



HELSO
2023-24

**Shape your university experience
with the Students' Union**

WELCOME TO

ROYAL HOLLOWAY STUDENTS' UNION.

f @SURHUL



Contents

- 04** Who we are
- 06** Freshers' Festival
- 09** Our Advice Centre
- 10** Get your voice heard
- 12** Thinking ahead
- 16** Meet your 23/24 Officers
- 17** Representing your academic interests
- 18** Financial support
- 19** Student groups
- 20** Get involved
- 22** Our venues

Hey.

It's almost time to embark on the journey of a lifetime and start crafting your Royal Holloway story.

As your Students' Union, we'll be here with you every step of the way. Whatever you're looking for, we're here to help you shape your ideal university experience.

But what exactly does that mean?

Well, think of the Students' Union (SU) as that place that always has your back. Independent from the University, we're here to champion student interests. This means we can fight for your rights and ensure you are always getting your voice heard. The best bit is that upon enrolling at Royal Holloway you automatically become a member*, meaning you can access our services from the get-go.

As your elected Officers, we'll work on a range of issues relating to student life, listening to your thoughts and opinions

while running campaigns and working with key stakeholders to make positive changes to your university experience. We can't wait to welcome you for Freshers' Festival as we kick off the year in style!

Throughout the rest of this guide, we'll take you on a journey of everything we have to offer at the SU and how you can get involved.

See you soon!

Hannah, Sharanya, Nisha, Alastair
Your 2023/24 Officers

>>SU.RHUL.AC.UK/OFFICERS

*You can opt out of membership at any time. Visit su.rhul.ac.uk/membership to find out more.



We're led by students.

Students shape everything about the Students' Union and are always at the centre of our thinking. From our Trustee Board, which is made up of over 50% students including our Sabbatical Officer team, down to casual staff working in our venues, students are involved in every aspect of our work. In fact, we employ 400+ students, as well as having over 3000 involved in our clubs, societies and media outlets.

We're not-for-profit.

Legally, the Union is a democratic charity (charity number 1141998) and must follow the laws and regulations which govern UK charity organisations. This means we are not run for profit - every pound we generate gets reinvested into the services we provide, be that student groups (via grants), the Union Shop, our events calendar, or our campaigns.

Our values.

Our values dictate the way we operate and the behaviours we champion.

- **Student Focused**
- **High Quality**
- **Trustworthy**
- **Inclusive**
- **Brave**

Freshers' Festival 23



What's going on?

Taking place across the first week of term, Freshers' Festival is your introduction to the Students' Union and everything we have to offer. We'll be welcoming you to Royal Holloway with loads of free events, taster sessions and nights out (if that's your thing).

Why not see for yourself?

With so many exciting events and activities happening across campus, you'll no doubt want to get a piece of the action. Check out the full programme by scanning the QR code or visiting the link below!

>> SU.RHUL.AC.UK/FRESHERS



Wristbands

Planning to dance away at the biggest club nights on campus? You'll want to get your hands on an official Freshers' Festival wristband – the only way to guarantee your entry to all our headline events. Wristbands will go on sale in two phases:

- First-year students: Thursday 24 August (13:00)
- General sale: Monday 4 September (10:00)

Individual event tickets will go on sale at 10am on Monday 11 September.

Remember, the Union website - SU.RHUL.AC.UK - is the only verified place to buy tickets to events. If you're unsure you're purchasing from the right place, contact us on social media - @[SURHUL](https://twitter.com/SURHUL) or email marketing@su.rhul.ac.uk.



If you're looking to develop a new skill, flex your creative muscles, or simply unwind after a day of lectures, you'll find something in our calendar of Give It A Go events.

These are smaller-scale events that are predominantly alcohol-free and focused on you meeting new people in a fun, relaxed and welcoming environment. Some previous highlights include a campus Colour Run, pamper sessions, a free pop-up ice cream parlour, and loads more including multiple day trips to places like Brighton and Cambridge.

So, whether you're an adrenaline junkie, culture vulture, sports fanatic, or just love trying new things, we'll have something for you!

>> SU.RHUL.AC.UK/GIAG

Meet & Mingle

Across Freshers' Festival, we'll also be hosting daily mixers, picnics, and socials specifically to help you meet other students and make friends! While you could meet your new best friend at any of our events, Meet and Mingle will bring together students from all walks of life in a relaxing environment. You'll also have the chance to speak to your new coursemates in an informal setting, and our Sabbatical Officer team, who can't wait to meet you!

Entertainment and activities to keep conversations flowing, refreshing food and drinks plus a friendly game or two will all be provided so that you have everything you need to meet and mingle with your new Royal Holloway community.

>> SU.RHUL.AC.UK/EVENTS

Navigating



It can be tricky finding the right balance between work and play but it's doable.

While we will be putting on an array of events to help you enjoy the social side of university life, it's up to you to decide how involved you get. Our events are a great way to meet new people and enjoy new experiences in a safe environment, but if you'd rather stay in and watch the latest Netflix series, that's also absolutely fine. There are no set rules, and you can shape your own experience!

Freshers' Festival isn't all about drinking and partying either – we run loads of alcohol-free events, including our Give It A Go programme, your best bet for new and exciting experiences. We'd also encourage you to go out and explore campus and the local area. The beautiful Virginia Water Lake is just down the road, and you can also check out the monument to Magna Carta down in Runnymede. From riverside walks to glorious meadows, memorials and secluded spots, there's something for everyone!

We know that adapting to student life can be challenging but you won't be going

through this alone. You can find help using our online resources or if you want to speak to someone, our Advice Centre is on hand to offer you free and impartial advice. Alternatively, you can also have a chat with the University's Student Services Centre.

You can also find out more information about the start to university life by downloading the 'Welcome to Royal Holloway' app from the App Store or Google Play.

Our Advice Centre is here whenever you need a helping hand.

Based on the first floor of the Students' Union, our Advice Centre is a free and independent service for all students at Royal Holloway. We're here to support you with a whole range of issues, free from judgement. While our advisors specialise in academic and housing advice, we can offer guidance on just about anything that may affect you during your university journey.

No matter whether you're studying on campus or from home, you'll be able to access support online through email and virtual appointments. You can also visit our Advice Centre hub on the website, giving you instant digital access to support and useful resources, or attend one of our weekly drop-in sessions.

It's okay to feel overwhelmed.

Starting university is a big deal and you may have moments where you feel overwhelmed. This is completely natural, and you won't be the only one feeling this way. While we encourage you to step out of your comfort zone and try new things, it's important to do so at your own pace.

>> [SU.RHUL.AC.UK/ADVICE](https://su.rhul.ac.uk/advice)

WE'RE HERE TO
SUPPORT YOU

Confidential. Impartial. Free.

Advice Centre and we're
happy to help.

Voice.

We're here to represent you, which means the most important voices in the Students' Union should be yours.

That's why we provide an array of different ways for you to get involved and have your say on how things work at the Students' Union, ensuring students are at the heart of every decision we make.

We're here every step of the way. From your first day to your last, we're here to support you throughout.

Student Executives.

We want students to collaborate more effectively on key issues and we achieve this through our three Student Executives: Education; Wellbeing, Community and Diversity; and Societies, Sports and

Opportunities. Your Officers engage with a wide range of students when planning their work and students feed directly into the development of policy and campaigns in their area.

Student Communities.

Making sure that you're valued and listened to during your time here is one of our top priorities, so last year we established Student Communities to give underrepresented groups a platform to have their voices heard. Led by student Community Officers, Communities work on campaigns with the SU to secure the general interests and rights of students.



Bright Ideas.

We want to make great things happen for Royal Holloway students. We realise that it's not possible for us to always be aware of the issues affecting you on a day-to-day basis. Sometimes it can be hard to find a place to have your say. That's why Bright Ideas exists. It's your opportunity to let us know where we should focus our attention so that we can continue to **make student life better at Royal Holloway.**

>> [SU.RHUL.AC.UK/BRIGHTIDEAS](https://su.rhul.ac.uk/brightideas)

Policy Inquiries and Insight Reports.

In the past few years, we've published several reports – SU Security Review, BAME Inclusive Student Experience, PGR Student Experience, Careers Support, and Student Housing – where we detailed a series of recommendations for ourselves and the University to improve our work in those areas. We're also coming to the end of our postgraduate taught student experience inquiry, and there will be more to come throughout the year.

>> [SU.RHUL.AC.UK/VOICE](https://su.rhul.ac.uk/voice)

Earn.



Part-time jobs.

Each year, we employ hundreds of students in paid part-time positions across the Union to help us achieve our aims: improving your education, making campus fun, looking after your wellbeing, making you more employable, and empowering you to change the world around you.

Becoming a student staff member is a great way to meet new people and learn loads of new skills in a professional and fun work environment. It's also a great way to earn some extra money – something that may be really important for you to consider given the cost of living crisis.

Whether you think you would do a cracking job serving up drinks behind the bar, or fancy getting involved with work behind the scenes to make our services tick, we've got something for everyone!

>> [SU.RHUL.AC.UK/JOBS](https://su.rhul.ac.uk/jobs)

Every year, teams across the SU work tirelessly to make sure you have the best possible experience while you're studying at Royal Holloway. We've delivered an incredible amount over the last academic year...

A YEAR AT YOUR SU 22/23

871

Cases opened by our Advice Centre

77

Students supported through academic misconduct cases

£5,149

Distributed to students through the Student Group Access Fund

140+

Active student groups

726

Total attendees at Colours Ball + Society Awards

710

Rate Your Union responses

20.7%

Voter turnout in this year's SU Elections

1,249

Students consulted during the SU Security Review

67,411

Jungbombs downed at Union Venue events

58,135

Pints enjoyed at The Packhorse

2,422

Expenditure transactions processed for student groups

£535,000

In income transactions processed for student groups

Finding a new student pad.

You're just starting your Royal Holloway journey so this may be one for the future, but it's still something to bear in mind.

It's easy to get carried away in the excitement but you shouldn't feel pressured into jumping straight into a housing contract. Take your time and wait for our Housing Fair towards the end of Term One where you can meet local landlords and estate agents.

When you're ready to start your search, head to @RHSUHousemating on Facebook to find other students looking for accommodation.

Check out RHUL Studentpad – your free portal to hundreds of properties in the local area. Whether you're looking for a place in Egham, Englefield Green or further afield, it's your best bet for finding high-quality private accommodation that's the perfect fit for you.

>> [RHULSTUDENTPAD.CO.UK](https://www.rhulstudentpad.co.uk)



Market Day.

Feeling peckish?

It's Market Day every Tuesday at the SU - stock up on fruit and veg at our indoor market and grab a delicious hot lunch from one of our international food stalls on the Union Plaza.

Get the supplies in.

Who wants to walk 20 minutes to the shops and then carry their bags back up a hill?

Literally nobody. Luckily, the Union Shop is located on the ground floor of the EWD Building, selling fresh produce, drinks, clothing and more. We also have a dedicated vegetarian, vegan and gluten-free selection - lovely stuff.

For all the latest deals and offers at the Union Shop, keep an eye out for us on Instagram @SURHUL



14



ANY SIZE PIZZA £12

USE CODE: **FRESHSEP**
EXP: 30/09

ORDER NOW



Domino's

Premium crusts and additional toppings may be charged as extra. Offer cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. Valid at participating stores only. Minimum delivery spend and delivery charge may apply. For full T&Cs see Boring Legal Stuff at [dominos.co.uk](https://www.dominos.co.uk). Expires 30/09/23.

Hannah Hockin

>> President

Hi! I'm Hannah - your SU President.

My role involves representing your views to the University and lobbying for changes which improve student life at Royal Holloway. I support the Officer team and ensure we work together to amplify your voices. I also play a large role in the Students' Union's governance and sit on College Council, the highest governing body of the University.

As the previous Vice President Societies and Sport, working with students has been the highlight of my job. I am so excited to continue representing student voice and begin campaign work on areas such as student safety, campus facilities, student wellbeing and the University's academic policies.

If you want to be included in a campaign or have any ideas to improve life at Royal Holloway, please reach out by email at president@su.rhul.ac.uk.

How we're led.

Every year, the student body elects a team of full-time Sabbatical Officers who lead the SU.

As a democratic organisation, we believe that elections show the best of what we can achieve when we work together. Any student can become an Officer and have the chance to stand up on issues that really matter to the student body.

So, if you're passionate about making a positive impact, nominations for the 2024/25 Officer positions will open at the start of Term Two. Keep your eyes peeled.

Campaigning.

Students like yourself direct the issues we campaign on and we're not afraid to tackle complex pieces of policy to improve students' rights. Alongside this, our student groups lead the way on liberation campaigns such as Disability, LGBTQ+, Women's, and Black History months. Check out some of our previous campaigns to see how you can change the world around you or have a chat with one of the Officers.

>> [SU.RHUL.AC.UK/CAMPAIGNS](https://su.rhul.ac.uk/campaigns)



Representing your academic interests.

It'd be very easy to think the Students' Union is here to purely focus on the social side of campus life, but that's only half of the story.

At the end of the day, you're here to get a degree and one of our core goals is making sure that this happens. That's why we run what's known as the academic representation system, made up of a mix of individuals who represent you and your course.

Course reps work on ensuring your degree programme is everything you expected it to be, senior course reps look at department-wide changes, school reps work across several departments to instigate change, while the Vice President Education works across the wider University.

As a new student, you can volunteer to be the course rep for your chosen degree programme, giving you the chance to directly influence what happens on your course and give a voice to your peers. Registration opens on Monday 11 September.

>> [SU.RHUL.AC.UK/ACADEMICREPS](https://su.rhul.ac.uk/academicreps)

Sharanya Sivarajah

>> VP Education

Hi, I'm Sharanya - your Vice President Education.

I can't wait to ensure that your academic experience at Royal Holloway is just as rewarding as mine has been.

As VP Education, I will be the voice for all our students' academic interests and feedback. I will constantly communicate your messages to senior staff in the University, ensuring their topmost priority is always students' interests.

This year, I want to increase the amount of financial aid that is available to you, so that the cost of living crisis does not impact your studies. You may just be starting your university career but I'll also be organising frequent and varied career fairs that cater to each academic School. Alongside these goals, I want to utilise our position as a University of London to hold networking events with our neighbouring London universities.

I'm so excited for the year ahead!

Nisha Bundhun

>> VP Wellbeing & Diversity

I'm Nisha - your VP Wellbeing & Diversity.

I'm really passionate about promoting wellbeing and diversity on campus and am excited to start working with the students at Royal Holloway to ensure you all feel supported, represented and valued on campus.

Working closely with students, I'll make sure that students' interests are effectively represented to the University. I'm going to regularly seek feedback from underrepresented student groups to understand their experiences and identify any areas for improvement and campaigns. I want to bring our campus community together at cultural fairs, speaker events, and workshops that celebrate the diversity of our student body.

I will also work to remove the stigma around mental health through awareness campaigns/events and expand mental health support to make the service more accessible.

I will work hard to ensure all students feel happy, included, and safe at Royal Holloway.

   @RHSUWELLBEING

Cost of living.

We know that the cost of living crisis may be a concern for you, with energy prices and the cost of your weekly shop soaring. We will do our best to support you with opportunities like paid part-time jobs, free events, and discount deals on food and drink, but we know that's not always enough. Your student loan will only stretch so far so it's good to know what support is available if you're facing financial difficulties.

Where can I get support?

The University's Financial Wellbeing team can assist you with financial difficulties you may experience, including the Study Support Grant which can provide assistance if you're experiencing unexpected money worries and short term loans of up to £500.

They can also advise you on a range of topics including budgeting, student loans, student bank accounts, working while you study, and referral to a local foodbank.

MONEYMATTERS@ROYALHOLLOWAY.AC.UK



18



19

Find your passion.

Nothing shapes your university experience more than the people you meet. Our student groups are the perfect way for you to get the most out of your time at Royal Holloway and we've got something for everyone with 140+ groups available for you to join.

Access Fund.

We know that sometimes the cost of joining a student a group can be a concern, especially if your budget is tight. We also know that joining a student group can be one of the most rewarding parts of university life. We're really keen to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to experience that.

That's where our Access Fund comes in. You can request up to £150 each academic year if you need it.

What does it cover?

- Group membership fees
- Kit and essential travel
- Competition entry
- Event entry
- Non-essential costs

>> SU.RHUL.AC.UK/ACCESSFUND

Alastair Copland

>> VP Societies & Sport

Hi, I'm Alastair - your Vice President Societies & Sport.

I'm really excited to spend the upcoming year working with student committees across campus to make societies, sports clubs and media outlets the best they can be. I will represent the University at BUCS and NUS conferences, chair the Societies, Sports and Opportunities Executive, and work on a variety of campaigns.

I'm aiming to strengthen the connection between the SU and student group committees, through more face-to-face contact, committee training, and platforms for student-led discussion. I'm going to review how the SU recognises and rewards student groups for their hard work, including our incredible awards nights.

If you have any questions or think of ways your student experience could be better, don't hesitate to reach out by email or on social media.

Looking forward to the year ahead!

   @RHSUSOCSPORT

Get Involved.

Our societies do amazing things.

Whether you've already found a passion or you're keen to discover a completely new hobby, there's a place for everyone within our societies and media outlets.

Societies are a great way to get involved in university life. They allow you to meet new people, try new things, and also massively benefit your mental wellbeing by getting you out of the library and doing something that you love! Society events can range from day trips and big celebration events in the SU to socials at the local pub, showcases and performances. There's no doubt that joining a society will massively enhance your Royal Holloway experience.

Our Freshers' Fair on 19 September is a great place to meet societies and find out more about their activities. If you can't find

a society that piques your interest, why not form one of your own? The SU can support you through the process of creating an entirely new group! Alternatively, you can revive one of our dormant societies through our Adopt A Group process.

>> [SU.RHUL.AC.UK/SOCIETIES](https://su.rhul.ac.uk/societies)

Our media outlets are ace.

Your first port of call for the latest news and entertainment on campus, our media outlets are the perfect home for any budding journalists, broadcasters, or creatives.

Orbital Magazine distributes a monthly magazine with a variety of articles ranging from artist interviews to breaking news stories. Find up-to-date news about what's happening on and off-campus in their online articles.

Broadcasting around campus, Surrey and beyond, Insanity Radio 103.2FM is our resident radio station. With a schedule of chart, chat, and specialist shows, plus news broadcasts, you're guaranteed great music, great presenters and great coverage.

If you have passion for television, perhaps you could bring rhubarbTV back to life – one of our dormant groups that needs new members!

>> [SU.RHUL.AC.UK/MEDIA](https://su.rhul.ac.uk/media)



Home of the Bears.

The Students' Union is home to 30+ sports clubs that offer a mix of recreational and competitive opportunities. Whether it's a casual game of Badminton or vying for the league title with American Football, you'll soon know what it means to be part of the Bears family.

If you see a club that takes your fancy at our Freshers' Fair (19 September), get in touch with the club to find out more about training or attending a trial session. Want to take it further? Represent your club in matches and competitions. If you're after something with less of a competitive edge, then campus leagues or social events could be perfect for you – these are run by the University's Active Lifestyle and Sport team.

Our sports teams compete in several competitions run by British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUCS) and London Universities Sports Leagues (LUSL). We also have an annual Varsity - the biggest clash of the year as we take on our local rivals, the University of Surrey, across a range of disciplines. After taking to Surrey Sports Park for 2022/23, we'll be back on home turf this year attempting to secure victory for the first time. Go Bears!

>> [SU.RHUL.AC.UK/SPORTS](https://su.rhul.ac.uk/sports)

Venues for Days.

Whether it's food, drink, or a little boogie you're after, we've got something for you to do every night, seven days a week, all year round.

>> [SU.RHUL.AC.UK/VENUES](https://su.rhul.ac.uk/venues)

SU Venue.



Home to our weekly Wednesday and Friday club nights, we've had some incredible artists performing over the years from Sigma and Nathan Dawe to Big Narstie and Becky Hill. It's not just big club nights you'll find here though as we also host loads of student group performances on our main stage.

Tommy's Kitchen.



Situated downstairs in the SU, we serve banging wraps and a range of other tasty dishes, catering for all dietary requirements. Grab yourself something quick to takeaway, sit in for a meal with mates, or chill outside on the Union Plaza.

Medicine.



Our second biggest venue plays host to a number of events and society performances throughout the year, including our favourites Toast and MedsWeds. We've also got a spacious beer garden which is perfect for drinks in the sun (don't worry, we have heaters for those cold winter nights).

The Packhorse.



Just a stone's throw away from campus, you can enjoy a range of food and drinks deals at the SU's very own pub. In addition to a pool table and table football, we also screen live sport seven days a week and have tons of other events including karaoke, live music, and our weekly Pub Quiz.



Wi-Fi



Gender neutral toilet



Accessible



Child friendly



Pet friendly



Food



Drink



Bookable rooms



Live sport



Board games

Keeping you safe.

While Freshers' Festival is obviously about having loads of fun, our number one priority is ensuring you can enjoy our events in a safe environment.

As part of our work around student safety, we've invested heavily in anti-spiking measures, and we also have a Good Night Out Crew in our venues. You'll see them wearing pink hi-vis jackets on a night out and their role is to ensure students have the support they need when attending evening events at the Union Venue and Medicine.


Whether your issue is mental health-related, a physical injury, or as simple as locating lost property, finding the right queue or bringing up a complaint, the Good Night Out Crew are there to support you!

All staff are Mental Health First Aid trained to engage in open discussion, recognise triggers and signpost to the relevant support services both within the University and SU, as well as external services.


>> [SU.RHUL.AC.UK/VENUES](https://su.rhul.ac.uk/venues)



RH | ROYAL
SU | HOLLOWAY
STUDENTS'
UNION



**WE'RE HERE TO MAKE
STUDENT LIFE BETTER AT
ROYAL HOLLOWAY**



sponsored by
Domino's

f @SURHUL

