The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Alasdair Smith, announced on Monday (27 November) that he will be stepping down in August 2007, after nine years in the post.

Professor Smith said that his reasons for this timing were focussed on Sussex's future. With teaching, research and business opportunities to prepare for beyond the national 2008 Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), he said that 2007-08 would be "an important year of opportunity for Sussex" and added: "It is best if a new Vice-Chancellor is in position at the start of that academic year."

The Vice-Chancellor explained he had already agreed at the start of his second five-year term in 2003 that he would not stay on beyond 2008: "Institutions need new leaders and new ideas from time to time."

"After careful reflection over the summer and discussion with the chair of Council, I have decided that the best timing for the University would be for me to hand over to a successor in 2007 rather than 2008."

Professor Smith also said that, having now put the new executive leadership team in place at Sussex (with three new Pro-Vice-Chancellors appointed from September 2006 and new senior management structures now operating), he believed that his successor would have an excellent base from which to take forward the University to its 50th anniversary in 2011 and beyond.

Sam Younger (left), chair of Council, the University's governing body, said that he applauded this thoughtful and considered approach, and added: "Alasdair's leadership over the last eight years has moved Sussex forward significantly, and he has given the University, and his successor, a solid platform for meeting the challenges ahead."

A process to identify and appoint a new Vice-Chancellor is now under way, with a joint selection committee of Council and Senate (the University's academic body) being proposed to lead the process. Under the Statutes, the appointment is made by Council, following consultation with Senate, at a meeting specially convened for the process.

The Council meeting on 15 December will discuss and approve the process, the composition of the joint selection committee and its terms of reference, taking views from the Senate meeting on 8 December. The committee is then expected to start work immediately, with its first meeting on 19 December.

The University is expected to appoint search consultants to support the process and to advertise the position in the new year, following consultation with the University community.

During his period as Vice-Chancellor, the University's student numbers have increased from 9,200 to more than 10,600. Applications for undergraduate study at Sussex have grown particularly strongly over recent years, with more than 18,500 applications for places in 2006, compared with around 12,000 in 1998.

Professor Smith has also overseen significant organisational change at Sussex, including major reorganisation of the schools of studies and the associated revision of the arts and science curricula.

Sussex has also seen significant academic development and growth in this time, with the creation in 2003 of the Brighton and Sussex Medical School (BSMS), jointly with Brighton University, and the Genome Centre in 2001.

In the 2001 Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), Sussex research in all areas was assessed as of national or international standing. Income has grown from £76m (1997-98) to £111m (2005-06).

The campus has been transformed with new student residences, the Freeman Centre, extensions to the Innovation Centre, the BSMS and Genome Centre buildings themselves, and the refurbishment of teaching facilities. Development is continuing, with additional student residences opening in autumn 2007.

Professor Smith has also put in place new leadership and senior management arrangements, with three new Pro-Vice-Chancellors taking up their posts in September.

Professor Smith has also played a leading role in higher education nationally, acting as chair of the 1994 Group of universities until 2005. He is currently chair of UCEA, the University employers' association, and sits on the board of Universities UK.
Philippa and Julia go head to head

Historical novelist Philippa Gregory talked about her career, her books and her fond recollections as a Sussex student with fellow alumna, broadcaster and journalist, Julia Somerville, in the Chichester Lecture Theatre on Wednesday (29 November).

The Tudor-themed event, complete with an appearance from Henry VIII and medieval minstrels, celebrated the publication of Philippa’s latest novel, The Boleyn Inheritance, which delves into the fates of Henry’s later wives, Anne of Cleves and Katherine Howard.

The novel follows on from Philippa’s earlier success, The Other Boleyn Girl, a world-wide best-seller that was subsequently adapted for television and is now being made into a film, starring Scarlett Johansson and Natalie Portman.

Philippa, who has a PhD from the University of Edinburgh, attributes her years as a history undergraduate at Sussex to inspiring her career choice.

“Sussex made me an historian,” she says. “Without the inspiration of my tutors at Sussex I would never have fallen in love with history and gone on to research and become a novelist.”

A trained journalist, Philippa initially registered as an English Literature student in the School of English and American Studies in 1975. But the interdisciplinary nature of studying at Sussex led to her taking a history course and finding her true calling.

“It changed my life,” she says. “The tutor who inspired me the most was Maurice Hutt, who taught the ‘Introduction to History’ course with great élan and impatience. He gave me a lasting sense of the importance of history and the drama of being an historian.”

Others she lists as having a lasting influence on her include Alan Hawkins, now Director of Graduate Studies in Humanities, who introduced her to English Marxism. “I remember it as a time filled with discussion and confusion,” she says. “I was intensely happy.”

Following her research in 18th-century literature at Edinburgh, Philippa had hoped to become an academic. But her ambitions were thwarted by cut-backs in education by the Conservative government of the time. “I was very angry about it at the time, but as it turns out I am working in history with great joy.”

Oh! What A Lovely War released on DVD

A classic film featuring former Sussex students has been released on DVD for the first time.

In 1967, the young Richard Attenborough was making a film about the tragedy of World War I – redefined in bawdy music-hall terms.

Part of Oh! What A Lovely War was made in Brighton and the surrounding area, and Attenborough needed lots of young men to play the soldiers who had been sent to the trenches as ‘cannon fodder’. He persuaded the Vice-Chancellor, Asa Briggs, to lend him Sussex students of the day as ‘extras’.

One of them was John Carmichaiel, now the owner of a language school and translation agency but at the time a Sussex undergraduate studying American literature.

John remembers playing his part in scenes on the pier (clad in blazer and boater) and in an indoor café/bar scene filmed at Bolney Abbey.

He and the other students also went ‘over the top’ from ‘trenches’ created on a Brighton rubbish dump. “These were also covered with artificial snow at one point (in June) to create the Christmas fraternisation football scene,” John recalls.

John is pictured as an extra on the set of a field hospital, which was created in the ruins of a church somewhere in Kent.

He says: “As getting there meant an early start to catch a coach there was plenty of overtime on top of what already seemed excellent money for a student – for doing relatively little.

“They wanted the scene to be in sunshine and thought they had it in the can after the first day. However, they then discovered the film had been spoilt in processing so everyone was bussed out there for the next five or six days, waiting for the sun to come out.

“My memory is of being able to do plenty of reading while relaxing on one of the hospital beds.”

The new DVD doesn’t feature John’s reminiscences, but it does include a director’s commentary from Richard Attenborough – now, of course, Lord Attenborough and Chancellor of the University of Sussex.
Student talent on screen

Filmed partly under a desk and featuring a typewriter, the winning entry was entitled Sebastien Foucault: The Life of a Freerunner. It was one of 15 short films showing at the Gardner Arts Centre at the culmination of 36 hours of frenetic movie-making by teams of Sussex students.

The annual 36 Hour Film Rush competition offers students the chance to script, shoot and edit their own films. This year’s challenge started early on Saturday morning (25 November), when each team was allocated a location in Brighton and a prop – both of which had to be incorporated into their five-minute shorts.

At the end of the weekend, the student talent was showcased to a lively audience and two prizes of £100 were awarded: one from the official judging panel and the other for the viewers’ favourite film.

Professor Alasdair Smith (Vice-Chancellor) and Dr Steve Burman (Dean of Humanities) were joined on the judging panel by four local filmmakers, including the chief executive of Lighthouse and the organiser of the recent SEE documentary film festival. Their vote went to Sebastien Foucault, produced by Peter Allen, Chris Marshall, James Marshall and Daniel Smith (pictured above).

The audience preferred Hell’s Kitchen by six-man team Dan Canetti, Rupert Connell, Daniel Patel, Robert Pettigrew, Cimran Shah and Joshua Thorpe.

Teenagers top up their maths at Sussex

As in previous years, the University has hosted Royal Institution Mathematics Masterclasses this term, on behalf of the local branch of the Mathematical Association.

Some 55 girls and boys from more than 25 schools across Sussex have attended regularly on eight Saturday mornings to enjoy two and a half hours of stimulus and mathematical enrichment led by a variety of distinguished speakers, including Professor Celia Hoyles, the government’s Chief Advisor for Mathematics.

The students, who are mainly in year 9, have seen how the maths they know can be applied to solve practical problems and have met useful or interesting ideas that they would not generally cover within their usual school curriculum.

They have worked both individually and in groups. “Their quiet, focussed enthusiasm is always apparent,” says Dr John Haigh from the Mathematics department.

Pro-Vice-Chancellor Professor Bob Allson will see the students take part in competitive mathematical challenges in the final session on 9 December, and will present their certificates.

Student stars in TV documentary about gay life

A Sussex student is one of the stars of a Channel 4 educational documentary series about the lives of young gay people, shown on TV every day this week.

Holly Sheppard, a 21-year-old Sociology and Gender Studies undergraduate in her third year at Sussex, is featured enjoying a typical student lifestyle – from studying to socialising with friends.

The series, ‘Gay – Z’, made by Brighton-based company Lambert Productions, follows young men and women from diverse backgrounds getting on with their everyday lives and presents the kinds of challenges that young people might face when being open about their sexuality. Some lose contact with families and friends, while new opportunities open up for others.

“My life is a happy story,” says Holly. “I’ve never had any problems being gay and my whole family were completely fine from the start. I think that was why they focused on me. It showed how life can be good for LGBT people – and that it isn’t all about problems.”

Holly, who lives off campus and is concentrating on her final exams, job-hunting and travelling plans, has thoroughly enjoyed her time at Sussex.

“Brighton is a great place to be. It makes it easier to be ‘out’. There are also far more opportunities here to meet people – you can’t fail to be happy.”

She got involved with the TV series after reading an email plea from Lambert Productions, asking for young gay people to take part in a documentary. “I called the production company and had a chat with a researcher – and we took it from there.

The first couple of times they pointed a camera at me it was a bit embarrassing – having a camera crew following you while you’re just hanging out with your friends. But I soon got used to it and it was a lot of fun because the crew were great.”

Filming took place intermittently between May and August of this year. Holly, who features in three of the five episodes, talks about her life and is seen enjoying Gay Pride weekend in August. She was also filmed handing in essays and visiting the campus Library.

Holly got to see the final edits and was pretty pleased with the results. “The show is educational – it’s aimed not just at gays but at all teenagers in general. It shows how LGBT people are just like everybody else.”

If you missed this week’s broadcasts, don’t worry: the series will be repeated on Channel 4 next year.

FIRST CLASS

Sussex and four other universities are through to the finals of the Pink Paper Readers’ Awards in the category for ‘Best University or College’. Readers of Britain’s only national newspaper for lesbians and gay men have nominated Sussex alongside Brighton, London School of Economics (LSE), Newcastle and University College London (UCL). The winner will be revealed on 11 January 2007.

Professor Michael Erat has been inducted into the International Adult and Continuing Education Hall of Fame. The induction ceremony in Bamberg, Germany was held in conjunction with two international conferences on adult education.

Research fellow David Parkinson was at the House of Commons on Tuesday (28 November) to present a poster in connection with his work on the design of a next-generation spectrophotograph. David’s presentation was one of several by early-stage research physicists.
Victoria Wood creates TV drama from Mass Observation diary

Award-winning television writer and performer Victoria Wood has written and stars in a wartime TV drama based on one of the Mass Observation diaries held in the Library at Sussex.

"Housewife, 49", to be shown on ITV on Sunday 10 December, follows six turbulent years in the life of Nella Last, a Lancashire housewife, who joined the MO's army of anonymous writers at the outbreak of the Second World War.

Through her writing, Nella reveals her fears for her son (played by Christopher Harper) as he fights for the country, emotional changes in the relationship with her husband (David Threlfall), and the companionship and purpose she discovers through joining the local Women's Voluntary Service.

As Victoria Wood says, "This is not the war of the newsreels - it's about tiny domestic difficulties, chilly church halls, lumpy custards. And Nella is fighting her own war, one that she hopes will end in liberation."

Although the Mass Observation Archive contains hundreds of wartime diaries, Nella's story was one of the first to be published (in 1981) and has fascinated researchers and readers ever since for its depiction of domestic wartime Britain.

Dorothy Sheridan, Head of Special Collections, was involved in putting together material for the original publication. "A documentary maker was interested in doing something with some of the MO diaries, and I thought Nella's one would be suitable because it was so complete," she recalls. "Nella wouldn't have written if it hadn't been for MO. She was rather lonely and she found that writing this was a way of reassuring herself."

Nella Last died in 1968 and Dorothy traced her relatives in Barrow-in-Furness to find out more about Nella's background. The original plans for a documentary did not materialise, but the manuscript was published as Nella Last's War.

Victoria Wood was among those who already had a copy of this book when she was approached by ITV producer Piers Wenger to collaborate on a TV project.

"I thought Nella's diaries would make a good drama," she says. "I read the book over and over and began to find things beneath the surface that I was interested in. It wasn't just about rationing and dried egg and people painting their legs brown to look like stockings. There was a story underneath of a woman in crisis."

The title of the drama is taken from Nella's description of herself: a housewife, aged 49 at the start of the diary. Piers and Victoria also visited Nella's former home, as well as friends and family members, to recreate an accurate picture of life in the 1930s and 1940s.

Back in the UK, Dr Peter Scott was on BBC Radio 4's 'Questions Questions', revealing why plants grow better to loud rock music (9 November); Dr Jim Watson was on BBC Radio 4's "You and Yours" (14 November) on the potential for biofuels such as palm oil; Dr Craig Barker did a live interview – in front of his students during a seminar – for BBC Southern Counties Radio about Saddam Hussein's death sentence (6 November); and Professor Jennifer Temkin was live on BBC Radio 5, talking about the legal issues connecting alcohol and rape (18 November).
**LETTERS**

**Must staff retire at 65?**

How does the University reconcile the claim (Bulletin 17 November) that it has made amendments to its policies and documents to eliminate potential age bias, with the continued presence of Statute XXII, which states that all members of staff must retire on 30 September following their 65th birthday, unless Council exceptionally invites them to continue?

**Dr John Haigh, Mathematics**

Jackie Rymell, Assistant Director of Human Resources, replies:

The University has updated the conditions of service for those staff groups affected by its Statutes to make it clear that the University’s normal retirement date remains at 30 September following an individual’s 65th birthday. (This is entirely acceptable under the age regulations.)

However, we have replaced the words ‘unless the Council shall exceptionally invite any such member to continue’ with a new sentence that states: ‘Members of staff have the right to request working beyond 65 years of age.’

We have not as yet amended Statute XXII, which refers to retirements of members of staff, as any such amendment has to be approved by Privy Council and will take some time. In the meantime, the amended conditions of service will take precedence over Statute XXII.

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**Penalise drivers for queue jumping**

In response to the letter about queue jumping (Bulletin 17 November), I just wanted to say that drivers will always jump the queue as long as the present system is in place.

The only way to stop queue jumping is to fine people for doing it, as appealing to social morals will not work. Why does the University not install a camera that notes offenders’ registration numbers and then sends them a penalty? So many people jump the queue, it could also be a nice earner for the University.

Alternatively, if we can’t afford a camera, employ someone to stand there at “home” time and note the registration numbers of those who jump the queue.

I really think that the University should take some action on this issue before a serious accident occurs.

**Dr Sue Sullivan, Psychology**

Chris Wadley, Transport Manager, replies:

As a fellow car driver who travels west on my journey home each day, I sympathise and agree that abuse of the lane restriction does cause frustration and could result in an incident on this roundabout. I, like many others, make a daily choice either to wait in line or to drive to the Kingston roundabout before travelling west.

However, the lane restriction is only advisory as buses are allowed to use the Lewes-bound traffic lane to access the bus stop and to give them priority over waiting traffic. Other drivers who also use this lane to cross directly to the bridge over the A27 are therefore not guilty of any traffic offence. As it is not an offence, penalty charging is not applicable.

The roundabout and final approach road from campus are in any case operated by the Highways Agency; the installation of any CCTV for number-plate recognition would therefore be off University land and would require permission.

A proportion of those exiting the campus are visitors and unaware of the arrangements at this junction until it is too late.

I commend those drivers who do queue patiently and discourage frequent queue jumpers from this risky practice. I will make contact with any driver who is identified to me, to indicate the possible consequence of their actions. Only when safe to do so, note the registration number and email it to transport@sussex.ac.uk.

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**Teaching is controlled by formulae**

The ‘VC’s Voice’ (Bulletin 17 November) tells us that we ought to be thinking more about teaching well, and in principle I agree.

But, whereas we are still free to research more or less however we see fit, our teaching has come recently to be controlled by an astonishingly detailed range of rigid formulae and requirements. Can this fail to push teaching styles towards unimaginative, ritualized drill?

**Professor Geoffrey Sampson, Informatics**

Professor Joanne Wright, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education), replies:

I assume that the ‘rigid formulae’ Professor Sampson refers to are our quality assurance and enhancement measures and I am sorry that he views them in such a negative light.

Like we expose our research to the highest standards of international peer review, so we need to expose our teaching to the highest national and international standards in order to assure and enhance our quality.

Sussex teachers have not and I am sure will not be revealed to be engaging in “unimaginative, ritualized drill.”
Widening participation makes a real difference

Latest figures from the HEFCE (the Higher Education Funding Council for England) show that Sussex’s action on widening participation is continuing to make a real difference to the student mix.

The University’s 2006 undergraduate cohort has the highest ever proportion of black and ethnic-minority students, disabled students and students from lower socio-economic backgrounds, where national benchmarks were exceeded for the first time.

Owen Richards, Academic Registrar, praised the work by recruitment and admissions staff, working with the AimHigher project and partner schools, under Sussex’s Widening Participation strategy (launched in 2001).

“Against a background of rising quality of intakes, and questions about the potential impact of fees, this is very welcome and positive news for Sussex,” he said.

“Long-term action to reach out to local schools and to schools in inner city London, under the SEAS scheme (Sussex Education Access Scheme), which was founded in 2002, and other initiatives such as the Sussex Progression Accord, have laid foundations which are really bearing fruit for us.”

Sussex has traditionally done well in attracting a good proportion of students from state schools, with 85% of the intake coming from the state sector—compared to the HEFCE benchmark of 76%.

However, like other universities with high entry standards, Sussex had in the past been less successful in attracting students from poorer backgrounds. Steady progress had been made since 1999–2000, when such students made up around 16% of the intake, rising to just short of 20% in 2005–06.

The 2006–07 entrants took this up to 22.5%, well above the 20% benchmark set for Sussex by HEFCE. This is despite rising entry requirements, meaning Sussex’s student intake is also of higher quality than before.

Figures also show that Sussex is admitting an increasing proportion of black and ethnic-minority students, with over 12% in 2006–07, compared to just over 10% in 1999–2000.

Sussex has also admitted its highest proportion of disabled students this year—with almost 7% of students in receipt of Disabled Students Allowance, compared to 5–6% in previous years.

Sussex has continued to take in a significant proportion of mature students (over 21 years old), with 18% admitted in 2005–06, the same as in 1999–2000, after a rise to above 20% in the early 2000s. This compares to a typical 10% entry for other campus-based research universities.

Better email service on its way

If you think the nicest Christmas present would be a faster email service, you might just be lucky.

Action is in hand from Information and Technology Services (ITS) to address the very slow-running email service, with a lot of preparatory work having been done in recent months to develop the new back-end systems needed.

From 18 December, work will begin to move the storage and management of emails to a new, faster system. Users will be moved over to the new system as quickly as possible—but, with 23,000 accounts to move, this will take a number of weeks.

As the moves take place (with the heaviest email users being moved first), pressure on the old systems will ease and speed should improve for all users.

No action is required from staff or students to make the changes happen, but notification will be sent to users as moves are planned.

Detailed FAQs on the planned changes are available online at www.sussex.ac.uk/its/news.

Users are also encouraged to reduce the load on the systems by following guidance on email good practice, which is available on the internal communications web pages at www.sussex.ac.uk/pressandcomms/1-3.html.

Make Christmas fair

There was a change from the usual selection of biscuits at the weekly meeting of the Vice-Chancellor’s Executive Group (VCEG) on Monday (27 November).

Senior managers tucked into Fairtrade cookies and cake, which were presented to them by Hannah Waddilove (below) and Katharine Fitzpatrick from the Sussex TradeFair Society in a break during discussions.

The society is a student-organised group that aims to promote the use on campus of Fairtrade goods. The Fairtrade mark is an independent guarantee that producers in the developing world are getting a fair price for their products.

A variety of Fairtrade and locally produced goods will be on sale at a Christmas market organised by the society on Tuesday 5 December, enabling everyone at Sussex to ‘Make Christmas fair’.

The market takes place in Mandela Hall from 11am to 4pm.

Cash for graduates

The University has recognised the entrepreneurial spirit of two new graduates by presenting each of them with a cheque for £500.

Will Griffiths (left) and Joshua Seal celebrated the award by joining Professor Bob Allison, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (seated), in a light-hearted game of pinball.

Will and Josh are off to the USA for six months in January, having being chosen by the National Council for Graduate Entrepreneurship (NCGE) and the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation to take part in a scholarship programme for aspiring entrepreneurs.
Level 2 of Bramber House to be revamped

Work begins in the vacation on a major project to create new teaching space on level 2 of Bramber House.

The Laines Restaurant and Grapevine Bar will close for good during the last week of term (week ending 8 December) to make way for the construction of 16 new seminar rooms, an area of flexible teaching space and an open-access computer cluster for students.

The Downs Restaurant on level 1 of Bramber House will remain open throughout the works and beyond, as will the Housing Office and all other services in the building.

The work is due to be completed in time for the start of the 2007-08 academic year.

Equipment delivered for new imaging centre

The 50-tonne crane that readers may have noticed by Eastern Road this Tuesday (28 November) has been delivering equipment to the Clinical Imaging Sciences Centre.

This building is to house the new imaging department at the Brighton and Sussex Medical School (BSMS). It will contain state-of-the-art facilities including an MRI scanner and the only 64-slice PET-CT scanner in the country, used in the early detection of cancers.

The centre can be used for research in the medical field, including new drug development. It is due to open in April 2007.

A walk on the wild side ↓

We recently received a message that unquestionably demanded our immediate attention – a call from the editor!

David Harper
Life Sciences

David Streeter
Life Sciences

While on a walk in Tenant Laine she and her companion had found a pair of large, distinctive-looking fungi. "Were they 'stinkhorns'?"

"Well, did they stink?" we enquired. "No, but they had the right sort of shape."

There was clearly nothing for it but to embark on an immediate expedition in search of the odourless Phallus. Sure enough, there on the edge of the path was the answer to the niddle – a splendid pair of Shaggy Inkcaps.

Inkcaps get their name from the fact that when mature the edge of the cap autodigests, forming a dripping ooze of ink-like fluid. In fact, ink was once made from the fungi. The caps were simply placed in a suitable container and allowed to deliqueusce and the black liquid poured off. However, it was never as effective as traditional tannin-produced inks.

Shaggy Inkcaps, Coprinus comatus, are one of the most sought after of the edible fungi. A word of warning: we have two species of large inkcaps that look superficially similar. The cap of the Shaggy Inkcap is covered by peeling scales, while that of the Common Inkcap, Coprinus atramentarius, is smooth. Although the Common Inkcap is edible, if followed by alcohol at any time up to about three days, symptoms of nausea and flushing may occur within a few minutes. So never eat any fung that you are not familiar with!

We have clearly been providing amusement by carrying around breakers of a gently steaming, yellowish liquid. This is artificial nectar made up of sugars, amino acids, vitamins and minerals in warm water.

Together with research student John Driscoll, we are investigating its use by Blue Tits, which often take nectar from flowers in the spring. By feeding them nectar at a time of year when natural supplies are low, we hope to learn more about this behaviour.

Not only are small birds short of nectar at this time of year. Many of their favourite fruits are rapidly running out. Female yew bushes (such as those opposite the Boiler House) have been virtually stripped of their red fruit, known locally as 'snotty-pops'. Many birds take the whole fruit, but Blue Tits strip the flesh away and then eat the seed, taking care not to swallow the papery brown seed coat, which is packed with toxins.

Thanks to everyone who has reported Harlequin Ladybirds after we described their discovery on campus. As we predicted, many sightings came from students on the MSc in Biodiversity Survey, who have also been identifying lichens on campus.

Ramalina fastigiate (left) lives on nutrient-rich bark in sunny situations such as those provided by our parkland trees. This lichen is very sensitive to pollution and its presence here is therefore encouraging news.
Academic events↓

WED 6 DEC

12.30pm Seminar: Mark Osborne (Sussex), An overview of single molecule techniques and applications in the biocatalysis. GDSC seminar room.

1pm IDS/OI/DfUED seminar: Simon Burnall (ODI), Aid architecture. ODI, 111 Westminster Bridge Road, London SE1 7JD.

2pm Music seminar: Dylan Robinson (Sussex), Musicology in performance. Palmer House 120.

3pm Saying the Unsayable: Dissecting the Development Industry: Garth Ginnventhor & Rob Mellors (independent consultants), Technical assistance: Who is assisting whom? IDS 221.

5pm Migration seminar: Sarah Spencer (Oxford), Life beyond the workplace: The experiences of Eastern European migrants in Britain. Arts C233.

THU 7 DEC

3pm CDE/IDS seminar: Rumy Hasan (Sussex), Jonathan Rosenhead (LSE) & Francisco Dominguez (Middlesex), Venezuela’s development under Chavez. Arts A103.

4.40pm Cognition and Language seminar: Brian Butterworth (UCL), Numbers in the brain. Rev 183.

FRI 8 DEC

11am Enquiry-Based Learning in the Arts and Humanities: Karen O’Rourke & Bill Hutcheson (CEEBL, Manchester). Contact d.v.mcdonald@u sussex.ac.uk for details.

12noon W. Trecusen-Fitch (St Andrews), Biocatalysis: The biology and evolution of language. Engg 1A502.

2.15pm Freeman Centre seminar: Michael Gasiorow (Sussex), Trade and productivity in Morocco. Freeman Centre 624/25.

4pm South Asia seminar: Tristram Stuart (independent scholar), The bloodless revolution: Radical vegetarians and the discovery of India. Russell 35.

WED 13 DEC

12.30pm Seminar: Penny Jeggo (Sussex), Penny and her lab discuss their work, GDSC Seminar Room.

THU 14 DEC

12noon Biochemistry and Genetics & Development seminar: Details TBA. JMS Lecture Theatre.

Arts events↓

PERFORMANCE

Mon 11–Sat 30 Dec various times Tall Stories – The Gruffalo’s Child

The magical musical sequel to The Gruffalo. Children’s theatre full of songs, laughs and scary fun. Gardner Arts Centre.

Small ads↓

For sale: 3-piece suite, 3 yrs old, ivory removable covers, Bovis feather-filled cushions. £250 ono. Buyer collects. T Chies on 07795 152304 or 583440.

To let: Double room in 2-bed flat nr London Rd station. 2 bathrooms. Share with owner (spends much time away). £400 pm + bills. Email20@sussex.ac.uk.

For sale: 1991 Mazda MX5. 1.6 manual, racing green, chrome trim, hard top, full windows, air con. 191K km, MoT June 07. £1,200. Email: robinson@sussex.ac.uk.

For sale: Stateside ‘Nevada’ inline roller blades, size 8. New in box. £35. E surnham@sussex.ac.uk or T ext. 7600.

Free to good home: Quantity of Lego, totally assorted. E h.j.holt@sussex.ac.uk or T 507983.

To let: Bed-sitting room + en-suite bathroom in house nr Lewes station. Separate kitchen/diner + shared washer/dryer. Own entrance. Suit N/S mature student, PG or faculty. Short-term poss. £100 pw incl. T 472006 or E rosemary@sussex.ac.uk.


For sale: Sony VAIO laptop; 128MB, Microsoft Office 2000, McAfee Virus Scan. Registered on Sussex system. E ahj6@sussex.ac.uk, T 07095 971 647.

For sale: Womanly. Complete starter kit including wheelee bin and worms. Unused. £15. Email: rh.garne@sussex.ac.uk.

News in brief↓

Genome Centre Open Day

The Genome Damage and Stability Centre, which investigates the relationship of DNA damage to genetic diseases and cancer, will be holding an open day for potential research students on 11 December. See www.sussex.ac.uk/gdfcc.

Disability equality scheme to be published

Following consultation this term with disabled staff and students on their experience at Sussex, the University will publish its first disability equality scheme and action plan this month. The scheme will set out the positive action being taken to promote disability equality throughout the University in recognition of our duties under the Disability Discrimination Act (2005). Copies will be available online via www.sussex.ac.uk/equalities.

New postgraduate admissions system

The University’s new online system for postgraduate applicants, which went live at the start of November, is completely electronic. Postgraduate co-ordinators and faculty now make their admissions decisions via Sussex Direct, which saves paper. Decisions should be quicker than before and applicants can track the progress of their application over the internet. Paper applications are of course still being accepted and processed in the usual way.

Female physicists

Fifty per cent of the students graduating from Physics and Astronomy with MPhys degrees this year are women. According to the Institute of Physics, this compares to the national ratio of around 20 per cent and made a positive impression on the applicants – two-thirds of whom were female – visiting the department on a recent admissions day.
Funding available for ideas, products or services

Call for Proposals

November 2006 sees the launch of two new investment funds which provide 'proof of concept' and 'seed fund' finance. These are available to any University of Sussex academic, student or alumni with an idea, or any small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) that are able to develop an idea with the involvement of staff of students from the University of Sussex.

Financed by CommercialiSE (a government award to a consortium of eleven universities, including Sussex), the two new funds will make investments ranging from £5,000 to £250,000 in opportunities which arise in the South East of England.

To further support these investments, and the successful development of the opportunity, successful applicants are enrolled on a 'CommercialiSE Fellowship' that will provide further dedicated support and a programme of tailored access to experts and mentors who can help guide development.

The two funds have a combined value of £3.25 million to be invested over a 2 year period and will be managed by Finance South East (a not-for-profit FSA regulated subsidiary of the South East England Development Agency) on behalf of the eleven universities.

A. CommercialiSE PoCkET Fund

The proof of concept fund, is designed to support the commercial or technical validation of an idea or technology. Up to 40 awards ranging from £5,000 to £50,000 will be made to help take concepts to a stage where they are capable of attracting further external funding and development, or indeed customers. This award, which is a repayable loan, is only expected to be repaid once the technology is successfully exploited and generates a revenue.

B. CommercialiSE Seed Fund

This will provide up to 12 equity based investments, up to a maximum of £250,000 to support opportunities that have proven that their product or service is viable, and the route to market is feasible. Funds will be used to develop a company with a new opportunity into a commercial operation - to the stage where it is able to generate a sustainable income stream.

To be eligible, applications from University of Sussex staff, students and associated companies are made through Sussex IP, who will advise on preparation and completion of the application process. Sussex IP encourages any interested staff or student to contact them even at the earliest stages of an idea.

Further information can be obtained from:

www.sussexip.com/commercialise

or by phoning Sussex IP on extension 3000.