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Supporting Information.

Fine-Tuning of Ferrocene Redox Potentials Towards Multiplex DNA Detection.

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1. General.

All reactions were carried out using oven dried glassware under and inert atmosphere of nitrogen unless otherwise stated. Solvents were dried prior to use using an Innovative Technology Inc. PS-400-7 solvent purification system. Reagents were used as supplied without further purification either from Sigma Aldrich Company Ltd or Alfa Aesar Ltd. Analytical thin layer chromatography was performed using commercial available aluminium backed plates coated with ALUGRAM® Xtra SIL G/UV₂₅₄ from Macherey-Nagel Ltd. Plates were visualised under ultraviolet light (254 nm) or by chemical staining with potassium permanganate stain followed by gentle heating. Column chromatpgraphy was performed use silica gel 60Å pore size, 200-440 mesh particle size from Sigma Aldrich Company Ltd. The ¹H and ¹³C NMR spectra were recored on a Brüker Avance 300 Mhz instruments. Chemical shifts are recorded in ppm and reference internally to C_6H_6 or $CHCl_3$ (as stated) at 7.16 and 7.26 ppm respectively for ¹H NMR and 128.1 or 77.0 ppm for ¹³C NMR respectively. Mass spectrum analysis were recorded on a µTOF electrospray time of flight mass spectrometer (ESI-TOF). IR spectra were recorded on a Perkin Elmer 1600 FT IR spectrometer with selected absorbances quoted as vcm⁻¹. Melting points were recorded using a Buchi 535 melting point apparatus. Ferrocene methanol was synthesised *via* literature procedure.¹

2. General Procedure A for etherification of ferrocene methanol with various diols.



Ferrocene methanol (1 eq) was dissolved in appropriate diol (5 ml/mmo or 10 eql) and then treated with ytterbium triflate (5 mol %). The reaction was stirred at room temperature until TLC analysis showed full conversion. The reaction mixture was then diluted with ethyl acetate (20 mL) and the organics then washed with water (20 mL) and brine (sat.) (20 mL). The organic layer was then dried over MgSO₄, then filtered and concentrated *in vacuo*. Purification was then carried out by silica-gel chromatography eluting with hexane 1:1 ethyl acetate to give the desired product.

2-(Ferrocenyloxy)ethanol (1).



Using general procedure A with ferrocene methanol (545 mg, 2.5 mmol), ytterbium triflate (77 mg, 5 mol%) and ethylene glycol (10 mL). This gave the desired product as a yellow oil (389 mg, 59%). IR; υ_{max} (thin film) (cm⁻¹): 3431, 3100, 2903, 2856, 1464, 1396, 1234; ¹H NMR (300 MHz, C₆D₆); δ_{H} : 4.19–4.16 (m, 4H), 4.04 (s, 7H), 3.61 (br s, 2H), 3.38 (t, *J*=4.8 Hz, 2H), 1.99 (br s, 1H).; ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, C₆D₆); δ_{C} 84.3, 71.8, 70.0, 69.9, 69.2, 69.1, 62.4. HRMS (ESI) calculated for C₁₃H₁₆FeO₂Na m/z 283.0397 found 283.0372 (m/z + Na⁺); Oxidation potential: 181 mV.

3-(Ferrocenyloxy)propan-1ol (2).²



Using general procedure A with ferrocene methanol (545 mg, 2.5 mmol), ytterbium triflate (77 mg, 5 mol%) and 1,3-propanediol (10 mL). This gave the desired product as an orange solid (514 mg, 75%). Mpt: 40–42 °C; IR; υ_{max} (thin film) (cm⁻¹): 3408, 3082, 2940, 2856, 1453, 1356, 1270, 1058; ¹H NMR (300 MHz, C₆D₆); δ_{H} : 4.17–4.13 (m, 4H), 4.07–4.03 (m,

7H), 3.72 (app q, *J*=5.3, 2H), 3.48 (t, *J*=5.8, 2H), 2.19 (t, *J*=5.3, 1H), 1.87–1.52 (m, 2H); ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, C₆D₆); δ_{C} : 84.7, 69.8, 69.6, 69.5, 69.2, 68.9, 62.1, 33.1; HRMS (ESI) calculated for C₁₄H₁₈FeO₂Na m/z 297.0553 found 297.0560 (m/z + Na⁺); Oxidation potential: 178 mV.

4-(Ferrocenyloxy)butan-1-ol (3).



Using general procedure A with ferrocene methanol (500 mg, 2.35 mmol), ytterbium triflate (71 mg, 5 mol%) and 1,4-butanediol (10 mL). This gave the desired product as an orange oil (636 mg, 95%). IR; v_{max} (thin film) (cm⁻¹): 3407, 3094, 2938, 2848, 1639, 1446, 1410, 1375, 1232, 1054; ¹H NMR (300 MHz, C₆D₆); δ_{H} : 4.21–4.2 (m, 4H), 4.07–4.05 (m, 7H), 3.55 (br s, 2H), 3.38 (t, *J*=5.5, 2H), 2.08 (br s, 1H), 1.66–1.56 (m, 4H); ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, C₆D₆); δ_{C} : 84.6, 70.5, 69.9, 69.7, 69.2, 68.9, 62.9, 31.1, 27.6; HRMS (ESI) calculated for C₁₅H₂₀FeO₂Na m/z 311.0710 found 311.0710 (m/z + Na⁺); Oxidation potential: 184 mV.

5-(Ferrocenyloxy)pentan-1-ol (4).



Using general procedure A with ferrocene methanol (545 mg, 2.5 mmol), ytterbium triflate (77 mg, 5 mol%) and 1,5-pentanediol (10 mL). This gave the desired product as a viscous orange oil (676 mg, 89%). IR; υ_{max} (thin film) (cm⁻¹): 3383, 3085, 2926, 1854, 1433, 1343, 1232; ¹H NMR (300 MHz, C₆D₆); δ_{H} : 4..07–4.06 (m, 4H), 3.90–3.87 (m, 7H), 3.28–3.22 (m, 4H), 1.47–1.42 (m, 2H), 1.30–1.21 (m, 4H); ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, C₆D₆); δ_{C} : 85.0, 70.5, 69.9, 69.6, 69.2, 68.9, 62.8, 33.3, 30.3, 23.3; HRMS (ESI) calculated for C₁₆H₂₂FeO₂Na m/z 325.0866 found 325.0880(m/z + Na⁺); Oxidation potential: 186 mV.

6-(Ferrocenyloxyl)hexan-1-ol (5).³



Using general procedure A with ferrocene methanol (420 mg, 1.9 mmol), ytterbium triflate (58.9 mg, 5 mol%) and 1,6-hexanediol (2.25 g, 19 mmol) with dry acetonitrile (5 cm³) as solvent. This gave the desired product as a dark orange solid (538 mg, 89%). Mpt: 38–40 °C; IR; υ_{max} (thin film) (cm⁻¹): 3369, 3102, 2928, 2852, 1479, 1453, 1344, 1232, 1090 ¹H NMR (300 MHz, C₆D₆); δ_{H} : 4.28–4.25 (m, 4H), 4.08–4.00 (m, 7H), 3.47–3.43 (m, 4H), 1.69–1.60 (m, 2H), 1.49–1.28 (m, 6H); ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, C₆D₆); δ_{C} : 85.2, 70.5, 69.9, 69.7, 69.2, 68.9, 62.9, 33.5, 30.7, 26.9, 26.3; HRMS (ESI) calculated for C₁₇H₂₄FeO₂Na m/z 339.1023 found 339.1024 (m/z + Na⁺); Oxidation potential: 195 mV.

7-(Ferrocenyloxy)heptan-1-ol (6).



Using general procedure A with ferrocene methanol (109 mg, 0.5 mmol), ytterbium triflate (15.5 mg, 5 mol%) and 1,7-heptanediol (2 ml). This gave the desired product as an orange oil (116 mg, 70%). IR; υ_{max} (thin film) (cm⁻¹) 3371, 3092, 2927, 2852, 2121, 1634, 1466, 1343, 1233; ¹H NMR (300 MHz, C₆D₆); δ_{H} : 4.29–4.26 (m, 4H), 4.09–4.06 (m, 7H), 3.49–3.41 (m, 4H), 1.71–1.62 (m, 2H), 1.54–1.28 (m, 8H); ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, C₆D₆); δ_{C} : 85.2, 70.6, 69.9, 69.7, 69.2, 68.8, 63.1, 33.5, 30.6, 30.0, 27.1, 26.5; HRMS (ESI) calculated for C₁₈H₂₆FeO₂Na m/z 353.1179 found 353.1191 (m/z + Na⁺); Oxidation potential: 212 mV.

8-(Ferrocenyloxy)octan-1-ol (7).³



Using general procedure A with ferrocene methanol (109 mg, 0.5 mmol), ytterbium triflate (15.5 mg, 5 mol%) and 1,8-octanediol (731 mg, 5 mmol) in a minimal amount of dry 1,4-dioxane (5 ml). This gave the desired product as an orange oil (65 mg, 38%). IR; υ_{max} (thin film) (cm⁻¹): 3407, 3094, 2924, 2852, 1726, 1455, 1343, 1233, 1094; ¹H NMR (300 MHz,

 C_6D_6); δ_H : 4.30–4.26 (m, 4H), 4.09–4.06 (m, 7H), 3.51–3.42 (m, 4H), 1.73–1.64 (m, 2H), 1.45–1.30 (m, 10H); ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, C_6D_6); δ_C : 85.2, 70.6, 69.9, 69.6, 69.2, 68.9, 63.1, 33.6, 30.7, 30.2, 30.2, 27.0, 26.5; HRMS (ESI) calculated for $C_{19}H_{28}FeO_2Na$ m/z 367.1336 found 367.1353 (m/z + Na⁺). Oxidation potential: 233 mV.

8-(Ferrocenyloxy)nonan-1-ol (8).³



Using general procedure A with ferrocene methanol (109 mg, 0.5 mmol), ytterbium triflate (15.5 mg, 5 mol%) and 1,9-nonanediol (801 mg, 5 mmol) in a minimal amount of dry 1,4 dioxane (5 ml). This gave the desired product as an orange oil (66 mg, 37%). IR; υ_{max} (thin film) (cm⁻¹): 3407, 3093, 2925, 2852, 1725, 1434; ¹H NMR (300 MHz, C₆D₆); δ_{H} : $\delta = 4.19$ (s, 2H), 4.16–4.15 (m, 2H), 4.06 (s, 7H), 3.55 (t, *J*=6.7, 2H), 3.33 (t, *J*=6.7, 2H), 1.52–1.45 (m, 4H), 1.28–1.21 (m, 10H); ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃); δ_{C} 83.7, 70.1, 69.5, 69.1, 68.4, 63.0, 32.8, 29.7, 29.6, 29.4, 29.4, 26.2, 25.7; HRMS (ESI) calculated for C₂₀H₃₀FeO₂Na m/z 381.1493 found 381.1561 (m/z + Na⁺). Oxidation potential: 260 mV.

8-(Ferrocenyloxy)decan-1-ol (9).



Using general procedure A with ferrocene methanol (430 mg, 2.5 mmol), ytterbium triflate (61 mg, 5 mol%) and 1,10-decanediol (3.4 g, 19.7 mmol) in a minimal amount of dry 1,4 dioxane (15 ml). This gave the desired product as an orange oil (346 mg, 47%). IR; v_{max} (thin film) (cm⁻¹):3437, 3076, 2916, 2849, 1464, 1349; ¹H NMR (300 MHz, C₆D₆); δ_{H} : 4.30 (s, 2H), 4.26 (s, 2H), 4.09–4.07 (s, 7H), 3.52–3.44 (m, 4H), 1.75–1.66 (m, 2H), 1.48–1.32 (m, 14H); ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, C₆D₆); δ_{C} 85.3, 70.6, 69.8, 69.7, 69.2, 68.8, 63.1, 33.6, 30.8, 30.4, 30.4, 30.3, 30.2, 27.1, 26.6; HRMS (ESI) calculated for C₂₁H₃₂FeO₂Na m/z 395.1649 found 395.1637 (m/z + Na⁺). Oxidation potential: 285 mV.

General Procedure B for the Acylation of ferrocene derived alcohols.



To a solution of the ferrocene alcohol (0.5 mmol) and DMAP (6 mg, 10 mol%) in dry THF (5 ml) was added acetic anhydride (90 ml, 1 mmol) dropwise over a 2 minute period. Once addition of acetic anhydride was complete the solution was allowed to stir at room temperature for 5 minutes (TLC analysis at this time shows full conversion of the starting material). The reaction was then diluted with EtOAc (20 ml) and the organics washed with water (20 ml), NaHCO₃ (sat) (20 ml) and brine (sat) (20 ml). The organics were then dried over MgSO₄, filtered and concentrated *in vacuo*, to give the desired product without need for further purification.

2-(Ferrocenyloxy)ethyl acetate (10).



Using general procedure B with 2-(ferrocenyloxy)ethanol (1) (131 mg, 0.5 mmol, 1eq). This gave the desired compound as an orange solid (132 mg, 87%). Mpt: 41–43 °C; IR; υ_{max} (thin film) (cm⁻¹): 3082, 2981, 2964, 2863, 1731, 1460; ¹H NMR (300 MHz, C₆D₆); δ_{H} : 4.22–4.17 (m, 6H), 4.06–4.04 (m, 7H), 3.48–3.45 (m, 2H), 1.74 (s, 3H); ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, C₆D₆); δ_{C} : 170.6, 84.4, 69.9, 69.7, 69.2, 68.9, 68.2, 63.9, 20.9; HRMS (ESI) calculated for C₁₅H₁₈FeO₃Na m/z 325.0503 found 325.0475 (m/z + Na⁺); Oxidation potential: 193 mV.

3-(Ferrocenyloxy)propyl acetate (11).



Using general procedure B with 2-(ferrocenyloxy)propan-1-ol (2) (138 mg, 0.5 mmol, 1eq). This gave the desired compound as an orange oil (151 mg, 95%); IR; υ_{max} (thin film) (cm⁻¹): 3094, 2980, 2856, 1734, 1365; ¹H NMR (300 MHz, C₆D₆); δ_{H} : 4.24 (t, *J*=6.5, 2H), 4.20 (s,

4H), 4.06–4.04 (m, 7H), 3.41 (t, *J*=6.2, 2H), 1.86–1.78 (m, 2H), 1.74 (s, 3H); ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, C₆D₆); δ_C : 170.5, 84.8, 69.9, 69.7, 69.2, 68.9, 66.7, 62.1, 29.9, 20.9; HRMS (ESI) calculated for C₁₆H₂₀FeO₃Na m/z 339.0659 found 339.0673 (m/z + Na⁺); Oxidation potential: 200 mV.

4-(Ferrocenyloxy)butyl acetate (12).



Using general procedure B with 2-(ferrocenyloxy)butan-1-ol (3) (145 mg, 0.5 mmol, 1eq). This gave the desired compound as an orange oil (144 mg, 86%); IR; υ_{max} (thin film) (cm⁻¹): 3094, 295, 2853, 1734, 1447; ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃); δ_{H} : 4.22 (s, 4H), 4.08–4.06 (m, 9H), 3.35 (t, *J*=6.0, 2H), 1.75 (s, 3H), 1.69–1.56 (m, 4H); ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, C₆D₆); δ_C : 170.5, 84.9, 69.9, 69.8, 69.6, 69.2, 68.9, 64.6, 27.0, 26.4, 20.9; HRMS (ESI) calculated for C₁₇H₂₂FeO₃Na m/z 353.0816 found 353.0802 (m/z + Na⁺); Oxidation potential: 212 mV.

5-(Ferrocenyloxy)pentyl acetate (13).



Using general procedure B with 2-(ferrocenyloxy)pentan-1-ol (4) (152 mg, 0.5 mmol, 1eq). This gave the desired compound as an orange oil (94 mg, 54%); IR; υ_{max} (thin film) (cm⁻¹): 3094, 2980, 2941, 2861, 1735, 1460; ¹H NMR (300 MHz, C₆D₆); δ_{H} : 4.25–4.23 (m, 4H), 4.08–4.02 (m, 9H), 3.39 (t, *J*=6.2, 2H), 1.76 (s, 3H), 1.60–1.36 (m, 6H); ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃); δ_{C} : 170.5, 85.1, 70.2, 69.9, 69.6, 69.2, 68.9, 64.7, 30.2, 29.2, 23.5, 20.9. ; HRMS (ESI) calculated for C₁₈H₂₄FeO₃Na m/z 367.0973 found 367.0985 (m/z + Na⁺); Oxidation potential: 232 mV.

6-(Ferrocenyloxy)hexyl acetate (14).



Using general procedure B with 2-(ferrocenyloxy)hexan-1-ol (5) (159 mg, 0.5 mmol, 1eq). This gave the desired compound as an orange oil (154 mg, 86%); IR; v_{max} (thin film) (cm⁻¹): 3094, 2936, 2856, 1735, 1462; ¹H NMR (300 MHz, C₆D₆); δ_{H} : 4.27 (s, 2H), 4.25 (br s, 2H), 4.09–4.01 (m, 9H), 3.42 (t, *J*=6.4, 1H), 1.77 (s, 1H), 1.64–1.44 (m, 4H), 1.38–1.21 (m, 4H); ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, C₆D₆); δ_{C} : 170.5, 85.2, 70.3, 69.9, 69.6, 69.2, 68.9, 64.7, 30.5, 29.4, 26.7, 26.5, 20.9; HRMS (ESI) calculated for C₁₉H₂₆FeO₃Na m/z 381.1129 found 381.1131 (m/z + Na⁺); Oxidation potential: 257 mV.

7-(Ferrocenyloxy)heptyl acetate (15).



Using general procedure B with 2-(ferrocenyloxy)heptan-1-ol (6) (74 mg, 0.22 mmol, 1eq), acetic anhydride (40 µl, 0.44 mmol, 2 eq) and DMAP (2.7 mg, 0.02 mmol, 10 mol%). This gave the desired compound as an orange oil (80 mg, 97%); IR; υ_{max} (thin film) (cm⁻¹): 3094, 2936, 2856, 1735, 1462; ¹H NMR (300 MHz, C₆D₆); δ_{H} : 4.29 (s, 2H), 4.26–4.25 (m, 2H), 4.09–4.03 (m, 9H), 3.46 (t, *J*=6.4, 2H), 1.77 (s, 3H), 1.68–1.61 (m, 2H), 1.57–1.36 (m, 5H), 1.24–1.22 (m, 3H).; ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, C₆D₆); δ_{C} : 170.5, 85.2, 70.5, 69.9, 69.7, 69.2, 68.9, 64.8, 30.6, 29.7, 29.3, 26.9, 26.6, 20.9; HRMS (ESI) calculated for C₂₀H₂₈FeO₃Na m/z 395.1286 found 395.1280 (m/z + Na⁺); Oxidation potential: 280 mV.

8-(Ferrocenyloxy)octyl acetate (16).



Using general procedure B with 2-(ferrocenyloxy)octan-1-ol (7) (57 mg, 0.16 mmol, 1eq), acetic anhydride (30 µl, 0.32 mmol, 2 eq) and DMAP (2 mg, 0.016 mmol, 10 mol%). This

gave the desired compound as an orange oil (52 mg, 83%); IR; υ_{max} (thin film) (cm⁻¹): 3094, 2930, 2854, 1736, 1464; ¹H NMR (300 MHz, C₆D₆); δ_{H} : 4.30 (s, 2H), 4.26 (s, 2H), 4.09 – 4.04 (m, 9H), 3.48 (t, *J*=6.4, 2H), 1.78 (s, 3H), 1.71–1.62 (m, 2H), 1.50–1.38 (m, 5H), 1.29–1.23 (m, 5H).; ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, C₆D₆); δ_{C} : 170.5, 85.2, 70.5, 69.9, 69.7, 69.2, 68.9, 64.8, 30.7, 30.1, 29.9, 29.4, 26.9, 26.6, 20.9; HRMS (ESI) calculated for C₂₁H₃₀FeO₃Na m/z 409.1442 found 409.1476 (m/z + Na⁺); Oxidation potential: 302 mV.

9-(Ferrocenyloxy)nonyl acetate (17).



Using general procedure B with 2-(ferrocenyloxy)nonan-1-ol (8) (51 mg, 0.14 mmol, 1eq), acetic anhydride (28 µl, 0.28 mmol, 2 eq) and DMAP (1.7 mg, 0.014 mmol, 10 mol%). This gave the desired compound as an orange oil (43 mg, 76%); IR; υ_{max} (thin film) (cm⁻¹): 3093, 2927, 2854, 1737, 1464; ¹H NMR (300 MHz, C₆D₆); δ_{H} : 4.31 (s, 2H), 4.27–4.26 (m, 2H), 4.09–4.05 (m, 9H), 3.50 (t, *J*=6.4, 2H), 1.79 (s, 3H), 1.74–1.65 (m, 2H), 1.51–1.40 (m, 5H), 1.27–1.23 (m, 7H); ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, C₆D₆); δ_{C} : 170.5, 85.2, 70.6, 69.9, 69.7, 69.2, 68.9, 64.8, 30.8, 30.2, 30.2, 29.9, 29.4, 27.1, 26.6, 20.9; HRMS (ESI) calculated for C₂₂H₃₂FeO₃Na m/z 423.1598 found 423.1651 (m/z + Na⁺); Oxidation potential: 327 mV.

10-(Ferrocenyloxy)decyl acetate (18).



Using general procedure B with 2-(ferrocenyloxy)decan-1-ol (9) (187 mg, 0.5 mmol, 1eq),. This gave the desired compound as an orange oil (194 mg, 93%); IR; υ_{max} (thin film) (cm⁻¹): 3098, 2926, 2853, 1737, 1464; ¹H NMR (300 MHz, C₆D₆); δ_{H} : 4.30 (d, *J*=2.2, 2H), 4.27–4.26 (m, 2H), 4.09–4.06 (m, 9H), 3.50 (td, *J*=6.4, 2.7, 2H), 1.79 (s, 3H), 1.75–1.66 (m, 2H), 1.53–1.48 (m, 5H), 1.34–1.23 (m, 9H).; ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, C₆D₆); δ_{C} : 170.6, 85.2, 70.6, 69.9, 69.7, 69.2, 68.9, 64.8, 30.7, 30.4, 30.3, 30.3, 30.1, 29.9, 29.4, 27.1, 26.6, 20.9; HRMS (ESI) calculated for C₂₃H₃₄FeO₃Na m/z 437.1755 found 437.1785 (m/z + Na⁺); Oxidation potential: 335 mV.





















































240 230 220 210 200 190 180 170 160 150 140 130 120 110 100 90 80 70 60 50 40 30 20 10 0 -10 f1 (ppm)













110 100 f1 (ppm) 210 200 -10





240 230 220 210 200 190 180 170 160 150 140 130 120 110 100 90 80 70 60 50 40 30 20 10 0 -10 f1 (ppm)





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