



GROUP DIRECTOR OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS

APPLICANT PACK



Contents

Welcome from the Vice-Chancellor	4
Who we are	8
Liverpool 2031	10
Our Values	12
About the role	14
Who we are looking for	16
How we are run	20
Our organisation	22
Appointment process and how to apply	24



Welcome from the Vice-Chancellor

Dear candidate,

Thank you for your interest in this role.

The University of Liverpool is a remarkable place, combining academic excellence with the attributes of our famous home maritime city: a spirit of creativity, originality, welcoming to all and committed to social responsibility.

With a history of innovation that spans life-changing discoveries through research, ground-breaking global education partnerships, and a steadfast commitment to opening up higher education to all, we have always believed in doing things differently.

Powered by academic excellence and the attributes of our famous home city, we are a 300,000 strong international community of staff, students and alumni recognised globally for our world-changing research and teaching portfolio. Ideas born here have long transformed societies and industries, touching millions of lives around the world and making an impact that really matters. We also play a crucial role in achieving our city region's economic strategy and a longstanding reputation for enabling students from all walks of life to access a university education.

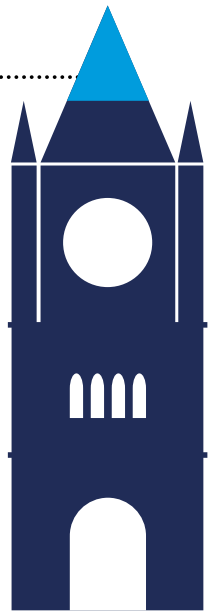
Our performance speaks for itself, with 91% of our research rated world-leading or internationally excellent in the Research Excellence Framework and a Gold rating in the Teaching Excellence Framework. These and a wide range of other recent successes at institutional and departmental level, from ground-breaking discoveries to transformational partnerships both locally and globally, reflect our standing as a highly performing Russell Group university.

As we look ahead to 2031, when the University will celebrate 150 years of creativity, innovation and global impact, this is a truly exciting time to join the Original Redbrick. We hope that you will help us to build on this success and look forward to hearing from you.

Professor Tim Jones BSc, PhD
Vice-Chancellor

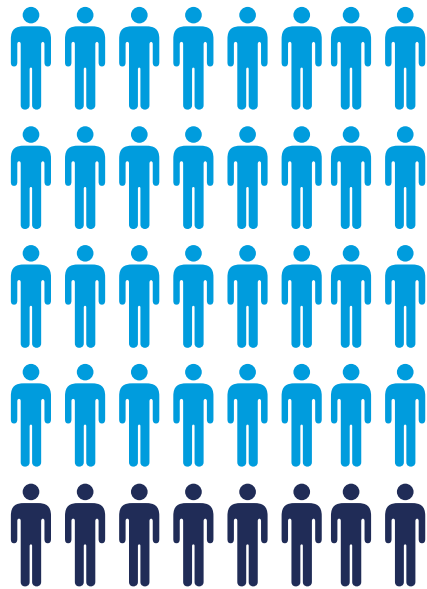
Ranked in the
TOP 150
universities worldwide

An internationally renowned
Russell Group University



Associated with
9 Nobel Prize winners

91%
of research ranked
world leading or internationally excellent



32,500
students

7,900
of whom travel from
all over the world

The original
REDBRICK
university

Established
in **1881**

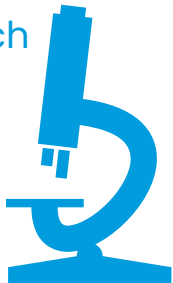
7,000
talented staff

A
UK leader
in widening
participation

Total value of
collaborative projects
£144.6 million



Annual research
income of
£163.1 million



A global **alumni**
network of
280,000 in **187** countries



94%
of our
graduates in
employment or further study

Working in
collaboration
with
445 organisations in
50 countries



££££££££££
Annual turnover of
£708.3million

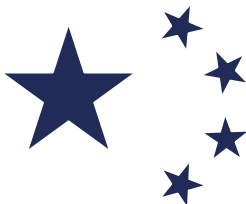
Awarded
GOLD
in the
Teaching Excellence Framework



TOP 20%

For 'Working with Business, Research Partnerships
and Working with the Public and Third Sector in the
Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF) 2024

First to establish a
Joint Venture University
in China




We have more than
21,000 graduates
from our
online programmes

HIGH ENGAGEMENT
For IP and
Commercialisation,
and Public
and Community
Engagement (KEF) 2024



One of the top UK universities
most targeted
by global
graduate
employers



liverpool.ac.uk/about

Who we are

Established in 1881, we are the original ‘redbrick university – a phrase inspired by our distinctive red brick Victoria Building. This spirit of originality shapes everything we do; ideas are born here that transform industries and travel the globe, touching and improving millions of lives as they go.

Our founding mission – ‘for the advancement of learning and ennoblement of life’ reflects our belief in the transformative power of research and education.

With around 7,000 staff, 32,500 students and 280,000 alumni across 187 countries, our diverse, multicultural community makes us a home for all kinds of ambitions and all kinds of achievements. Alumni include nine Nobel prize winners, the first female poet laureate, and the first female Director General of MI5, alongside those who have led the way in fields from nuclear disarmament to the life cycle of malarial parasites.

We are proud to create an inclusive and welcoming environment that attracts the best staff and students from around the world and we are committed to embedding inclusivity within everything we do by working towards disability inclusion, and gender, LGBTQ+ and race equality.

From Liverpool to the world

Ranked in the Top 150 universities in the world, we are globally-focused and have an extensive international history across research and teaching activity, with hundreds of international research collaborations spanning diverse subject matter across our three faculties – Health and Life Sciences, Humanities and Social Sciences, and Science and Engineering.



Our highly successful partnership with Xi’an Jiaotong-Liverpool University creates life-changing opportunities for students at both universities, along with valuable research collaborations and cultural exchange.

This year we have also launched a new campus in Bengaluru, India, which aims to blend world-leading, research-intensive education with the energy, talent and innovation of one of the world’s fastest-growing knowledge economies.

Meanwhile our partnerships with Kaplan Open Learning and Kaplan International Pathways build on our strong track record in offering a range of online programmes and, through University of Liverpool International College, deliver a foundation pathway that sees around 500 students annually progress to our on-campus degree programmes. We also work extensively with global partners including research institutes, universities, industry, governments and foundations, developing new opportunities for international research and impact.

Here in the UK, our strategic partnership with Unilever is an exemplar of successful collaboration between academia and industry, catalysing our world-leading expertise in advanced materials to develop new materials and formulations, spin-out companies and co-fund cutting-edge facilities. Launched in 2017, the Materials Innovation Factory is the University’s flagship knowledge exchange centre, providing a centre of research for over 200 Unilever R&D staff along with a similar number of University of Liverpool researchers.

A life-changing student experience

Our research focus is reflected in the design of our curriculum, which seeks to engage our students in understanding the newest discoveries and ideas, and the best learning experience, on their way to a high-quality degree that we know will be desired by leading employers.

Our Gold rating in the Teaching Excellence Framework highlights our commitment to world-class teaching and learning. We offer a wide range of individual support, including academic advisers for each student, access to peer mentors and a comprehensive selection of student services, and aim to inspire all students to be creative, independent and courageous on their way to achieving their personal goals.



Campus life

Our main campus sits at the top of Brownlow Hill, just a ten-minute walk from Liverpool’s vibrant city centre and at the heart of the Knowledge Quarter, while our Leahurst campus in Wirral is home to the University’s Veterinary School, which includes two farms, two referral hospitals, and two of the Institute’s three first-opinion practices.

The University helps drive the city’s knowledge economy through close collaboration with fellow universities, industry and the NHS, helping the Liverpool City Region compete in the global business world.

Like Liverpool itself, we march to the beat of our own drum. And we encourage our students and staff to do the same. Leading by example, we foster creativity, independence and courage. We open our doors wide, and make sure everyone can express their true character here, whoever they are and wherever they come from. Because when they do, they make our learning environment richer, and our whole University stronger.



An exciting vision: Liverpool 2031

Our strategic framework, [Liverpool 2031](#), builds on our distinctive strengths and characteristics, setting out how we will develop the confidence and sustained excellence to break into the top 100 ranked universities worldwide. It gives new impetus to the University's continued evolution, with a focus on the most important opportunities and challenges we face both now and in years to come, including the development of new materials and technologies, addressing local and global health challenges, tackling environmental change, and stimulating knowledge-based economies and the creative and cultural sectors.

Success will see our research capability considered world-leading in an even wider range of specialisms, including our unique [Research Frontiers](#), and directed through partnership to spur innovation and creativity that benefits communities within our region and beyond.

Our students experience from programmes and a learning environment that help them to realise their full potential and equip them with the skills and dexterity to succeed as global citizens, employees and entrepreneurs in a rapidly changing world. These successes will be underpinned by successful public, private and third sector partnerships and we will have an excellent reputation internationally for our research and its impact, our influential alumni, and our status as an aspirational destination for students, postgraduate researchers and staff.

Liverpool 2031 also places emphasis on our role in securing a more sustainable future, building on our existing commitments in the transition to Net Zero and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, while also reflecting our ability through research and education to shape future generations of change-makers able to tackle these greatest of challenges.



And at the heart of our commitments are the University's people; our remarkable community of academic, technical and professional services staff, who are the key to achieving all of this. The framework sets out the path to being an employer that attracts, values, develops and retains the best people, enabled by a culture that helps unlock everyone's potential, promotes high performance and confidence, and will deliver our aspiration to be a global Top 100 university.

This strategic framework is ambitious and our vision will only be achieved through a sustained and focused team effort across the University and its strategic partnerships. It will be progressed through a range of new and existing strategic implementation plans including institutional plans for growth and a major new fundraising campaign aligned with our 150th anniversary in 2031, unlocking significant additional resources for investment in our priorities.



Our purpose

The strategic framework supports the University in fulfilling its Purpose:

Embracing Liverpool’s enterprising and creative spirit through research and education that transform students’ lives and creates a fairer, better world.

Our vision

Through the framework, we are seeking to realise our Vision:

The University of Liverpool will be recognised for globally-leading research and education, the quality and scale of its partnerships, and its positive impact on people, our place and the planet. Driven by our values and diverse community of colleagues, students and alumni, we will make ground-breaking discoveries that shape the future, empower individuals to become changemakers, and inspire students to fulfil their academic and personal ambitions.

Our values

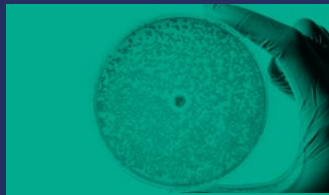



We are a values-led organisation. Our five Values reflect the character of our University and the things our people believe are most important to creating an environment in which individuals and the University as a whole can thrive.

They will guide our way of working from day-to-day and be a reference point for our decision-making, future plans, and individual performance and development.



Ambitious	Collaborative	Inclusive	Innovative	Responsible
<p>We dream big and make things happen</p> <p>We have the confidence to make bold decisions to achieve success</p>	<p>Together, we achieve more</p> <p>We make an impact through partnerships, releasing the power of collective expertise and shared endeavour</p>	<p>Shaped by diversity, powered by difference</p> <p>We champion a culture in which all are valued and supported to thrive</p>	<p>Original thinking with an independent spirit</p> <p>We create, reimagine and break new ground</p>	<p>A focus on doing the right thing</p> <p>We create positive change that improves lives</p>

Our strategic pillars and themes

The strategic framework features four pillars, representing our main areas of strategic focus. The pillars are:

 <p>Research and impact</p>	 <p>Education and experience</p>	 <p>Global experience</p>	 <p>Place and Innovation</p>
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There are also two overarching themes, essential to each pillar and to achieving the overall vision:

 <p>People and Culture</p>	 <p>Sustainability</p>
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About the role

Reporting to the Chief Operating Officer, this is a crucial, newly reshaped role bringing together two business critical Directorates – 1. External Relations and 2. Global Student Recruitment, Widening Participation and Admissions.

The newly-configured Directorate of External Relations will oversee critical functions that grow income and drive reputation and reach for the University.

Building out from a strong core brand and value proposition, the Group Director will oversee all campaigns and communications to key internal and external stakeholders to drive reputation and support the achievement of our Liverpool 2031 goals, both University-wide, as well as at Faculty and Institute/School level. You will protect existing income streams and drive strategic growth in tuition fee income – domestically and internationally – whether through traditional on-campus education or existing or new TNE relationships.

Working in a matrix structure with Faculty PVCs, Thematic PVCs for Education, Global and Research, and reporting directly to the Chief Operating Officer, you will develop clear strategies and annual operational plans to achieve stretch, but with achievable goals across all areas of their portfolio.

Teams within your remit will include:

- **Marketing** – headed up by the Director of Marketing and covering strategy and plans across all levels of the institution to drive brand awareness, effective programme portfolio development, marketing channel management, and supporting relevant reputational and student recruitment goals.
- **Communications** – headed up by the Director of Communications and covering internal and external communications strategy and policy engagement plans across all levels of the institution, as well as crisis communications and reactive reputation management.
- **Global Student Recruitment, Widening Participation and Admissions** – headed up by the Director of Global Student Recruitment, Admissions and Widening Participation and covering strategy and plans to drive tuition fee income (per student and overall) from identified target markets, whilst widening access and maintaining/enhancing quality of intake as required.
- **Development and Alumni Relations** – headed up by the Director of Development and Alumni Relations and covering alumni relations both in the UK and internationally, as well as ambitious philanthropic targets and associated nurturing of existing and potential donors.
- **Global Engagement and Partnerships** – led by the Head of Global Engagement and Partnerships and working to supporting the delivery of the Liverpool Global strategic theme. Supporting the development and ongoing oversight of global partnerships to drive reputation and income across research and education, as well as supporting robust models for existing and future partnership sustainability.



Who we are looking for

This high-profile role is responsible and accountable for the strategic leadership of the External Relations function, directly supporting achievement of reputation, recruitment and other income generating activity aligned to our Liverpool 2031 goal of becoming a world top 100 university.

Highly competent in building and nurturing strong and effective relationships with both internal and external stakeholders at the most senior level, the postholder will be extremely experienced at developing and rolling out strategy and plans that directly contribute to success, with strong operational goal alignment and reporting.

The Group Director operates at a strategic and an operational level and is a member of both the Senior Leaders Network and the Professional Services Leadership Team. The role includes a strong focus on building exceptional relationships with other Professional Services Directorates, ensuring overall operations are efficient, digitally enabled, and facilitate student success and research excellence.

Principal accountabilities:

- Responsibility for developing supporting strategies and operational plans to achieve goals, both financial and reputational, to support the achievement of Liverpool 2031, ensuring full alignment and integration of focus and resources across all areas of the Directorate.
- Working with and across the whole university senior leadership team to ensure effective delivery of strategy in their assigned areas, with a particular focus on driving clear accountability for delivery in a matrix structure across Faculty aligned and thematic (Education, Global, Research) PVCs.
- Responsibility for the development of and delivery against both mid-term and short-term operational targets, enabling clear tracking of progress via relevant reporting metrics and reporting frameworks.
- Full oversight and accountability for maximising return on investment from both pay and non-pay operational budgets, seeking opportunities to drive growth in income whilst focusing on where a strong value for money focus can drive contribution and efficiency gains.
- As a senior member of the Professional Services Leadership Team, contributing proactively to the effective running of Professional Services University-wide, with a strong focus on shared goals and accountability, and a consistent, functionally aligned and highly-integrated operating model.
- Service Excellence – delivering a high-quality service in achievement of goals across relevant areas of the institution with a strong level of accountability and service mindset embedded in all activities and measures of success.
- Ensuring the Marketing department develops, and then consistently implements, a strong and compelling brand and value proposition across all audiences and channels and all areas of activity across the University.
- Ensuring the Marketing department supports the development and maintenance of a highly attractive portfolio of programmes of study, informed by robust marketing insight and intelligence and aligned to the core strengths and attributes of the University.
- Ensuring Global Student Recruitment, WP and Admissions and Marketing departments develop strategic prioritisation of priority source markets for student recruitment and opportunity markets for TNE, focussing appropriately on building numbers from key source markets and diversification strategies where needed.
- Ensuring a highly competitive and robust pricing strategy is in place, supported by a clear, consistent and competitive scholarships and bursaries offer, to maximise tuition fee income overall and per student.



- Leading and developing a network of regional representative offices globally, to grow the University's reputation and reach.
- Ensuring the Global Engagement and International Partnerships department supports the development of new partnerships and effective nurturing of existing ones, both institution to institution and institution to government, as well as related international education networks and channels.
- Ensuring the Directorate can support the establishment and maintenance of reputation and income growth from key TNE initiatives, including key overseas campus initiatives.
- Providing robust frameworks to guide partnership agreements to maximise income and contribution and drive consistency across the institution where relevant.
- Ensuring the University's reputation is both enhanced and protected through relevant stakeholder relations and media channels, maximising opportunities to drive impact both regionally and nationally.
- Driving a strong metrics and target-oriented culture of reward and recognition within the Directorate, ensuring mapping of goals from strategic to operational level across the whole team.
- Maintaining and nurturing external networks to ensure marketing and communications best practice is deployed in the delivery of the team.
- Ensuring the University's digital and social media channels best reflect and enhance the reputation of the University, aligned to its priority markets and stakeholder audiences.
- Supporting a strong internal communications function that effectively supports the communication and delivery of strategy, the management of changes, and the embedding and amplification of the University's strategic ambition, brand and core values.
- Supporting effective engagement with current students through relevant channels, optimising their sense of community and belonging and nurturing their success and future advocacy for the University.
- Supporting the development and nurturing of an engaged and loyal alumni community who strongly feel the benefits of being part of a global alumni base and as a result are ready to give back their time, talent and treasure to the University.
- Supporting the achievement of clear and achievable fundraising targets through a clear case for support and nurturing of existing and potential donors.
- Shaping and developing an effective Directorate which values the diversity of skills and experience required across all aspects of activity whilst ensuring staff are goal focused, motivated to drive the University forward, and have strong opportunities to excel and to progress.

Knowledge, Skills and Experience Needed

- Significant leadership experience in a combination of marketing, public relations, communications, internationalisation, student recruitment, widening participation and admissions.
- Significant experience of developing and rolling out strategy and plans that directly contribute to success, with strong operational goal alignment and with clear reporting metrics.
- Experience of leadership and management of large teams and services, and of successfully working in a matrix management structure.
- Ability to develop and articulate a clear vision which demonstrates innovation, creativity and lateral thinking.
- Experience of managing and monitoring large, complex budgets and allocating resources effectively.

Relevant Qualifications

- Educated to degree level or equivalent.

Communication and Interpersonal Skills

- Highly developed communication skills including the ability to write strategy/policy documents, analyse complex data and deliver presentations to a wide range of audiences.
- Excellent interpersonal skills including the ability to lead, negotiate, persuade, influence and to maintain large networks, both internally, nationally and internationally.

How we are run

Our team

Our governing body, with ultimate responsibility for the conduct of all the affairs of the institution, is the University Council.

The Council is also the Trustee Board and its members are the trustees of the University. The Council has a number of committees, including Finance and Resources, Audit, Education, and Research and Impact.

There are 22 members of Council with a lay majority. Membership comprises: the President, the Vice-President, 10 other lay members; the Vice-Chancellor; two Pro-Vice-Chancellors; the President of the Guild of Students; the Senior Professional Services Representative with Responsibility for People and Infrastructure, three members of the academic staff drawn from the Senate, one member of staff from the Professional Services, and one member of the student body.

Elected and appointed members serve for renewable three-year terms. Council meets six times per year (four business meetings and two away days).

Senate has a membership of 87, comprising the Vice-Chancellor, the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor, the Chief Operating Officer, the Pro-Vice-Chancellors, the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellors, the Deans of Schools/Institutes, eight heads of Level 1 academic units from each Faculty, eight representatives from each Faculty elected by and from among the academic staff employed on substantive Teaching and Research or Teaching and Scholarship contracts, the four Student Representative Officers and one student representative from each Faculty.

The governance structure is laid down in the University's Charter, Statutes and Ordinances from which both Council and Senate derive their powers.

VICE-CHANCELLOR

- Professor Tim Jones BSc, PhD

PROVOST AND DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR

- Professor Richard Black BA, PhD

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

- Lucy Everest BA

PRO-VICE-CHANCELLORS

- Professor Tariq Ali PhD DIC CPhys FInstP FRAS (Global engagement and partnerships)
- Professor Gavin Brown BSc, PhD (Education)
- Professor Anthony Hollander BSc, PhD (Research and Impact)
- Professor Alison Fell (Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences) From 1 October 2025
- Professor Louise Kenny MB ChB (Hons.), PhD, MRCOG (Faculty of Health and Life Sciences)
- Professor Laura Harkness PhD MPhys PGCert MInstP FHEA (Faculty of Science and Engineering) From 1 September 2025

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

- Nicola Davies BSc, MSc, FCA

UNIVERSITY SECRETARY AND GENERAL COUNSEL/ CLERK TO COUNCIL

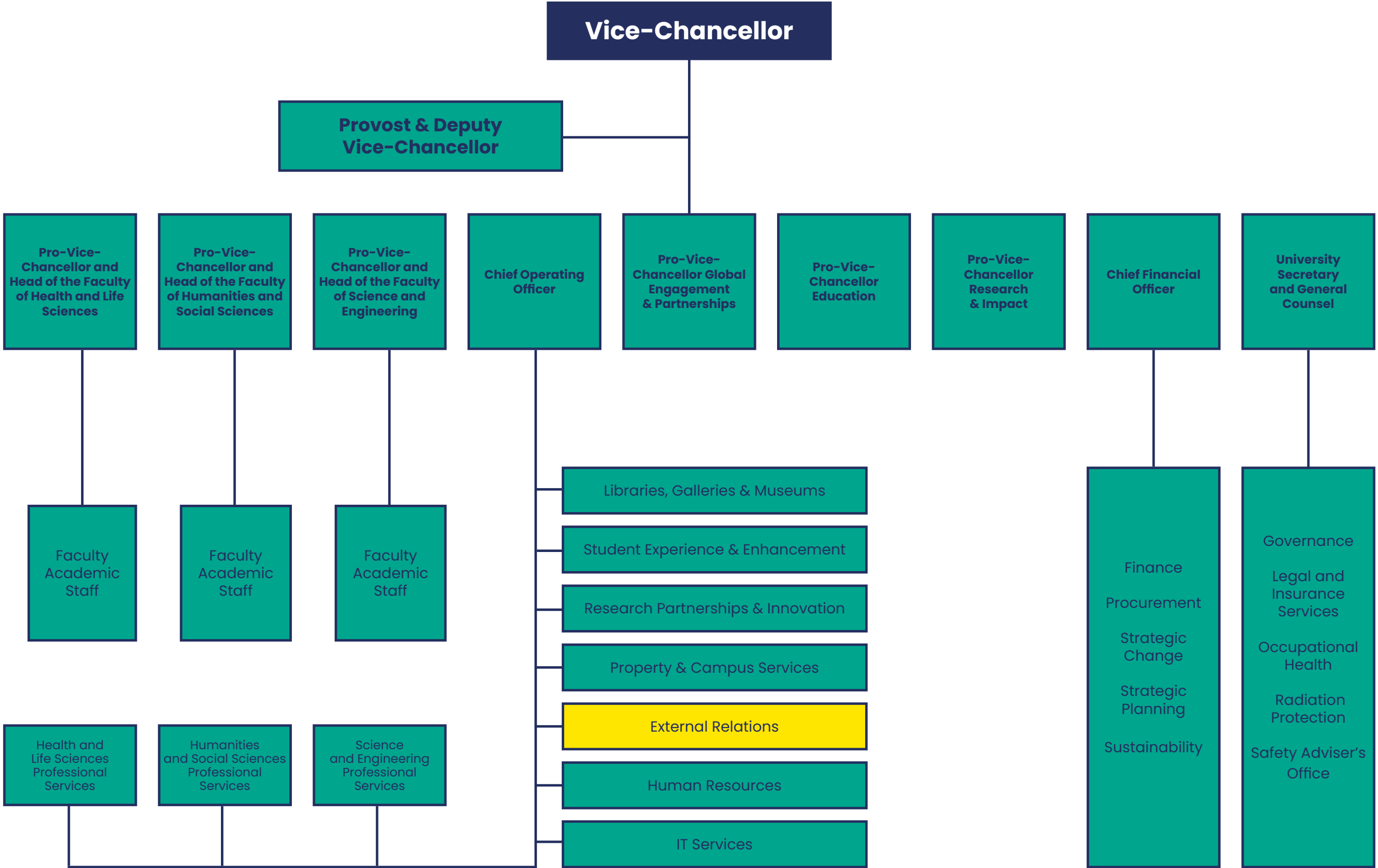
- Kevan Ryan BA, CPE, LPC

PRO-VICE-CHANCELLOR (Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University)

- Professor Youmin Xi BSc, MEng, PhD



Our organisation





Appointment process and how to apply

The University has retained executive search firm Dixon Walter to support this appointment.

If you would like to discuss this opportunity further or have any questions about the role, please contact **Mike Dixon** at mike@dixonwalter.co.uk.

Applications should be emailed to mike@dixonwalter.co.uk by the closing date, **Monday 11 August 2025**.

Your application should include on separate documents:

- a letter of application setting out your interest in the role, why now, and details of how you match the requirements in the person specification.
- a comprehensive curriculum vitae.
- details of three referees and your notice period (referees will not be contacted without your permission).
- a completed personal details form available from the vacancy microsite: www.dixonwalter.co.uk/opportunities/liverpool-er

Final interviews are expected to take place on campus in mid-October 2025.

Salary: Competitive for the role

Location: Liverpool, England



Our story began in 1881.

We became one of the first civic universities.

The Original Redbrick. More than 140 years later, we're as original as ever.

We're still welcoming people from every walk of life.

Still colourful and creative. Welcoming and warm.

Still advancing learning and ennobling life, just like we always have.

And uncovering world-firsts through our pioneering research.

Still marching to the beat of our own drum.

Still bursting with character. And characters.

Still shaping the spirit that makes Liverpool a one-of-a-kind kind of city.

And helping our students forge their own path.

1881 is where our story started. We were original then.

And we're original now.

