

What's next?

Our plan for **2016-2020**

SU.RHUL.AC.UK



SURHUL

SU
Students' Union
Royal Holloway, University of London

**A SHIP IS SAFE
IN THE HARBOUR,
BUT THAT'S NOT
WHAT SHIPS ARE
BUILT FOR.**

WHY DO WE NEED A PLAN?

We've been on an incredible journey. But now it's time to set a clear path for the next four years. This vision shows where we want to be by 2020, how we mean to get there, and what type of organisation we want to become.

You may notice we've spent a lot of time putting this together. That's because we know how important it is to get it right. We've undertaken a huge research project and spoken to thousands of students on campus and online, asking them what matters and what they think we should be doing. We've looked at surveys and run focus groups and we've come up with hundreds of different ideas. Some of them were great. Some of them were easy. Some were impossible. Some made it into this plan. Some fell by the wayside. But all of them had one thing at their core: students. You're at the heart of everything that we do. You're why we exist. We owe it to you to be the best Students' Union possible.

Nayab Cheema (PRESIDENT 2015/16)

Tom Flynn (CHIEF EXECUTIVE)

CONTENTS

THE CHALLENGES | 4

HOW IT WORKS | 8

OUR MISSION | 10

OUR AIMS | 12

OUR VALUES | 24

OUR ENABLERS | 28

THE CHALLENGES

A huge amount of research has gone into this plan and we're confident we know what you want us to be doing. But it's also important that we recognise we face some big challenges.





SPACE MATTERS.

The College has mapped out an estates masterplan that identifies how it can provide a 21st century campus that meets the modern needs of people studying and working in the University today. Space is at a premium across the entire College, and we know we'll need to work with College to secure more and renovate what we have, in order to deliver an expanding range of services.



LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION.

This is both a strength and a challenge. We must recognise the opportunities that being close to London provides, but also deal head on with the challenges it presents. The high cost of living and small local community is a significant barrier for our students and staff alike.



CHANGING STUDENT NUMBERS.

The College has plans for the student population to grow over the next four years, which in turn will have an impact on the services both organisations can provide. We must consider how scalable our current operation is, and which parts of the Students' Union require more resources as student numbers grow.



TRADITION AND HERITAGE.

The College is steeped in history which shapes how it operates today. We need to make the most of this where appropriate, reconciling tradition with a modern demographic and approach to how we work.



THE HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR.

We do not exist in a vacuum. Over the past decade the sector has had significant time in the spotlight, with changes such as tuition fees, access agreements and student number controls having a direct impact on our work. With more reform agenda, we must consider how we respond to initiatives like HEAR and the potential Teaching Excellence Framework.

HOW DOES THE PLAN WORK?

Great strategy is easy to understand and straightforward to follow. Which is why this plan follows a very simple structure.

A

We state what our overall mission is.

B

We define what this means for our students.

C

We articulate how we work through our values.

D

We identify the factors that will enable us to achieve our aims.

E

We set targets that measure our performance against clear goals.

OUR MISSION IS SIMPLE:

TO MAKE STUDENT LIFE BETTER AT ROYAL HOLLOWAY

BY 2020...

- 80% of students are satisfied with the Students' Union at Royal Holloway
- 80% of students agree we have a positive impact on their life at Royal Holloway
- Achieve national recognition (e.g. NUS Quality Mark Gold)

OUR AIMS.

Our mission probably seems really simple. But in reality, if we ask 100 of you what the most important thing that we do is, we'll probably get 100 different answers. So we've broken it down to five key areas that you've said you want us to work on. Some of these ideas will involve delivering services ourselves or in partnership, while some will mean lobbying other organisations to do more.



IMPROVE YOUR EDUCATION.

It's the number one reason you're a student at Royal Holloway, and it's what you've told us you spend most of your time doing. Every survey tells us you want us to work on making your experience in the classroom better, topping your list of priorities in 2014. Higher quality feedback. Extra contact time. Better library facilities. More innovative use of technology in the classroom. We know we need to do lots more in this area.

OVER THE NEXT FOUR YEARS, WE WILL...

Rejuvenate the academic representation structure within the College; better supporting Course Reps to make positive changes to their own programmes.

Make better use of our research and policy work, securing changes for you at a College and Departmental level that have a positive impact on your experience.

Work more closely with academic departments to see how we can join up opportunities in the Students' Union with specific degree courses.

BY 2020...

80%

OF STUDENTS AGREE WE HAVE A POSITIVE IMPACT ON THEIR EXPERIENCE IN THE CLASSROOM

80%

OF COURSE REPS ELECTED, TRAINED AND FURTHER ENGAGED TO MAKE CHANGE IN THEIR DEPARTMENT

100

POSITIVE CHANGES ARE ACHIEVED BY COURSE REPS EACH YEAR

MAKE YOUR CAMPUS FUN.

Something we've always known that we need to do, and the single most popular area identified by you as a priority for us. But with changing tastes and expectations higher than ever, we know it's important we do this well and help make your time at Royal Holloway as fun as possible. This means getting more of you involved in more activities, more often.

OVER THE NEXT FOUR YEARS, WE WILL...

I

Support you to increase the number of student groups on campus, including clubs, societies, media outlets and halls based associations.

II

Rejuvenate our events and entertainments programme, providing a wider range of activities that cater for all of you.

III

Provide higher quality space and venues on campus for you to organise your own activities, supporting you in planning and running events yourselves.

IV

Build engaging and active communities around shared interests, shared identities and shared living spaces on campus.

BY 2020...

80%

OF STUDENTS AGREE THAT WE PROVIDE SERVICES, EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES THAT ARE ENTERTAINING AND FUN

80%

OF STUDENTS WILL HAVE ATTENDED AT LEAST ONE OF OUR EVENTS EACH YEAR

200

STUDENT GROUPS AND
6,000
UNIQUE MEMBERS

LOOK AFTER YOUR WELLBEING.

We know it's really important that we play a role in supporting your health and general wellbeing, and that money is an issue. In 2015, 63% of you responded that you needed to supplement your income with part-time work, while 50% relied on funding from family. Student housing is a huge area we need to make an impact on – raising the quality and getting rid of additional charges. We've also got a role to play promoting both physical and mental wellbeing, keeping you happy and healthy.

OVER THE NEXT FOUR YEARS, WE WILL...

I Offer more advice and support when you need it, growing the reach, proactivity and preventative work of our welfare advice service.

II Provide you with more student job opportunities, putting more money back into your pocket when you need it most.

III Play a much larger role in the private housing market, ensuring you get high quality accommodation, within a community who value the positive impact you make.

IV Create and support activities directly targeted at improving your health during your studies and beyond.

BY 2020...

80%

OF STUDENTS AGREE WE HAVE HAD A POSITIVE IMPACT ON THEIR GENERAL WELLBEING, HOUSING OR FINANCES

2,000

STUDENTS HAVE ACCESSED OUR ADVICE SERVICE

2,000

STUDENTS SUPPORTED TO MAKE A PRIVATE HOUSING CHOICE

MAKE YOU MORE EMPLOYABLE.

The second highest result for what you want us to focus on. We know that once you've finished studying the graduate job market is tough. There are so many ways that getting involved in the Students' Union can help you with your eventual career. But at the moment we don't make these clear enough. And we know you expect us to work alongside the Careers Service to make sure the College is supporting you in your professional development.

OVER THE NEXT FOUR YEARS, WE WILL...

I

Provide you with higher quality student job opportunities that prepare you for the future which include an explicit professional development angle.

II

Make it clear how leadership and voluntary roles in the Students' Union can help you develop, and support you to do this.

III

Support the development of academic focused student groups on campus, facilitating student-led activities around the theme of professional development.

IV

Work with the College and academic departments to ensure graduate employability and professional development is embedded as part of your education.

BY 2020...

80%

OF STUDENTS INVOLVED IN A LEADERSHIP ROLE THROUGH THE STUDENTS' UNION AGREE WE HAVE MADE THEM MORE EMPLOYABLE

3000

STUDENTS HAVE ENGAGED WITH AN EMPLOYABILITY SCHEME EACH YEAR THROUGH THE STUDENTS' UNION

25

PAID INTERNSHIPS / GRADUATE JOBS PROVIDED EACH YEAR

EMPOWER YOU TO CHANGE THE WORLD AROUND YOU.

Higher Education is transformative for people at all stages in their lives. It inspires and drives people to look at things how they could be, rather than how they are. We know we need to support you in driving change and making the world around you a better place: in the Students' Union, in the College, in the local area and beyond.

OVER THE NEXT FOUR YEARS, WE WILL...

I Ensure your voice is heard locally and nationally, giving you the skills to make positive changes for other students at all levels.

II Encourage debate on campus around important issues, helping you go into the world as engaged citizens.

III Give you the confidence and skills to become independent, socially minded leaders in your chosen fields.

IV Provide more volunteering opportunities for you to give something back to the local community and beyond.

BY 2020...

80%

OF STUDENTS AGREE WE
CAMPAIGN ON THE ISSUES THAT
AFFECT THEM AND REPRESENT
THEM EFFECTIVELY

40%

TURNOUT IN OUR ELECTIONS

6

CANDIDATES PER ROLE

80%

OF VOTERS CAST A BALLOT OVER
ALL ROLES

25

POSITIVE CHANGES ACHIEVED BY
OFFICERS EACH YEAR

OUR VALUES.

We've said what we're going to do but we also need to state clearly how we'll go about doing it. Our values dictate the way we operate, the behaviours we champion, and how the organisation should feel.

BY 2020...

80%

OF STUDENTS ASSOCIATE US WITH ONE OF OUR VALUES WHEN ASKED TO DESCRIBE THE ORGANISATION IN ONE WORD

100%

OF STAFF CAN IDENTIFY AND EXPLAIN AT LEAST ONE VALUE AND HOW IT'S DIRECTLY RELEVANT TO THEIR ROLE

Our Values.



STUDENT FOCUSED.

Everything we do will have students at the heart of it.



HIGH QUALITY.

Your expectations are high and we must exceed them.



INCLUSIVE.

We will offer a diverse range of activities and services which are fulfilling and accessible.



BRAVE.

We should be bold and not afraid to challenge the status quo.



TRUSTWORTHY.

We will ensure that we are transparent, honest and fair in what we say and do.

OUR ENABLERS.

We've outlined what we're going to do and how we're going to do it, but we'll only be able to do this if we're an effective organisation now and in the future.

BY 2020...

DIGITAL FIRST AMBITION

80%

OF STUDENTS HAVE ENGAGED WITH US THROUGH OUR DIGITAL PLATFORM EACH YEAR

GREAT PEOPLE AND CULTURE

90%

OF ALL STAFF WOULD POSITIVELY RECOMMEND THE SU AS A PLACE TO WORK

WE HAVE ACHIEVED INVESTORS IN PEOPLE, VOLUNTEERING AND DIVERSITY

COMPREHENSIVE INSIGHT

25%

OF STUDENTS COMPLETE OUR ANNUAL SURVEY

A SINGLE PERFORMANCE AND ENGAGEMENT INDEX DEVELOPED AND DEPLOYED ACROSS THE ORGANISATION



SUSTAINABLE RESOURCES.

We've got ambition, which means we always want to do more. That means that growing our resources sustainably is crucial, generating our own income and securing a long-term commitment from the College to fund our development. This also includes investing in and developing high quality space for the Students' Union to operate from.



COMPREHENSIVE INSIGHT.

To be the legitimate voice of students on campus, we need to know them better than anyone else. This means conducting high quality research regularly, and using it to inform our decisions. We also need to collate and manage data in a way that allows the organisation to report quickly and comprehensively on our performance.



EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION.

When asked in 2015, 70% of students felt informed about what the Students' Union does. As a membership organisation, we need to understand what students think, and communicate what we're doing through a clear brand. That means it's essential we take time to ask you what you want, and ensure you know everything that is going on.



GOOD GOVERNANCE.

We're a complex organisation: a Students' Union, part of the College community and a registered charity subject to legislation with which we need to comply. That means we need to ensure our governance is democratic, professional, robust and transparent.



GREAT PEOPLE AND CULTURE.

Great organisations are driven by great people. And great people need developing and rewarding. That means we need a high performance culture which values teamwork: trusting students to run our commercial services and celebrating our volunteers.



DIGITAL FIRST AMBITION.

Not all students live and work on campus, and we can't physically interact with every member. That means we need to ensure all our services are accessible online where possible, integrating everything we do through a single engagement platform.

BY 2020...

GOOD GOVERNANCE

80%

OF STUDENTS AGREE THEY KNOW HOW WE WORK AND HOW DECISIONS ARE MADE

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

80%

OF STUDENTS AGREE THEY'RE KEPT WELL INFORMED ABOUT WHAT WE DO

SUSTAINABLE RESOURCES

£25k

APPROPRIATE RESERVES, WITH £25K CONTRIBUTED TO A STRATEGIC INVESTMENT FUND ANNUALLY

FOUR YEAR FUNDING SETTLEMENT WITH CAPITAL REFURBISHMENT AGREED

STUDENTS' UNION ROYAL HOLLOWAY



Egham Hill
Egham
Surrey
TW20 0EX
Registered Charity No: 1141998

t: 01784 276700
e: students.union@su.rhul.ac.uk
w: su.rhul.ac.uk

Find us on social media **@SURHUL**

