

# Access and Participation Plan summary

## Royal Holloway, University of London (RHUL)

### Summary of 2025/26 to 2028/29 access and participation plan

#### What is an access and participation plan?

Access and participation plans set out how higher education providers will improve equality of opportunity for underrepresented groups to access, succeed in and progress from higher education.

You can see Royal Holloway's full access and participation plan [here on our website](#).

#### Key points

Royal Holloway is a historic, inclusive university with a diverse student population, based close to London. It has its roots in two London colleges founded in the 1800s, both among the first in the UK to offer higher education to women. Ensuring equality of opportunity for all students to access, succeed in and progress from higher education has therefore been fundamental to RHUL since it first began. Our founding values of inclusion, social justice, and educational excellence are reflected in the statement of our core values in 2024: Daring; Open; Respectful; Innovative. Our new strategy to take RHUL into the 2030s establishes us as a university of social purpose, with a bold and brave vision for the future. We are student centred and research intensive, and place inclusive education and research at the heart of everything we do.

Our student cohort has changed rapidly over the past few years, both in size and diversity. An increasing proportion of our students come from the London area, and from West and South London in particular. Our student body has become much more ethnically diverse, reflecting the hyper-diversity of London's population. In 2023/24 the majority of our students (51%) were from Black and Global Majority (BGM) ethnic backgrounds, with students from Asian backgrounds making up 32% of the total student body.

An increasing proportion of our home undergraduate students choose to commute to RHUL, 40% in 2023/24. Intersectional analysis shows a high level of association between commuters and underrepresented groups; 67% of commuters were from BGM backgrounds in 2023/24, and 42% from the most deprived areas of the country (IMD Q1&2).

We offer courses in a wide range of subjects, including performing and digital arts, humanities, law and social sciences, business and management, life and environmental sciences, and engineering, physical and mathematical sciences. Most of our teaching is provided at our main campus in Egham, with some key postgraduate courses taught at our London campus.

Our vision is for all our students, regardless of background, to have equity of opportunity to access and to succeed in higher education at RHUL, and to progress to the personal, social, and economic benefits of higher education.

In order to achieve this vision, we are committed to improving outcomes for all students, particularly those facing socio-economic deprivation, and from minoritised ethnic groups. Specifically, we know we have furthest to go to achieve equity in the following areas:

- The proportion of students joining us from the most deprived areas of the country, relative to those from the least deprived areas.
- The proportion of 1st / 2:1 degree classifications awarded to students from the most deprived areas of the country, relative to those from the least deprived areas.
- The proportion of 1st / 2:1 degree classifications awarded to students from minoritised ethnic groups, relative to students from white ethnic groups.

See page 1 of the access and participation plan for more information.

## Fees we charge

The maximum tuition fee charged for full-time home undergraduate students in 2025/26 will be £9,535 in accordance with government regulations. Please [see our website for more details on undergraduate tuition fees.](#)

## Financial help available

We offer bursaries to support students who are most likely to require financial support during their studies. Full details can be seen [here on our website.](#) Students also have access to a [Study Support Grant \(SSG\)](#) to provide help with financial difficulties, and advice and guidance from our Wellbeing Financial Advice team.

See pages 31-32 of the access and participation plan for more information.

## Information for students

We provide all prospective students with clear and comprehensive information about RHUL, including: our academic courses, their structure and assessment methods; entry requirements; tuition fees; financial support and eligibility; and approximate living costs. This information is easily accessible on our website and in our printed prospectus.

See pages 31-32 of the access and participation plan for more information.

## What we are aiming to achieve

Our assessment of performance identified a number of key risks to equality of opportunity, and we will be focusing our efforts in the following areas:

Risk area	Objective
Access for students from the most deprived areas of the country (IMD Q1)	To reduce the difference in the proportion of entrants from the most deprived areas (IMD Q1) and the least deprived areas (IMD Q5).
Attainment for disadvantaged pupils (Pupil Premium)	To increase the number of year 9 students on track to achieve grade 4-5 (or above) in GCSE Maths and English, working with local schools.
Access for care leavers	To work collaboratively with local organisations to raise awareness, aspirations, and attainment for learners from under-served communities in the region. In addition, to include care experienced young people as a priority group for all access initiatives with the aim of increasing the numbers participating.
Access to languages study	To work with local schools to increase success in modern languages at GCSE and increase language take-up at A Level and degree level.
Continuation gap for mature students	To reduce the difference between continuation rates for mature students (21+ at the start of the course) and young students.
Continuation and awarding gaps for all students in receipt of financial support	To maintain the very low difference in continuation rates between students in receipt of financial support and all other students, and to reduce the difference between the proportion of students from these groups who are awarded a 1 <sup>st</sup> / 2:1 degree.
Awarding gaps for the following groups: - BGM students - Black students - IMD Q1 students - BGM IMD Q1/2 students	To reduce the difference in the proportion of students who are awarded a 1 <sup>st</sup> / 2:1 degree from the groups of students listed and their comparator groups. These groups represent minoritised ethnic groups and those from the most deprived areas of the country.

See pages 2-5 of the access and participation plan for more information.

## What we are doing to address key risks to equality of opportunity

To help us meet the objectives listed above we are launching 5 intervention strategies:

1. **Improving access to RHUL for students from lower socio-economic groups via outreach work** – we will work with local schools to support pupils with targeted information and guidance, mentoring and revision skills workshops, immersive campus experiences and a residential summer university scheme. We will develop a student voice group for care experienced pupils and will work to deliver collaborative community outreach for young people from under-represented and under-served communities.
2. **Improving access to RHUL for students from lower socio-economic groups by providing additional pathways** – we will create alternative ways of studying at RHUL, introducing Higher Technical Qualifications (HTQs) with a pathway to studying for a full degree, making improvements to our foundation year by introducing more discipline-specific skills sessions, and extending our contextual offer scheme.
3. **Raising attainment for underrepresented groups through academic collaborative outreach** – we will work with local schools, including the Reach Foundation to deliver the Languages For All (LFA) programme, and the English and Maths Attainment Raising (EMAR) programme.
4. **Supporting students to continue their studies** – we will provide a Transition Framework to support successful and scaffolded transition into study, will continue to develop our Head Start pre-arrival early induction programme, and will provide financial support in the form of bursaries and Study Support Grant alongside financial education and cost of living support.
5. **Supporting students to successful awarding outcomes** – we will deliver an Inclusive Curriculum Framework, and a Wellbeing Framework to support emotional, financial, physical and social & community wellbeing, including a review of the Personal Tutor model. We will ensure the centrality of student voice in our interventions, extending our peer mentoring scheme, launching student-led collaborative networks and employing student intervention leads. We will launch new Inclusive Behaviours EDI training for all staff.

See pages 6-24 of the access and participation plan for more information.

### **How students can get involved**

Student voice is key to everything we do at RHUL, and students and the Students' Union have been involved in every stage of the creation of this plan. We commit to continuing to work with students on all aspects of the plan going forwards, to ensure it addresses their needs and aligns with their lived experience.

See pages 28-29 of the access and participation plan for more information.

### **Evaluation – how we will measure what we have achieved**

We are committed to ensuring continuous improvement in the evaluation of the strategic measures underpinning our aims and objectives to ensure that they remain effective in meeting their aims and ultimately our overarching vision. Programme design is informed by evidence of the impact of activities both at local and national level, for example through reviewing own evaluation and sector best practice and evidence on what works for the specific intervention. This means that our programmes are underpinned in all cases by narrative evaluation, and in most cases by empirical evaluation. Evaluation outcomes will be published on the university's website alongside this Access and Participation Plan, which will be viewable by staff, students and external visitors in order to contribute to the latest research evidence.

See pages 30-31 of the access and participation plan for more information.

### **Contact details for further information**

Please contact our Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education and Student Experience) at [vice-chancellorandprincipal@rhul.ac.uk](mailto:vice-chancellorandprincipal@rhul.ac.uk) for more information.