



Access Agreement (REVISED FOR 2008-09 ENTRY ONWARDS)

Executive Summary of contents of Access Agreement

This revised agreement has been set out to provide the Office for Fair Access (OFFA) with our proposals, following the introduction in 2006/07 of full tuition fees for full-time Home and European Union (HEU) students on undergraduate courses at Royal Holloway and in 2008/09 of new threshold household income levels for full and partial maintenance grants, to meet their requirements to safeguard and promote fair access. The needs of under-represented groups, in particular students from low-income backgrounds, have been addressed through bursary and other financial support and outreach work. This section summarises the contents of this document.

Strategy and Context

Widening participation (WP) is an important strategic objective for Royal Holloway and we are committed to widening access to higher education by welcoming and encouraging more applications from groups who are under-represented in higher education.

In preparing this document the College considered, specifically with regards to widening participation outreach work and other activities targeted at under-represented groups, a range of strategies including WP, admissions and recruitment strategies. The main considerations underpinning the thinking behind this document were to:

- Embed both centrally and across the College fair admissions processes and policies to ensure equality of opportunity for all applicants regardless of background;
- Ensure student academic standards are maintained across the College;
- Aim to attract a wider pool of applicants and attain academically able students, regardless of background;
- Minimise financial barriers to HE for those students for whom financial concerns would otherwise prevent them from coming to Royal Holloway;
- Maintain retention rate and minimise drop-out from students;
- Work within the region with potential students from low higher education participation areas to raise aspirations and attainment, and encourage these students to consider HE as a viable option for them;
- Work with all potential students to ensure that full and clear financial and college information is provided prior to them considering Royal Holloway;
- Optimise the impact of the institutional support which we offer students and graduates in achieving career success and satisfaction.

Fee Income and Expenditure

Our additional fee income is estimated to be £7.86m following full implementation of top up fees (Year 3) and £9.10m (Year 4). Of this we have allocated the following:

Year 3		Year 4	
Bursaries and Scholarships	£1.86m	Bursaries and Scholarships	£2.85m
WP and Student Support	£0.30m	WP and Student Support	£0.31m
Contingency	£0.07m	Contingency	£0.13m

Uncommitted income	£5.63m	Uncommitted income	£6.61m
Total	£7.86m	Total	£9.90m

Bursaries and Scholarships

The main characteristics of the generous bursaries and scholarships funded from additional fee income can be simply described as follows:

- Bursaries, known as Standard Bursaries, will be awarded to full-time undergraduate students from England and Wales with a household income of £39,305 or less (uplifted for inflation in subsequent years), and who are in receipt of a full or partial maintenance grant. The total given for this will be £500 per student per year. A student repeating a year of undergraduate study is only eligible for bursary support for the repeated year if they are in receipt of a full maintenance grant.
- Royal Holloway Excellence Scholarships of £500 per year will be awarded to excellent students from England and Wales with a household income of £39,305 or less (uplifted for inflation in subsequent years), and who are in receipt of a full or partial maintenance grant. These students must also achieve 320 UCAS tariff points (grades ABB at GCE A-level) or equivalent in those specific subject elements of their academic qualifications which are specified in their Royal Holloway UCAS offer as requirements for admission for their programme of undergraduate study at the College;
- Founder's Scholarships of £3500 per year will be offered to outstanding students from England and Wales with a household income of £39,305 or less (uplifted for inflation in subsequent years), and who are in receipt of a full or partial maintenance grant. These scholarships will be competitive, made on application and will be awarded by a Bursaries and Scholarships Panel;
- Bedford Scholarships of £1000 per year will be offered to outstanding students irrespective of household income. These scholarships will be competitive, made on application, and will be awarded by a Bursaries and Scholarships Panel. The Bursaries and Scholarship Panel will be required to consider groups under-represented in higher education in making these awards. It is estimated that 42% of Bedford Scholarships will go to under-represented groups.
- Masters Scholarships (equal to the standard tuition fee) will be offered on a competitive basis to students from England and Wales who begin undergraduate programmes in Royal Holloway in or after 2006, who are in receipt of a Standard Bursary in their final year of undergraduate study, and who achieve a 2.1 degree or better.

The College will conduct an annual review of the bursaries and scholarships funded from additional fee income. Minor adjustments may be made, including the offer of additional elements, in the light of the impact of variable fees and/or our rate of progress towards milestones and targets. OFFA protocols will be followed in all cases and should a substantive revision to the bursaries and scholarships offered by Royal Holloway prove necessary we will notify OFFA and apply for a variation of our Access Agreement.

Outreach

The College commits, building upon current good practice, to undertake extra outreach activities with the additional fee income it receives. This can be summarised as follows:

- Expansion of the current WP Team by 4.5 members of staff and the upgrade of two current members of staff.
This will allow additional resource to be allocated to targeting schools and colleges and increasing the number of activities provided by the WP department; expanding the group of schools and colleges to whom activity is targeted; embedding tracking and monitoring of the outcomes and effectiveness of activities, developing strategies to attract more applications from under-represented groups, including mature students.
- Expansion of the current Student Support team by two new members of staff.
This will allow additional resources, in order to attract a wider pool of applicants, to be allocated to pre-application financial advice; on-line study skills; further study skills classes for those in need;

enhanced communication with target groups of existing students; provide study skills classes beyond the first year of study; provide, maintain and improve the retention of students.

Compliance and Review

The College has various mechanisms through which compliance with this agreement will be ensured. The principal monitoring mechanism will be through reporting to the Academic Awards Group chaired by the Vice-Principal (Academic Affairs) and the Resources Sub-Group chaired by the Senior Vice-Principal (Planning and Resources).

The following groups and committees will also have ad hoc monitoring functions as detailed below:

Audit & Compliance Committee	General progress towards milestones.
Admissions Management Group	Progress towards outreach objectives and milestones, tracking and monitoring, fair admissions, funding awarding processes.
Finance Committee	Scrutiny and review of OFFA related income and expenditure.
Marketing Executive Group	Monitoring the effective dissemination of information through publications, website.
Admission Plenary Meeting	Monitoring the dissemination of WP strategies to academic departments; Funding for students.

Access Agreement for Royal Holloway, University of London

1. Level of Fees

In 2008-2009 the College will charge the full fee to all Home and European Union (HEU) undergraduate students of £3,145 per annum (the maximum fee permitted by the Department of Innovation, Universities and Skills will be charged in subsequent years). This will be for all full-time undergraduate courses on offer at Royal Holloway, University of London.

2. Bursaries and Scholarships

Royal Holloway will offer the following bursaries and scholarships as cash awards:

- A Standard Bursary of £500 per year will be awarded to full-time students from England and Wales who are in receipt of a full or partial government maintenance grant with a household income of £39,305 or less. A student repeating a year of undergraduate study is only eligible for bursary support for the repeated year if they are in receipt of a full maintenance grant.
- Royal Holloway Excellence Scholarships of £500 per year will be awarded to excellent students from England and Wales who are in receipt of a full or partial government maintenance grant and have a household income of £39,305 or less. In addition to this, students must also achieve 320 UCAS tariff points (grades ABB at GCE A-level) or equivalent in those specific subject elements of their academic qualifications which are specified in their Royal Holloway UCAS offer as requirements for admission for their programme of undergraduate study at the College.
- Founder's Scholarships of £3500 per year will be awarded on a competitive basis to full-time students from England and Wales who will be in receipt of a full or partial government maintenance grant and have a household income of £39,305 or less. In addition to this, students must also achieve 360 UCAS tariff points (3 A grades at GCE A-level) or equivalent in those specific subject elements of their academic qualifications which are specified in their Royal Holloway UCAS offer as requirements for admission for their programme of undergraduate study at the College.
- Bedford Scholarships of £1000 per year will be offered to outstanding students irrespective of household income. Students must achieve a minimum of 360 UCAS tariff points (3 A grades at GCE A-level) or equivalent in those specific subject elements of their academic qualifications which are specified in their Royal Holloway UCAS offer as requirements for admission for their programme of

undergraduate study at the College. These Scholarships will be competitive, made on application and will be awarded by a Bursaries and Scholarships Panel. The Bursaries and Scholarship Panel will be required to consider groups under-represented in higher education in making these awards. It is estimated that 42% of Bedford Scholarships will go to under-represented groups.

Royal Holloway will offer the following scholarship as fee related support (available from 2009-10 onwards):

- Masters Scholarships will be available to students who begin undergraduate programmes in Royal Holloway in or after 2006 and who are in receipt of a Standard Bursary in their final year of undergraduate study. Masters Scholarships will enable students to undertake postgraduate study in the academic year immediately after their undergraduate degree, or the following year free of the standard tuition fee for Home and EU students (proposed 2008 rate of £3,300). Masters Scholarships will be offered on a competitive basis subject to the student making satisfactory progress at undergraduate level, achieving a 2.1 degree or better, and gaining an offer of admission to a taught Masters degree programme of study at Royal Holloway.

These are summarised in further detail in **ANNEX A**.

3. Outreach Activities

Additional funding will be apportioned to the following:

- Recruiting an additional WP Officer;
- Upgrading the present part-time WP Officer post to full time;
- Recruiting a Fair Access Co-ordinator;
- Upgrading the present WP Assistant position;
- Recruiting an Outreach Officer;
- Reviewing the current line-management arrangements and formally upgrading the current Outreach Officer role to Deputy WP Manager with responsibility for overseeing and facilitating activity, through best practice outreach work, across the three faculties;
- Recruiting a full-time study skills tutor (Student Support);
- Recruiting a part-time administrator (Student Support).

This will contribute towards the following areas of new activity:

1. Extend and develop WP target group outreach work by expanding the aspiration-raising activity portfolio of schemes within our current 20 target schools and colleges, and provide activities for at least 50 schools and colleges within the region.
2. Review and extend the tutoring and mentoring and associated embryonic WP schemes:
 - within the existing schools and colleges with which we have established co-operative relationships;
 - with new schools, colleges and other education providers in the region i.e. in Surrey, Berkshire (including Slough), and West London (including Hounslow);
 - by developing the existing student shadowing scheme.
3. Strengthen the College's outreach presence to raise aspirations and achievement by undertaking additional outreach activity in History and Social Sciences, and Arts Faculties, in-line with the Science Faculty model. This departmental WP activity will be reported and reviewed as a part of an embedded college WP strategy.
4. Develop a Mature Students Strategy, including the production of targeted literature for mature students, collaboration and regular information exchanges with local Access to HE providers, and dedicated progression activities for mature students. This will come in hand with additional activity within key target areas (for example, further education colleges and adult learning environments) to

- promote progression and access to HE. Investigate the possibility of an Associate Student scheme for local mature students who are undertaking pre-HE qualifications.
5. Extend and develop Taster Day provision across a wide range of departments.
 6. Develop Summer School Opportunities targeted at under-represented groups beyond current provision (e.g. Gifted and Talented Summer Schools, Pre-Access activity for mature students).
 7. Identify students from WP target groups at the point of application using available data – date of birth, postcode, and alternative qualifications. Review identification retrospectively when additional data becomes available in December (i.e. ethnicity and socio-economic status). Develop processes that set objectives and benchmarks and times for review against these benchmarks.
 8. Produce a comprehensive guide to alternative/'non-standard' qualifications for Admissions Tutors and Admissions Office staff. Develop and implement a strategy/action plan for promoting alternative qualification routes to study at RHUL to broaden the pool of applicants, and recognise the broad range of student groups who could benefit from study at RHUL and add value to the College.
 9. Provide further administrative assistance to support the additional work of the WP office and to offload the baseline clerical activity, in order to free time to support higher level administrative tasks: tracking, monitoring, and administration associated with the tutoring and mentoring scheme, marketing and communications strategies to schools, colleges, adult education services and potential students.
 10. Further support WP departmental strategies and establish a process of review and evaluation of WP departmental strategies, and conduct an annual audit of WP and outreach activity across the College.
 11. Establish and embed a process for analysis and dissemination of retention and achievement statistics of WP target students at college, faculty and department level.
 12. Develop and embed fully electronic and other forms of communication systems, including internet and intranet WP portals to communicate and disseminate information to potential students, and provide a central college resource for colleagues on WP matters.
 13. Extend the role of Student Services as a part of an integrated approach to WP as shown in **ANNEX B**.

Student Support

Objectives for Student Support are as follows:

Study Skills Support

14. Develop and implement communications plan for dissemination of information on study skills sessions available for all students.
15. Develop and offer web-based diagnostic equipment as an alternative to face-to-face meetings.
16. Develop and implement a follow-up system for all students at regular intervals.
17. Extend current programme into students' second and third year to ensure successful completion.

Financial Advice and Guidance

18. Expand current work to cover feeder schools in Slough and Woking that represent more WP targeted students.
19. Develop publicity material on financial support services available.
20. Design web-based profiling material to help students identify funding problems and possible sources of support.
21. Offer surgery for prospective students (by phone, email or face-to-face) to discuss bursaries, scholarships and financial assistance available to students.

Admissions Activities

22. Up skill and train the Admissions team in processes for identifying students who may come from under-represented groups.
23. Develop systems to ensure that all admissions and technical support processes can track WP target students effectively through the applications process.
24. Develop and disseminate a fair and transparent admissions policy.

Please see **ANNEX B** for a full breakdown of outreach and student support activities to support the above objectives with detailed objectives and targets for 2006-2007.

4. Communications Plan for Financial Support

The College will provide information to prospective students in the following manner:

Website

We will invest in the development of online funding information pages which fully details the funding available, eligibility criteria and application packs that can be downloaded. There will be a telephone number advertised that will allow prospective students to contact the student funding office to discuss their issues.

Prospectus

The prospectus will have a clear section within which will state the funding that the College has on offer. We will state the eligibility criteria and advertise a phone number providing further information and support. Information on the aggregate cost of tuition will also be provided.

Student Services Office

The Student Finance office will handle all calls relating to student finance. They will also produce a student finance booklet detailing services and available finance that will be distributed through the Admission Office with all offer letters.

Admissions

All members of staff within the Admissions Office will be trained on all aspects of college funding. The Admissions Office will also disseminate this information internally to academic departments to ensure consistency in dissemination of clear information to students. Training will also be given to Admissions Tutors and other stakeholders within the admission process to ensure that through their contact with students during the admissions cycle, sufficient and accurate information is being disseminated.

Recruitment Office

All members of staff within the Home Recruitment and WP Office will be trained on all aspects of college funding so this information can be disseminated through schools and college liaison contact, and outreach activities.

Additional Activities/Publications

Funding Brochure: We will publish a booklet specifically about funding and bursaries/scholarships for UG students. This will be available on request to all enquirers, through all outreach activities, Open Days, and Schools Liaison activity.

Funding Talks at Open Days/UCAS

We will allocate additional time to a specific talk during college open days that will provide full information on funding, bursaries and scholarships available at Royal Holloway. We will also provide these talks to departments for UCAS days.

All publications will state the aggregate amount of fees that the institution will charge for the completion of the course.

5. Financial Information

Financial details of how the College proposes to use the funds gained through additional fee income is provided in **ANNEX C**.

In summary:

Year 3		Year 4	
Bursaries and Scholarships	£1.86m	Bursaries and Scholarships	£2.85m
WP and Student Support	£0.30m	WP and Student Support	£0.31m
Contingency	£0.07m	Contingency	£0.13m
Uncommitted income	£5.63m	Uncommitted income	£6.61m
Total	£7.86m	Total	£9.90m

The total commitment of total marginal fee income following full implementation is 26% (Year 3) and 33% (Year 4).

6. Institutional Milestones, Targets and Objectives

Detailed outreach targets and objectives for 2006-2007 are listed in **ANNEX B**.

Institutional milestones and objectives for the five years covered by this Access Agreement are given in **ANNEX D**.

Institutional milestones and targets will be monitored and reviewed through the arrangements detailed in this Access Agreement. Royal Holloway recognises that there may be a need in the future to revise original milestones and targets in the light of the impact of variable fees and/or our rate of progress towards milestones and targets. OFFA protocols will be followed should a revision to milestones and targets prove necessary.

7. Monitoring Compliance

We will monitor compliance with this Access Agreement through a range of arrangements, committees and groups. The principal monitoring mechanism will be through termly reporting to the Academic Awards Group chaired by the Vice-Principal (Academic Affairs) and reporting to the Resources Sub-Group chaired by the Senior Vice-Principal (Planning and Resources):

Group/Committee	Area to monitor	Membership
Academic Awards Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversight of bursaries and scholarships 	Vice-Principal (Academic Affairs) Academic Registrar Head of Recruitment/Liaison Office Deans of Faculty
Resources Sub-Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resource allocations 	Senior Vice-Principal (Planning and Resources) Director of Finance Deans

The following groups and committees will also have ad hoc monitoring functions as detailed below:

Group/Committee	Area to monitor	Membership
Audit & Compliance Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General progress towards milestones 	4 lay members of the Council <i>In attendance:</i> Director of Resources Director of Finance Internal Auditor Members of the External Audit Team, by invitation
Admissions Management Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress towards outreach milestones, Tracking and monitoring of college baseline data • Progress towards fair Admissions policies • Monitoring the award of scholarships and bursaries 	Vice-Principal Head of Recruitment/Liaison Office Dean of Graduate School Head of Admissions
Finance Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrutiny and review of OFFA related income and expenditure 	Principal Vice-Chair of the Council Five lay members of the Council Two staff members of the Council <i>In attendance:</i> Vice-Principal Director of Resources Director of Finance Deans of the Faculties College Secretary Director of Facilities Management
Marketing Executive Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring the effectiveness dissemination of information through publications, website, and collaborations. • Monitoring of collaboration gained through outreach activities 	Head of External Relations, Administrative Secretary, Director of Resources, Director of Facilities Management, Head of Research & Enterprise, Publications & Web Manager
Admission Plenary Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring of effective dissemination of WP strategies through to academic departments • Monitoring of effective dissemination of information as regards funding available for students 	Head of Admissions Admissions Tutors from Academic Departments Head of Recruitment/Liaison Office

8. Additionality for Outreach

The access measures as outlined in this document will further embed outreach and widening participation strategies into recruitment, admission and retention activities in Royal Holloway. The additional income will allow us to widen access to higher education and attract, in a more strategic and powerful way, an increased number of applications from under-represented groups.