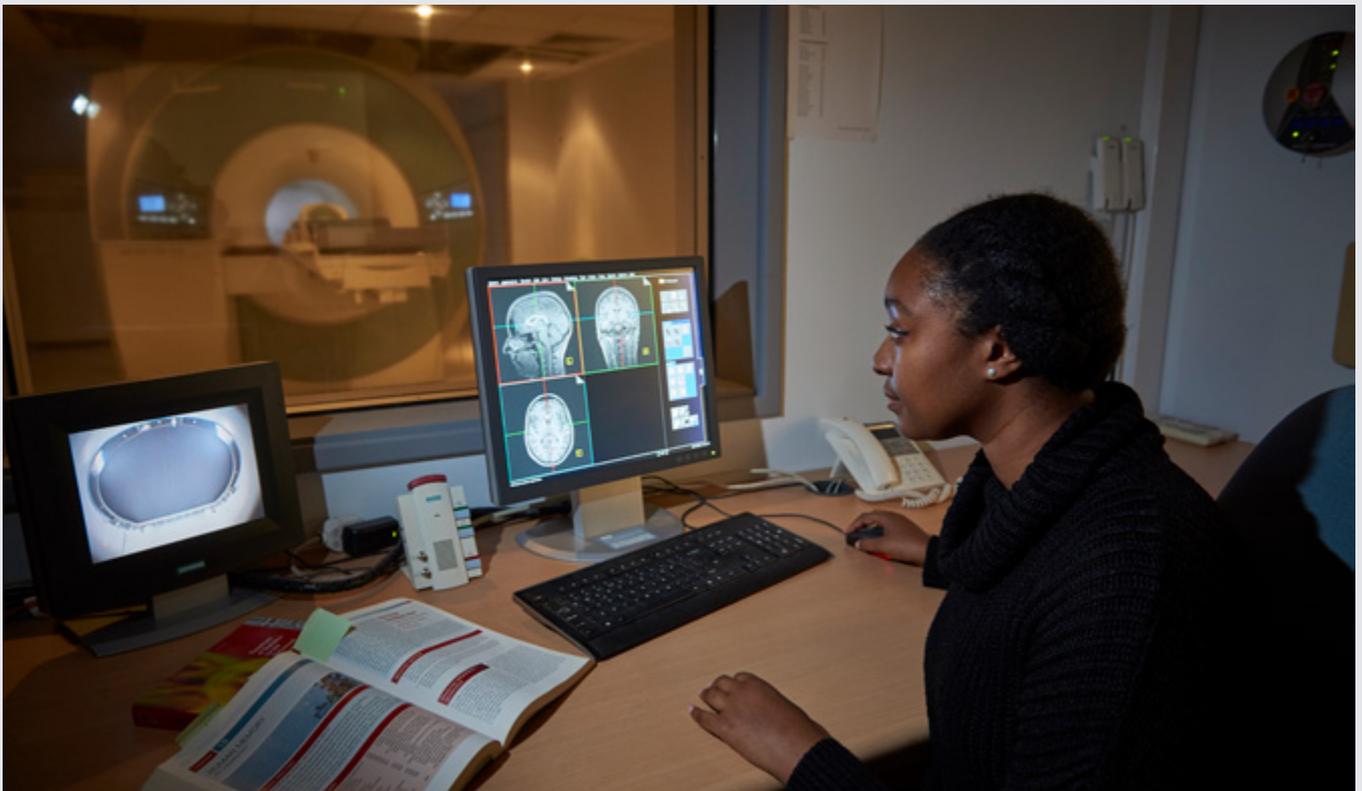
Geography is an inclusive, collegial and supportive department that is internationally-recognised for world-class research and teaching. It achieved the fifth highest result in the UK for research (top for Research Impact and top for Research Environment in REF 2021). The department's three research groups, the Centre for Quaternary Research, the Geopolitics, Development and Social Justice group and the Social, Cultural and Historical Geography group, have a well-established track record in attracting funding from UKRI and other sources and contribute to a vibrant research culture, supported by a suite of state-of-the-art laboratory facilities, including tephrochronology and luminescence. Geographers lead the university-level Centre for the GeoHumanities and benefit from key partnerships in the UK and overseas with an exceptional diversity of institutions, including other universities, government departments, museums, botanic gardens and NGOs. The department also prides itself on its excellence in teaching, scoring 92% overall student satisfaction in NSS 2022 with outstanding track record of student satisfaction achieved year on year. Our single degree undergraduate programmes are accredited by the Royal Geographical Society (with Institute of British Geographers) and we offer a range of specialist postgraduate training opportunities.

## Department of Health Studies

As a new department, Health Studies is excited to build on established world-class research and interdisciplinary collaborations at Royal Holloway and develop new areas of growth with leading experts in health and environmental sectors. These include Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew and the Harvard-led Planetary Health Alliance, whose Northern European Hub is coordinated from Royal Holloway. The department's focus is on the wellbeing of people and the environment, engaging with fundamental challenges and building healthy and resilient communities. It aims to deliver a portfolio of undergraduate and postgraduate degrees with flexible, student-led provision and opportunities to experience real life, challenge led placements. Their students will develop their knowledge, networks and transferable skills to become leaders, innovators and influencers across boundaries. As graduates they will be equipped with a robust understanding of the links between healthy environments and healthy people, and the value of good health to national and global economies. The department was delighted to welcome our first PGT students this year and is looking forward to starting our BSc Health Studies in September 2023.

## Department of Psychology

The department is internationally-recognised for world-class research and teaching. It achieved the third highest result in the UK for research in the last REF. The department has a consistent track record of attracting significant funding and it is well set up to support colleagues' research ambitions. We benefit from excellent facilities including MRI, EEG, TMS, eye trackers, behavioural testing suites, and social and infant observation labs, as well as strong links with clinical organisations and government, industry, and charity affiliations. As well as being a thriving research-led department, we also receive very strong student ratings in the NSS. Students consistently report appreciating the strong community spirit and educational support provided within the department. The dual excellence in teaching and research is achieved in a collegial, diverse and inclusive environment.



# The role

The Executive Dean is responsible for providing strategic leadership and management, enabling the school to deliver innovation and impact in research, teaching and learning, student experience and outcomes, aligned to the university's strategic plans.

The Executive Dean leads a senior team to develop a strategic vision and plan for the school and is accountable for its delivery. They provide a focal point for collaboration and cross-discipline working between departments within the school and between the school and the wider university.

The Executive Dean will develop wider networks both nationally and internationally in furtherance of the interests of the school and university and in line with Royal Holloway's strategic direction.

## Key tasks

### Strategic leadership

- To lead the development and implementation of a strategic plan for the school, aligned to overarching university objectives, which draws on future-focused analysis of the changing HE environment to develop strategic opportunities and manage risk.
- Working with the Senior Vice-Principal and through the planning process, to set student recruitment and research income targets for the school in line with university targets, and ensure their achievement.
- To develop an admissions strategy for the school to ensure that admissions numbers for the school and each of its departments are fulfilled in line with university strategy.
- To develop new income streams for the school, consistent with university and school strategies and goals.
- To be responsible for effective workforce planning within the school to assure delivery of the Strategic Plan.
- As a member of the university's academic planning committees, to actively participate in the overall strategic planning of the university and in the implementation of strategy, resource allocation and business development.



## Academic leadership

- To lead and embed strategies which promote academic innovation in research and teaching across each of the school's departments and disciplines.
- To provide strategic direction and vision for the school to ensure the highest quality of education, outcomes and experience for students.
- To ensure that the school maintains the highest standards of academic performance, teaching quality and of innovation in learning and teaching.
- To develop and lead a culture of active student engagement within the school, including effective representation and course co-design.
- To develop and implement a strategy for continuous improvement in response to feedback from the National Student Survey.
- To be accountable for ensuring that the school is prepared for the subject-level TEF and REF working closely with the Vice-Deans and Heads of Department.
- To ensure that the school is aware of developments within the university and undertake the timely cascade of information.
- To represent the school at a senior level, ensuring equal and appropriate representation for each department and discipline.

## Leading people

- To lead the school executive as the team responsible for the school strategy and its implementation.
- To lead, recruit, manage, develop and motivate high-quality academic staff to create a culture of excellence, cross-discipline collaboration and respect within the school and across the university.
- Through the Performance Development Review process to set and actively review objectives and measurable outcomes of teaching and research success, linked to school and university strategy.
- To initiate and lead change within the school in pursuit of the university's strategic objectives.
- To foster and develop a culture of close working relationships and collaboration between academic and professional services staff.
- To work as a part of a collaborative team with fellow Executive Deans.
- To demonstrate effective leadership on equality and diversity issues within the school, ensuring a culture of fairness and inclusion.



## Managing resources

- To manage the physical and financial resources of the school in a professional and efficient manner to advance the implementation of the school's strategic plan and aligning with the environmental sustainability commitments of the wider university.
- In co-operation with the appropriate Director of Professional Service, to lead and take overall responsibility for the school's compliance with the university's codes of practice, operational standards, policies and procedures, regulations and relevant legislation, particularly in relation to health and safety, ethical issues, equality and diversity, data protection, the management of staff, the supervision of research students and the security of staff, students and property.
- To be accountable for financial performance within the school, managing income flow, investment in support of strategic goals, authorisations and budget planning. To ensure a fair and appropriate distribution of resources to departments within the school.

## External networking and liaison

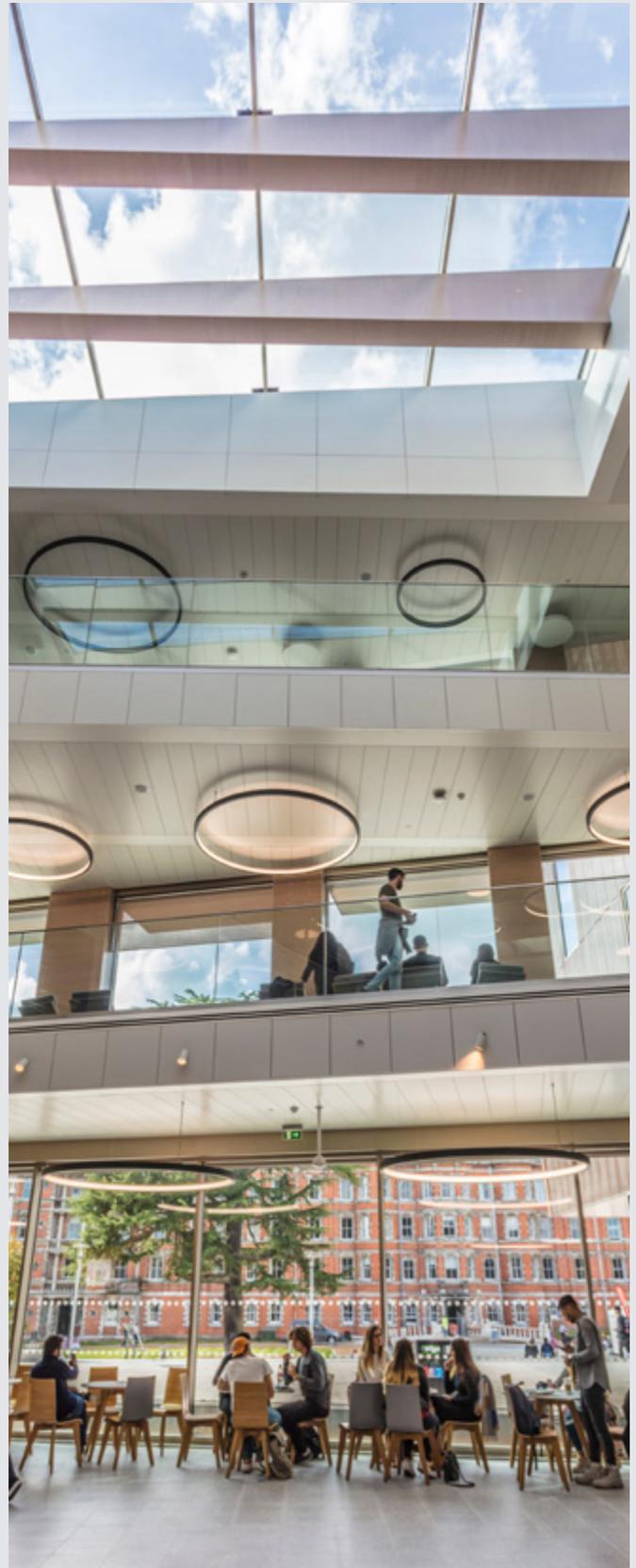
To develop and maintain a network of external partners supporting the global and local ambitions of the school and university.

## Other duties

The duties listed are not exhaustive and may be varied from time to time as dictated by the changing needs of the university. The postholder will be expected to undertake other duties as appropriate and as requested by their manager. The postholder may be required to work at any of the locations at which the business of Royal Holloway is conducted.

## Internal and external relationships

The following list is not exhaustive but the postholder will be required to liaise with: the Principal, Senior Vice-Principals, other Executive Deans, Directors of Professional Services and Students' Union representatives. Key professional service contacts include the Director of Student and Academic Services, Chief Marketing Officer, Director of Strategic Planning, Recruitment and Admissions colleagues, Financial Performance Manager and HR Business Partner.



# Person specification

## Knowledge, education, qualifications and training

- Educated to PhD level or equivalent.
- Excellent understanding of the academic challenges and needs of all disciplines within the school.

## Skills and/or abilities

- Excellent strategic planning skills.
- Excellent leadership and teambuilding skills which demonstrate the university's leadership behaviours at senior level.
- Ability to lead and manage a multi-disciplinary team of senior colleagues effectively, inspiring confidence, collegiality and respect.
- Ability to effectively represent and provide leadership to academic disciplines outside of your own.

- Excellent resource and financial management skills.
- Ability to demonstrate and encourage excellent collaborative working within the school and between academics and professional services.

## Experience

- Proven track record of success in leadership and line management at Head of Department level or equivalent.
- Successful academic track record demonstrated through promotion to Chair or equivalent industrial experience.
- Demonstrable success in developing and implementing future-focused strategic plans for a department/team which maximise opportunities and manage risk.
- Experience of successfully leading change within a department/HEI.



# How to apply

Please apply through Royal Holloway's online recruitment system at [jobs.royalholloway.ac.uk](https://jobs.royalholloway.ac.uk) by the published closing date.

First round interviews: 20th March

Final round interviews: 5th April

For an informal discussion about the role please contact Professor Ken Badcock, Senior Vice-Principal (Academic Strategy and Research) [ken.badcock@royalholloway.ac.uk](mailto:ken.badcock@royalholloway.ac.uk)





Royal Holloway, University of London  
Egham, Surrey, TW20 0EX  
01784 434455  
[royalholloway.ac.uk](http://royalholloway.ac.uk)