Handbook for disabled and dyslexic students
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Welcome

Royal Holloway has a long tradition in equal opportunities and we are proud that, as part of the University of London, we were the first university in the UK to recognise equal access for women to degree courses. We remain committed to do our best to provide support for all disabled students.

Royal Holloway adheres to an equal opportunities policy in which students are admitted on academic merit alone. In order to provide appropriate support to disabled students, the College has an established Disability & Dyslexia Services (Educational Support Office) to co-ordinate services across all the administrative and academic departments.

Royal Holloway has an impressive campus but physical accessibility is an issue as the site is on a hill and has a number of 19th-century buildings. Anyone with mobility difficulties would be well-advised to visit the site in order to discover as far as possible whether the adaptations made to buildings are suitable for their particular needs. Wheelchair users will find the College Access Guide of particular use.

This Handbook outlines our range of services and contains information to help you to decide if this is the right institution for you. In order to ensure your needs can be addressed appropriately please discuss any particular arrangements you will need with our Admissions Tutors and with the Disability and Dyslexia Services Team. They are there to assist you to realise your full potential during your time at Royal Holloway.

Professor Paul Layzell
Principal
How will I be supported?

Why should I declare my disability?
Royal Holloway recognises that each student is unique and will have the intellectual capacity to succeed. As part of this uniqueness, some students may have a physical impairment, long-standing medical condition, Specific Learning Difficulty or Mental Health Condition. The College is committed to remove the physical, procedural and attitudinal barriers which may stand in the way of a student achieving his/her academic potential, taking advantage of all the experiences and opportunities available at College and becoming an integrated member of the College community.

The College also recognises that certain physical or mental health conditions will create particular challenges in specific situations and that therefore, the inclusive practices already in place will not be sufficient in allowing a student to thrive. These are the instances in which achieving one’s full potential becomes difficult without some reasonable adjustments or the provision of extra support put in place. This is when declaring your impairment and registering with Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) may help you access the following services and sources of support:

• One-to-one study skills support
• Support from a Mental Health Adviser
• Services of a mentor
• Exams Access Arrangements (such as extra time, use of a computer, amanuensis (scribe etc...));
• handouts, time-tables or reading material delivered in different forms such as in braille;
• in enlarged print or electronically;
• lectures notes in advance of lectures;
• book or article fetching;
• permission to record lectures;
• use of a note-taker or amanuensis to take your dictation;
• priority to specific accommodation which suit your physical impairment or mental health condition;

This booklet explains the support available. As support provision differs according to individual situation and course requirements, it is essential to discuss this with a member of the Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) team as early as possible. This will allow you to identify what is most appropriate for your needs and enable the College to allocate the required resources.

Please contact us if you would like to arrange a visit to the campus, tour the accommodation available and/or speak to departmental staff. Contact details can be found on the inside cover for any additional information that might be required.
Who can register with Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO)

Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) is the dedicated office for all students who have a disability as defined in the Equality Act 2010.

You’re disabled under the Equality Act 2010 if you have a physical or mental impairment that has a ‘substantial’ and ‘long-term’ negative effect on your ability to carry out normal daily activities.

• ‘substantial’ means more than minor or trivial – for example, it may take you longer than usual to complete a daily task like getting dressed
• ‘long-term’ means 12 months or more or likely to recur within 12 months. This also applies to recurring (such as a serious mental health condition) or progressive conditions (such as Multiple sclerosis, cancer or HIV infections).

Therefore you can register with Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) if you have:

• A social/communication impairment such as an Autistic Spectrum Condition
• A visual or sensory impairment uncorrected by glasses
• A longstanding or chronic condition (such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease or epilepsy)
• A Mental Health Condition such as depression, Anxiety Disorder, Bipolar Disorder, Borderline Personality Disorder and Anxiety Disorder
• You have a specific Learning Difficulties such as dyslexia, dypraxia, ADHD
• You have a physical impairment or mobility issues

Our services and those offered by the other sections of Support & Advisory Services (Welfare and Wellbeing) are also available to students awaiting a diagnosis or wanting to be assessed for a Specific Learning Difficulties such as dyslexia.

What isn’t counted as a disability

Some conditions aren’t covered by the disability definition. These include addiction to non-prescribed drugs or alcohol, temporary illness or impairments or pregnancy. However, this does not mean that you cannot get support from other sections of the College. Please see the section entitled “Other Sources of Support” for more details.
When should I contact or register with Dyslexia and Disability Services?

Prospective students
As a potential student you are strongly encouraged to visit the campus well ahead of the date of your proposed entry. Talking with your academic department and/or Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) is the best way to ensure that any needs you may have are properly assessed alongside the requirements of the course that you wish to undertake.

Whether you are applying for an undergraduate or postgraduate course, the following is a brief summary of how your support needs will be assessed. Please be assured that throughout the process the information you provide will be treated as confidential and will only be passed to those involved in devising or implementing reasonable adjustments.

If you have been offered a place at Royal Holloway and you have indicated a physical or medical condition, specific learning difference (such as dyslexia) or Mental Health condition on your application form, your details will be passed to Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO). The Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) team will send you a support pack which will include this handbook, a questionnaire in order to establish your support needs and, if required, a map of any accessible routes around campus. Once the questionnaire is returned, your requirements will be summarised in a memo sent to our contact in your academic department. Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) will also send you a letter detailing the support available. The support provision letter may indicate any source(s) of funding that may be available to you.

International students (including EU)
If you are a disabled applicant from overseas you should contact Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) as early as possible before your arrival. This will enable us to assess your needs well in advance in co-operation with professionals and specialists in your own country. It will also provide you with an accurate picture of what is available to you free of charge and what you may be required to fund for yourself.

It is important to be aware that only UK home students are eligible to receive the Disabled Students’ Allowance or many of the bursaries on offer. In addition, international students are not normally eligible to receive assistance from Social Services for personal care support. Royal Holloway makes every effort to assist with covering some of the costs of academic support, such as note-taker or dyslexia tuition. More information is available directly from Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO). For information about alternative funding such as scholarships or bursaries, contact your local British Council or the Socrates coordinator at your home institution.

International students can however receive treatment from the National Health Service if they are registered on a course which will last 6 months or over. It is therefore advised that such international students register with the Health Centre on campus during Welcome Week or as soon as possible thereafter.
Current students

Whether you are an undergraduate or postgraduate, home or international student, you are eligible to use the services of Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO). If you have not declared your disability before enrolment, it is still possible to do this at any time during your course of study and every effort will be made to create an appropriate support programme for you.

You are invited to speak to any of the following people:

• one of the staff in Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO)
• Disability & Dyslexia Services Network Members (support co-ordinator) in your Department
• Student Services
• your Personal Adviser
• your Supervisor
• your Course Director
• The Senior Faculty Administrator in your department

If you are not sure whether the difficulties you are experiencing entitle you to receive support from Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO), please discuss this with one of us.

In a nutshell: how to register your disability with Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prospective students</th>
<th>Current students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Declare your disability / Specific Learning Difficulties on the UCAS form</td>
<td>Contact the Disability &amp; Dyslexia Services (ESO) team by phone (01784276473)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Or contact Disability &amp; Dyslexia Services (ESO) once you receive an offer from Royal Holloway</td>
<td>Or visit Disability &amp; Dyslexia Services (ESO) in person in Founder’s West room 151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 The Disability &amp; Dyslexia Services (ESO) team will send you a registration pack containing a registration questionnaire</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Return the questionnaire filled in and signed with appropriate medical evidence or a Educational Psychologist Report/Specialist teacher’s Report</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 The Disability &amp; Dyslexia Services (ESO) team will send their contact in your academic department a summary of the reasonable adjustments that have to be put in place for you</td>
<td>The Disability &amp; Dyslexia Services (ESO) team will send their contact in your academic department a summary of the reasonable adjustments that have to be put in place for you</td>
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<td>5 You will receive a copy of this summary of adjustments which will stay in place for the duration of your course or which can be altered as your situation changes</td>
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What does the Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) team do?

Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) is your first point of contact for support.

Our responsibilities include:

• assessing your support requirements together with you and your academic department
• communicating those support requirements to any member of staff who will be involved in putting the support in place
• ensuring that the support put in place remains adequate and adapted to your changing situation and course
• providing specialist support for students with Specific Learning Differences (screening, full diagnostic assessments and one-to-one study skills sessions) (see below)
• recruiting, training and assigning a team of note-takers, mentors and general helpers to students in need of such service
• providing advice and help on how to apply for the Disabled Students’ Allowance;
• offering you advice on suitable support equipment and services
• co-ordinating Needs Assessments on site with West London Assessment Centre for those students in receipt of the Disabled Students’ Allowance
• co-ordinating applications for Examinations Access Arrangements and priority to College accommodation
• Organisation of adaptation to enrolment and registration procedures. Registration takes place in a wheelchair accessible room and arrangements can be made for you to register in a separate smaller room if required. If you wish to have support for enrolment and registration please contact Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) prior to the start of the academic year
• Organisation of modification to Graduation Ceremonies to ensure full and equal participation
• Raising disability awareness and helping to foster inclusive practices among College staff
• communicating and representing the needs of disabled and dyslexic students to College committees and external bodies

Most importantly however, we listen to you and work with you to help you make the most of your time at Royal Holloway.
Dyslexia and other Specific Learning Differences

More than half of the students registered with Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) have dyslexia or another Specific Learning Difficulties such as dyspraxia and ADHD. A few members of our team are dedicated to assessing and supporting these students.

Assessments

Students suspecting that they have dyslexia can have a quick computer screening which identifies their learning style (oral, aural, visual or kinaesthetic) and also potential signs of dyslexia, dyspraxia and visual stress. Following the screening and a short interview with the Educational Support Officer, a student may be referred for a full Specialist Teacher or Visiting Educational Psychologist assessment.

Students will be asked to make a contribution towards the costs of these full assessments. Students in their final year of their undergraduate degree or postgraduate students may be asked to cover the full cost of the assessment. These full assessments are necessary to apply for the Disabled Student Allowance.

However, it is also possible for students with dyslexia in their final year to opt not to apply for the Disabled Students Allowance and to go through a shorter assessment, which does not generate a report to determine whether specific Exam Access Arrangements are required.

One-to-one specialist study skills tuition

Generally, dyslexic students or students with other Specific Learning Differences who have applied for the Disabled Students’ Allowance will get access to a specified number of one-to-one study skills sessions aimed at developing strategies to minimise the effect of their Specific Learning Difference on their studies. Those sessions can cover note-taking techniques, reading techniques, essay questions and essay structures, exam revision techniques or any study skills related difficulty that the student encounters. It is possible to gain access to these sessions even when you are not in receipt of the Disabled Students Allowance.

Green Stickers and marking guidelines which take account of the Specific Learning Differences

At Royal Holloway, we have a system of green stickers that dyslexic students put on their coursework and exam scripts. These stickers alert the marker or examiner to the presence of a Specific Learning Difference. This encourages the marker not to take points off for minor incorrect grammar or spelling and to give more constructive feedback. These stickers are only effective if grammar, spelling and structure do not form part of the learning outcomes of a course (for example, green stickers put on a grammar exercise in Modern Languages will have little effect as the understanding and application of grammatical rules are the learning outcomes assessed in that particular piece of work). The full marking guidelines for marking work by students with Specific Learning Difficulties are available at: royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/documents/pdf/eso/dyslexicassessmentmarkingguide.pdf
Super reading course
Disability and Dyslexia Services (ESO) also host a ‘Super Reading Course’. This course is aimed at improving the reading speed, understanding and memory of texts. Originally devised to help busy business managers improve their reading speed, it also works well for people with dyslexia, dyspraxia, people with visual stress or those with concentration problems. This course is funded via students’ individual Disabled Students’ Allowance.

Mobility and sensory impairments
Royal Holloway has substantial experience in supporting students with physical impairments. We have even been lucky enough to put in place support for successful Paralympians who have managed to achieve excellent results academically and in their sporting careers!

Students with physical impairments can use the Non-Medical Help part of their Disabled Students’ Allowance to fund support such as:

• BSL interpreters
• Orientation training for the Visually Impaired
• Specialist Teachers for the Blind or the Deaf
• Note-taking support
• Scanning and other general support

Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) outsources some of these specialist services (BSL, orientation training, Specialist Teachers). Others, such as note-taking and scanning or other general support are provided by our student helpers.

Please be aware that there are services, such as personal care, that the College does not deliver and disabled students are well-advised to contact their Local Authority or Social Services directly to source this type of help.

Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs)
If you have physical or sensory impairments, Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) will contact you on arrival to carry out a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) to work out a specific route out of each of the buildings that you regularly use on campus. Please ensure that you respond to the Disability & Dyslexia Services’ prompts to complete each stage of your PEEP.

Autistic Spectrum Conditions
Over the past few years, Royal Holloway has welcomed an increasing number of students with Autistic Spectrum Conditions across a greater array of subjects. Certain members of the Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) team have trained with the Tizard institute, National Autistic Society and University of Kent to become Autism Champions and have therefore been able to share their expertise across the university.
Students with Autistic Spectrum Conditions are encouraged to visit Royal Holloway in advance of the start of term and more than once if necessary. Appointments to meet Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO), and/or Disability & Dyslexia Services Network Members in the academic departments can be booked with Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO). Visits can also comprise a tour of the campus and of the accommodation available. Many students with Autistic Spectrum Conditions choose to take part in our 2 day/one night residential orientation programme (Unistart – see below).

Students with Autistic Spectrum Conditions are generally encouraged to apply for the Disabled Students’ Allowance so that they can benefit from specialist equipment which may, for example, aid good time-management and time-keeping, or access to a book or taxi allowance if it is necessary for them to travel as part of their course and using public transport is a difficulty. In addition, this group of students often benefit from mentoring or general student support.

**Mentoring**

Mentoring is used to work on a variety of topics, depending on what the student needs at a particular time. For example, it may cover:

- Organisation
- Local orientation
- Seeking clarification on academic tasks or assistance with administrative procedures
- Advice on social integration
- Help with approaching staff or meeting people for the first time
- Help with identifying areas which are cause difficulty
- Study assistance (non subject –specific study skills)
- Help with managing anxiety and consequential behaviour
- Help with accessing other sources of support
- Making the most of different opportunities available to Royal Holloway students

Depending on the level of needs, mentoring can be done by different types of mentors, all of whom have an awareness of Autistic Spectrum Conditions:

- A fellow student who is trained and employed by Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO).
- A Specialist Mentor that is, a member of staff who has received more extensive training on Autistic Spectrum Conditions and has experience with supporting students on the Spectrum.
**Priority to Halls**

First year students with Autistic Spectrum Conditions can request a specific hall, which suits their need. For example, if cooking is an area of difficulty, a room in a catered hall might be preferable. Conversely, if noise of public places is distressing, it may be wiser to choose a room in a self-catered hall. Many students on the Autistic Spectrum live happily with other students in private housing around the College in their second or third years and the College wishes to support this independence. However, for those who would find it too difficult to share a house in the private sector, it is possible to request priority to a College room as a continuing student. This is done in February of each year by contacting Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) who then assesses needs for priority on the basis of the medical evidence on file and the history of support that the student has received thus far.

**Mental Health Conditions**

Students at Royal Holloway enjoy a very comprehensive array of services aimed at contributing to an individual’s good mental health and wellbeing. They can access NHS services via the Health Centre, see a counsellor from the Counselling Service for short-term professional counselling if they experience psychological and emotional difficulties; or can talk to the Outreach Officer from Support & Advisory Services. These services are available to all students.

Students with diagnosed mental health conditions such as anxiety disorders, bipolar disorders, borderline personality disorders or schizophrenia can also register with Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) for more targeted support.

**Mental Health Adviser**

Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) has a dedicated Mental Health Adviser who can coordinate these services for students with a diagnosed Mental Health Conditions. They can also:

- Meet students with mental health conditions on a regular basis to check that they are managing their condition and the impact that it may have on their courses.
- Liaise with the student’s mentor
- Organise additional support as and when needed
- Liaise with the academic departments to ease a particular student’s progress on the course
- Liaise with external providers
- Refer for more support from other sections of the College (for example study skills support, Counselling, Health Centre, etc.)

The Mental Health Adviser also has a wider role in advising staff on how to support students with mental health difficulties.
Support from the Health Centre
NHS services from the Health Centre include a psychiatrist, psychologists, an eating disorder nurse, Cognitive Behaviour Therapy or referral to other types of therapy. Students need to live on campus or in the near vicinity of the College to register at the Health Centre. Please talk to the Mental Health Adviser about accessing equivalent NHS services if you live off campus.

Mentoring
Students with mental health diagnoses can apply for Disabled Students’ Allowance. Part of their package of support may include mentoring. Mentoring is used to work on a variety of topics, depending on what the student need at a particular time. For example, it may cover:

- Organisation
- Seeking clarification on academic tasks or assisting with administrative procedures
- Advice on social integration
- Help with approaching staff
- Help with identifying areas which are cause difficulty
- Study assistance (non subject-specific study skills)
- Help with accessing other sources of support
- Making the most of different opportunities available to Royal Holloway students

Depending on the level of needs, mentoring can be done by different types of mentors, all of whom have an awareness of Mental Health Conditions:

- A fellow student who is trained and employed by Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO)
- A Specialist Mentor that is a member of staff who is mental health professional (for example a trained counsellor Counsellor) and/or has extensive experience with supporting students

Counselling
The Counselling Service sees students on short-term basis to tackle emotional or psychological distress. It is different from long term therapy but students with mental health conditions may want to speak with a counsellor for specific issues that they experience at particular times whilst at Royal Holloway (bereavement, difficult relationship with friends, etc). Ongoing support however will be provided via the Mental Health Adviser.

Priority to Halls
First year students with mental health conditions can request a specific hall, which suits their need. For example if occupying a room in a hall arranged in small flats is preferable for somebody with social anxiety, or if living on campus will aid attendance for somebody with serious depression, then it is possible to contact Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) to be assessed for priority to halls.
More specialised support from Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) continued

We generally expect students with mental health difficulties to live with other students in private housing around the College in their second or third years. In fact this might be one of steps towards full recovery or successful management of symptoms of a mental health condition. However, for those whose mental health condition makes them vulnerable to harm or disengagement from the course and the support offered, it is possible to request priority to a College room as a continuing student. Equally, those who would it find it impossible to share a house in the private sector can also apply to receive priority to halls. This is done in February of each year by contacting Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) who then assesses needs for priority on the basis of the medical evidence on file and the history of support that the student has received thus far.

Unistart (orientation programme for students with mental health diagnoses and for those on the Autistic Spectrum)

Unistart is an orientation programme run for incoming students in the second week of September over two days and one night. It is aimed at easing transition to university for those groups of students who, as a result of their disability, might find change and new starts daunting. Once they declare their disability on application, students are invited to this event and can bring along a supporting adult with them. They are often the option of staying on campus and to take part in a series of events such as:

- Early registration with the College and early release of student card
- Tour of campus, library and local area
- Mock lecture
- A talk on study skills
- A session on living in halls
- A session on managing one’s finances
- An introduction to all the support services
- An introduction to social, volunteering and employment opportunities at Royal Holloway
- A range of activities in the evening

In addition to meeting the Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) team, students are given the opportunity to meet somebody in their academic department.

If you have a mental health condition and/or an Autistic Spectrum Condition and would like to take part, please look out for the invitation sent out via our Admissions Team or contact Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO).
Support which the Disability & Dyslexia Services team (ESO) does not provide

Personal care
Our student helpers are not trained carers and would not be involved in any personal care or lifting duties. If you need a carer, please contact your Local Authority. We welcome carers on campus and when care is needed round-the-clock or at night time, these carers can be accommodated on campus (for more details about carer’s room, please see the section on accommodation). Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) is also unable to recommend care agencies.

Extra subject-specific tuition
Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) does not provide extra classes on topics covered on the course. Its study skills tuition is solely directed at the method of efficient studying at university. If you would like extra tuition, you will need to arrange this separately.

Proof-reading service
The study skills sessions provided by Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) do not constitute a proof-reading service. Tutors can give feedback on recurring mistakes in short sections of an assessment but do not correct assessments in full.

Psychological assessment of some conditions
Our Specialist Teacher and Educational Psychologist can assess students for dyslexia and dyspraxia but students with suspected AD(H)D, Autistic Spectrum Conditions or Mental Health conditions are referred for diagnosis through their GP.
The Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) team is dedicated to supporting disabled and dyslexic students in becoming successful and independent learners. All members of the office are available to meet with any disabled or dyslexic student or applicant with a question or concern. Whenever possible we try to see students immediately, but during busy periods it may be necessary for students to book an appointment in order to see some members of staff. Staff can be contacted on the generic email address: disability-dyslexia@royalholloway.ac.uk

Senior Educational Support Officer
This Officer is responsible for ensuring that student and applicant needs are assessed and appropriate programmes of support are established. She/he works with different other sections or services to foster inclusive practice across College. She/he is also responsible for the smooth and efficient running of the Disability & Dyslexia Services team.

Mental Health Advisor
This advisor helps the Senior Educational Support Officer coordinate the support for all students with a mental health condition or diagnoses. She devises strategies with the students and with staff which are aimed at maximising engagement. She also helps students get access to support from external providers such as the NHS. Finally, she trains staff and student helpers in mental health awareness and inclusion.

Educational Support Officer (Specific Learning Differences)
This Officer is a qualified Specialist Teacher and available to assist students with Specific Learning Differences (for example dyslexia, dyspraxia or attention deficit disorder) in finding effective learning strategies which meet the demands of undergraduate or postgraduate study. He/she also assesses students who show signs of dyslexia.
Educational Support Officer (General Study Skills)
This Officer is available to assist students in improving their academic skills. He/she runs one-to-one and group sessions.

Visiting Study Skills Tutors (Specific Learning Difficulties and disabilities)
This tutor provides one-to-one study skills tuition for students with a Specific Learning Difficulties who are in receipt of funding from the Disabled Students Allowance. He/she also sees students whose impairment, mental health condition or medical condition creates dyslexic-type difficulties.

Educational Support Officer
This Officer co-ordinates the recruitment, training and day to day running of the Student Helpers Scheme which provides help and support to disabled students. She/he also helps the Senior Educational Support Officer co-ordinate Examinations Access Arrangements and helps him/her oversee Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO).

Educational Support Officer (Reasonable Adjustments)
This Officer is responsible for contacting and registering disabled or dyslexic students or applicants. He/she assists the Senior Educational Support Officer in establishing student support programmes and is the first point of contact for disabled or dyslexic students or staff with queries. He/she also assist in the process when students request to be prioritised for College halls.

Educational Support Officer (Accessibility)
This officer is responsible for physical access and egress around campus. If you have a physical or sensory impairment, this officer will contact you to draw a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP). She/he can also advise on assistive computer equipment available and provides statistical monitoring data for the whole service.

Student helpers
We also employ a pool of student helpers who are paid out of a student’s Disabled Students Allowance. These students fulfil different roles:

• note takers (who take notes for you whilst you attend classes)
• student mentors (who ensure that you all you need to thrive academically and socially at Royal Holloway),
• specialist Mental Health mentors (if you have a Mental Health condition which has a greater Impact on your day-today activities) or Specialist Mentors for Autistic Spectrum Conditions
• library helpers (who can help you fetch and return books to the library)
• general or mobility helpers (if you need a little bit of help carrying books around campus),

Perhaps you will want to become a student helper in your second or third year. If so, please contact us around the month of January.
The Disabled Students’ Allowance (DSA)

Student Finance England, Student Finance Wales and Student Finance Scotland have funds available to Home students, in the form of a Disabled Students’ Allowance (DSA). This allowance assists full and part-time undergraduate and postgraduate disabled students, to fund some of the support mentioned above and more.

The allowance has three main parts: specialist equipment allowance (for the purchase or rental of equipment such as computers, scanners, or tape recorders), non-medical helper’s allowance (which can pay for note-takers, sign language interpreters, specific learning difficulties tutors or mobility helpers for access to college facilities) and general disabled student’s allowance (to cover the cost of items such as extra photocopies and book purchases or extra travel costs).

Students should contact Student Finance England about the Disabled Students’ Allowance as early as possible. The application takes between one and seven months to process. You will have to provide information about your condition, how it affects your study and what study support you will need. Evidence of your condition comes from your doctor or an educational psychologist (for Specific Learning Difficulties). The Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) team can give advice about the Disabled Students’ Allowance application.

The Disabled Students’ Allowance is not means tested so even if you do not receive assistance with your tuition fees you may still be eligible. For more information, and an online application form go to gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas/overview. Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) can also provide you with a hard copy of the form.

Needs Assessments for the Disabled Students’ Allowance

Once you have applied for the DSA, Student Finance England will write to you and ask that you book a Needs Assessment with one of the centres listed on nnac.org. The Needs Assessment is not an assessment of your disability/Specific Learning Differences or your academic ability. It is your chance to identify what difficulties you might have on your course as a result of your disability/Specific Learning Differences. The assessor will then be able to write a report listing the support you’ll require in your studies, breaking it down into the three support categories mentioned above (Specialist equipment, non-medical help and general allowance).

You may wish to have your Needs Assessment carried out at Royal Holloway by the West London Assessment Centre Outreach Centre. If so, please contact the West London Assessment Centre on 01895 266704 to book an appointment once you receive the authorisation letter from Student Finance England.

For more information on the application process, the evidence to provide and an application form, please go to: gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas/overview

For a DSA application Roadmap, please see: yourdsa.com/dsa/roadmap

NHS Bursaries and Research Grants students:

Postgraduate students who are receiving a NHS bursary or a grant from a Research Council can also apply for the DSA, but the process is slightly different as the one described above. The application is done entirely via the Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) so these students should get in touch as soon as they know that they will be studying at Royal Holloway.
Royal Holloway is a friendly and caring community, offering an extremely high level of student support to help you get the most out of your time here. Assistance is available to all students needing extra support to enable them to manage their own educational and personal progression.

Support in academic Departments

The Disability & Dyslexia Services Network Member
Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) has a dedicated member of staff in each academic department who ensures that their support is put in place at a departmental level. They are your first point of contact if you have any query about your support or if your academic support needs. The Network Member works closely with Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) and you to establish any necessary reasonable adjustments to your course.

Your personal tutor
All students are given a personal tutor or adviser whose role it is to discuss with you any concerns. You will be told the name of your personal adviser at the start of the year. Like all academics, your personal tutor will have office hours when you can go and speak with them. It may be necessary to make an appointment with the administrative team in your department.

Administrative staff in departments
Administrative staffs in departments generally get to know students very well and are available to answer questions and signpost students to other services/individuals for an answer to a query.

Support & Advisory Services (Welfare and Wellbeing)
Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) is part of the wider Support & Advisory Services (Welfare and Wellbeing). The section comprises support such as:

- Community, Wellbeing & Student Outreach who offer welfare support and advice for students living off campus and wellbeing support for all students
- Residential Support team for those living in College halls and housing (part of Student Life);
- International Office for support available to International Students;
- Financial welfare for budgeting advice and applications to the hardship funds & Principal’s Loan.
- Faith Support for multi-faith information and details of accessible places of worship and prayer;
- Counselling Service for short-term professional counselling for psychological and emotional difficulties;
- Health Centre on campus (Founders’ Building East) which offers all the services of a General Practice with access to a Community Psychiatric Nurse, Psychologist, Psychiatrist, Eating Disorders Nurse and a sexual health clinic;
- Career Service for career development with an officer dedicated to disabled students.
The Centre for Development of Academic Skills (CeDAS)

The Centre for the Development of Academic Skills (CeDAS) has recently been established. Its purpose is to provide a co-ordinating hub as well as dedicated support for any students with the development of their language, literacy and numeracy skills. CeDAS offers workshops, courses and one to one tutorials that develop core skills needed for academic success on undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes. Support and guidance will be offered on areas such as:

• academic reading and writing
• seminar/workshop skills
• academic integrity
• working with data
• Independent learning.

Teaching of discipline-specific skills will be delivered within a selection of students’ home departments while more generic skills will be offered via sign-up sessions open to all. There is also significant support provision for international students who speak English as an additional language.

For further information please contact CeDAS@royalholloway.ac.uk.

The libraries

There are two main libraries on campus:

• The Bedford Library containing science, social science and history materials
• The Founder’s Library containing language, literature, fine arts, film, and theatre materials

Other sources of support around the College continued
The Bedford Library has wheelchair access via an automatic door, a lift and a fully accessible toilet. As with most libraries, access to stock on shelves above wheelchair height and between aisles is restricted, but a book-fetching service can be arranged. The Founder’s Library has limited access to wheelchair users and is currently only suitable for those who can transfer on to an evac chair, but it is possible to request material to be transferred to Bedford Library.

You may be able to have personal helpers, funded by your Disabled Students’ Allowance, to assist you in obtaining materials from the library. Library information Leaflet 52 offers a description of services to disabled students or you can follow the link Help & Support Information for disabled users from the Library home web page royalholloway.ac.uk/library. Parking spaces reserved for students with mobility problems can be found next to Bedford and Founder’s libraries.

You are strongly encouraged to make yourselves known to the librarians early in the academic year. If you have requested library support when you registered with Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO), you will be invited by the Disability & Dyslexia liaison to talk about your specific requirements as a disabled or dyslexic library user. Librarians may be able to offer assistance such as:

- photocopying including large print format (at cost)
- reservation services
- book-fetching
- help with navigating the building
- remote access by phone and email

Advanced notice may be required for some services.

Please contact the Library’s Head of Customer Services in the first instance by calling 01784 414640 or email library@royalholloway.ac.uk.

**Computer services**

The Computer Centre offers a wide range of facilities, including the provision of a number of PC labs situated around campus, and a range of IT courses. For details please see our training website: royalholloway.ac.uk/it/training.

As part of its facilities, the Computer Centre can assess computer support for students on a case-by-case basis. Please contact Chris Horton (Training and Information Manager): 01784 414025 or email c.horton@royalholloway.ac.uk.

A door access card is available from the Computer Centre that allows 24 hour access to many of our PC labs around campus. The International Building, which contains one of our main PC labs, provides the best access for students in a wheelchair, with ground floor facilities in a clean, modern environment. The Bedford Library also offers good access to several suites of PCs.
The Computer Centre is unable to provide equipment for students’ personal use, for example in their own room. However you may be eligible for funds to purchase a computer, hardware or software through either the Disabled Students’ Allowance or through Access to Learning Funds (please refer to page 17). Contact Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) for details.

The Student’s Union

Student Advice Centre
The Student Advice Centre has an open-door policy meaning students can confidentially seek help with any academic or welfare issues. This can be anything from advice on student housing, appealing degree results to information on finance and employment. Students do not have to make an appointment.

The Adviser’s office is located in the Advice & Support Centre, on the first floor of the Students’ Union, which is accessible to wheelchair users via a lift. The Welfare Adviser and the Disabled Students’ Officer (see below) are happy to meet you at alternative locations.

Co-President (Welfare & Diversity)
This student is elected to run the organisation for a year with three others. The CP Welfare & Diversity is responsible for all the wellbeing campaigns run by the SU, touching on topics like sexual health and mental health. She is also responsible for engaging the diverse student population; for example, she works with the Disabled Student’s Officer on access, campaigns and engaging disabled students. Other student characteristics that she will be working with and promoting throughout the year include ethnicity, sexuality, gender, international postgraduate, mature and student parents (yes, all of them!). This year the CP Welfare & Diversity is Sid. As ever, if you have a concern or would like to get involved in campaigns, email sidonie.bertrand-shelton@su.rhul.ac.uk or follow on Twitter @SURHUL and @BertrandShelton

The Disabled Students’ Officer
The Disabled Students’ Officer is responsible for providing a link between the services provided by the Students’ Union and those provided by wider college, with a focus on the rights of the student. In practice, this means that if you feel any services are discriminating against you for being disabled, or that the help you need is not being provided we can support and signpost you. We are also responsible for running the Disabled Students’ Network. For more information email disabled@royalholloway.ac.uk.

Sports centre
Royal Holloway offers a wide range of quality sporting facilities for a range of different disciplines, a fitness suite, a free weights room and a stretching area. The fitness suite equipment has been approved by the Inclusive Fitness Initiative which means it is suitable for many disabled students. There are qualified gym instructors in the fitness suite that provide inductions and specialised one-to-one programmes for your specific requirements.

Access to the Sports Centre is by a path that has a steep gradient, but if you travel by car, there is a car park next to the Sports Centre. For more information please refer to the College Access Guide.
Getting involved

**Disabled Students Working Group**
The Disabled Students Working Group is a termly meeting gathering key members of services departments at Royal Holloway, an academic representative, the Students’ Union, a lay member from a leading charity and any disabled or dyslexic students wishing to take part. Its primary aims are:

- To embed disability and dyslexia support within College practices and provision by seeking the active involvement of disabled and dyslexic students.
- To disseminate information about disability and dyslexia support and provision to students;
- To make key staff aware of issues faced by disabled students in their day-to-day life in College, to seek immediate solutions, to agree any necessary actions or referral for further consideration.
- To exchange ideas about the development of disability and dyslexia support;
- To receive regular reports on the work of the Disability & Dyslexia Services, review any emerging trends and agree any necessary action;
- To hear relevant concerns from the Students’ Union and agree any necessary action;
- To have disability support practices examined by a Lay Member from an external disability group.

If you register with Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) you will be sent an invitation in advance of all meetings and minutes will be circulated to you. Please come along!

**Student Welfare Forum**
Support & Advisory Services (Welfare and Wellbeing) also have termly meetings where all the subsections, including Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO), are represented. The Students’ Union is also represented and the meetings are open to any student wishing to attend. Like the Disabled Students Working Group, it is aimed at examining welfare and wellbeing provision together. Please come along!

**SU Disabled Students’ Officer and Network:**
See the section on the Student’s Union Disabled Students’ Officer.

**Becoming a peer guide, student helper, student ambassador or volunteer:**
There are many opportunities at Royal Holloway to get involved in supporting other students. We are very keen to make use of all the talents that the disabled and dyslexic student population brings with them to Royal Holloway. If you would like to fulfil such roles as student helper for the Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO), or become a peer-guide in your department, a student volunteer or student ambassador, please let us know. The Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) team will put you in touch with the right people in College.

**Joining our Facebook page and Following us on Twitter:**
We have a presence on social media so please join our group, follow us and feel free to post comments.

Disability and Dyslexia Services @ESORHUL
Important things to consider

Geography
Royal Holloway’s beautiful campus is set in 135 acres of landscaped grounds just outside the M25 ring at Egham in Surrey. Academic buildings are situated on both sides of the A30 road, and there are two footbridges, one with a stepped ramp and the other with steps. There are also administrative buildings at the Huntersdale site about one mile away from the main site. Most residential accommodation is on campus with the exception of Kingswood Hall, one mile to the north of the main campus.

The main campus is built on a slope, which runs down from the Founder’s Building to the residential area, less than half a mile away, via the academic buildings. The geography of the campus and the large number of older listed buildings can make access difficult for those with mobility problems (please refer to the College Access Guide). Some students regard electric wheelchairs or scooters as essential equipment. The College also maintains a Georgian terraced house at Bedford Square in London, which currently accommodates some inter-collegiate teaching for undergraduates and postgraduates (mainly English and Social Work), and a research group.

Applicants for admission who have mobility difficulties are strongly encouraged to visit the campus and discuss their needs with staff in Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO).
Transportation and parking
A free bus service is provided between Kingswood Hall and the main site. A further bus service is available from the main campus to the local train station in Egham for which a small charge is made. All buses are accessible for those students who require the use of an adapted bus service.

If you decide to live off campus you may need your own private transport. Disabled parking spaces are available in most campus car parks, although in some cases these are not immediately adjacent to building entrances. Information about the location of disabled parking spaces is available from the campus Security Office or the Access Guide. If you require the use of these parking spaces please contact Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) to obtain a College parking permit.

It is advised that all disabled students register their vehicles with the Security Office.

Accommodation and catering services
The College has residential accommodation for around 3,000 students, both undergraduate and postgraduate. Halls vary from the Founder’s Building which houses almost 500 students, as well as the College Administrative Offices, a library, picture gallery and chapel, to the Victorian houses which house about 25 students each. Both catered and self-catered Residence Halls are available.

Halls of Residence are located on campus, on the other side of the A30 and on the Kingswood campus about one mile to the north of the main site. Residence Hall accommodation is restricted to registered full-time students. You can find descriptions of the Halls of Residence in the College Prospectus and on the website royalholloway.ac.uk/studyhere/accommodation. You will find information about Hall accessibility in the Access Guide.

Students usually have College accommodation for their first year only. In general, there is provision for students who require adapted rooms or who have serious medical or mental health conditions which cannot be managed in private housing to apply for a place in halls after their first year of study (in general, students have College accommodation for their first year only). If you fall in this category, please contact Disability & Dyslexia Services as early as possible. If granted priority, you will have to complete the online application for the Accommodation Office by the normal deadline (usually in February for the next academic year). As far as it is possible, College tries to mix the population in halls. If you do gain priority to halls through Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) we will try, as far as availability of suitable rooms allows, to allocate you a room in a flat or along a corridor with other students who have a disability and with some who have not.

Students who request priority after the closing date for accommodation applications will not normally be given special consideration unless they can show that compelling circumstances prevented an earlier request being made. A late application may also mean that particular room types are no longer available.
Adapted accommodation

- Runnymede, Reid, Kingswood, Gowar and Wedderburn, Butler, Tuke and Williamson Halls include rooms that have been adapted to make them fully accessible to wheelchair users.
- Founder’s Hall, Runnymede, Gowar and Wedderburn, Butler, Tuke and Williamson have rooms fitted with flashing lights and pillow vibrators for use by students with hearing impairments. Kingswood Hall has two rooms with vibrating pillows.
- Full-time carers can be housed in a Hall of Residence room adjacent to the room assigned to the student he/she is supporting. Normal residence fees will be charged for the carer’s room.
- Specific enquiries about the adapted facilities should be addressed to Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) who will act as your point of contact with other departments. Visits to these different halls can be arranged via our office. Full notes on each of the halls can be found at royalholloway.ac.uk/studyhere/accommodation. Catering outlets are situated in the Founder’s Hall, Kingswood Hall and near Tuke, Butler and Williamson Halls in the HUB. For information on opening hours please refer to the Student Handbook.

Personal care

As said above, Royal Holloway does not provide carers or recommendation of caring agencies. It is up to you to make prior caring arrangements with Social Services in your Local Authority. Separate rooms adjacent to the student’s can be booked for carers who need to be on duty at night. These rooms are generally paid by Social Services. A carer living in halls is subject to the same rules and regulations in place for all student residents and may be asked to leave if they do not conform to Royal Holloway’s halls rules.

Year abroad and year in industry

If your course involves studying abroad or working in industry for a year, your department(s) will need to establish the suitability of the placement for you as early as possible. Before placement, the matter can be discussed with you. With your permission, the overseas institution or company can, with your consultation and permission, be fully informed about your needs. Close personal links, established over a number of years with overseas institutions, allow for discussion with colleagues abroad about individual needs.

Support on fieldtrips and on work placements

If you course involves assessed fieldtrips (as in the departments of Geography or Earth Sciences) or statutory work placements (as in the department of Social Work), you may be asked if you want to disclose your disability or Specific Learning Difficulty so that the appropriate adjustments can be made.
Equal opportunities statement
The University of London was established to provide education on the basis of merit above and without regard to race, creed or political belief and was the first university in the United Kingdom to admit women to its degrees.

Royal Holloway, University of London (hereafter the College) is proud to continue this tradition, and to commit itself to equality of opportunity in employment, admissions and in its teaching, learning and research activities.

The College is committed to ensure that:

• all staff, students, applicants for employment or study, visitors and other persons in contact with the College are treated fairly, have equality of opportunity and do not suffer disadvantage on the basis of race, nationality, ethnic origin, gender, transgender, age, marital or parental status, dependents, disability, sexual orientation, religion, political belief or social origins

• both existing staff and students, as well as, applicants for employment or admission are treated fairly and individuals are judged solely on merit and by reference to their skills, abilities, qualifications, aptitude and potential

• it puts in place appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity

• teaching, learning and research are free from all forms of discrimination and continually provide equality of opportunity

• all staff, students and visitors are aware of the equal opportunities statement through College publicity material

• it creates a positive, inclusive atmosphere, based on respect for diversity within the College

• it conforms to all provisions as laid out in legislation promoting equality of opportunity.

Confidentiality and parental contact
Information and documentation submitted to Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) regarding disabilities will be treated as confidential. However, in order for office staff to plan and provide appropriate support to students, information about an applicant’s or student’s support requirements will be shared with those College staff and contracted support workers directly involved in the planning or delivery of the individual’s support provision. Details of an applicant’s or student’s disability would not normally be shared, except in cases where there was a clear health and safety reason or support requirement to do so, or at the specific request of the student.
Royal Holloway is an independent learning environment and student’s confidentiality is protected by the Data Protection Act. Information will not be discussed with the student’s parent or guardian without the express written permission of the student. We will always involve students in all communications with parents even when permission has been given. Equally, we would expect students to act independently of their parents when dealing with College departments, although mentors and other staff in Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) can facilitate this communication.

In exceptional cases, where someone is thought to be in imminent danger of serious harm, or causing harm to others, the staff of Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) may disclose information as would be appropriate to avert this harm. In those cases, the Head of Support & Advisory Services (Welfare and Wellbeing) has the authority to inform your next of kin whether prior consent has been given or not.

**Documentation of disability, medical condition, Specific Learning Difficulties**

In order that the College may provide the most appropriate support possible to disabled students, it requires that all students who request special adaptations, accommodations or auxiliary support provide documentation of their condition and their support needs from an appropriate professional. Documentation should contain the following information: diagnosis, prognosis, limitations and recommendations. Documentation of a medical condition should be from a medical doctor. Documentation of Specific Learning Difficulties should be from an educational psychologist or a Specialist Teacher and completed after the age of 16. Additional documentation from other professionals such as teachers, physiotherapists, speech therapists, counsellors, social workers, etc. which an applicant or student may feel clarifies their support needs are welcomed. All documentation submitted must be in English.

On some occasions the College may request individuals to provide additional documentation in order to gain a full understanding of their needs and support requirements.

All information and documentation regarding an applicant or student’s condition will be used exclusively for the purpose of planning and implementing appropriate support provision which will enable the student to gain the maximum benefit from the educational opportunities at the college.

Information contained in the Needs Assessment is not usually passed on to academic departments. Dyslexia & Disability Services (ESO) will ask for permission to share it if it thinks it may benefit your support. Conversely, you can request that this information be passed on to certain staff in your department.
**Student files**
Both electronic and paper files are kept on every student who registers with Disability & Dyslexia Services and these are kept in conformity with the Data Protection Act 1998. These files contain all reports or documentation submitted by a student/applicant, staff case notes and any other appropriate information, such as correspondence with the student and Disabled Students’ Allowance details. Statistics are kept to monitor the numbers of students using Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) (the types of disabilities reported and support provided). These statistics will be handled with care and used judiciously to prevent anyone being identified from them.

All files are confidential to Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) and are accessible only to staff within the office. Files are kept for six years and then destroyed. Students are entitled to receive a photocopy of their files in order to check their accuracy. In accordance with the College Policy, this must be requested through the College’s Records Manager and a small fee be paid.

**Admissions policy**
Decisions on admission to programmes of study at Royal Holloway are made on the basis of academic qualification and, if relevant, previous academic or professional experience. The College does not discriminate on grounds of race, gender, age, and marital status, details of dependants, nationality, disabilities, sexual orientation, religion, political belief or social origins. It is recommended that students declare any disability on application so that the College can assess the level of adjustments and support required in a timely manner for all provision to be ready for the start of the year.

**Exam scripts and extenuating circumstances**
Examination scripts are marked anonymously using a candidate numbering system to ensure confidentiality and fairness. A Sub-Board of Examiners can, at the discretion of the Chair, take medical and/or other evidence into account when considering a student’s results. However, this is only normally done in cases where a student has not already received Exams Access Arrangements and has applied for extenuating circumstances. If this is your situation you should discuss this provision with your department(s).

**Complaints procedure**
Contact your Departmental Disability & Dyslexia Services Network Member or Disability & Dyslexia Services (ESO) for any difficulties with academic matters relating to disability support.

The College also has a formal complaints procedure if you feel that a problem has not been satisfactorily addressed. Full details of the complaints procedure and the complaint form can be found at royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/academicsupport/complaints/thecomplaintprocess.aspx
Other useful documents

The Royal Holloway Access Guide
The Access Guide is available to all students, but may be especially helpful to wheelchair users. It provides a comprehensive map of accessible routes and facilities around the campus. Find it online at royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/welfare/disabledstudents

The Royal Holloway Student Handbook
The Student Handbook outlines all of the policies and procedures of the College in regard to students, including information about the College’s policies on Equal Opportunities, Harassment and Fee Payment. For full details see royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/ onlinestudenthandbook.aspx

Royal Holloway Prospectuses
The Undergraduate and Postgraduate Prospectuses detail the courses offered at Royal Holloway, outline services and list the scheduled Open Days. The Prospectuses can also be viewed online at royalholloway.ac.uk/studyhere/prospectus
## Contact information

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<tr>
<td>Health or Medical</td>
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<td>Library</td>
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<td>Disabled Parking Permits</td>
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<td>Students’ Union Services and Activities</td>
<td>01784 486300&lt;br&gt;royalholloway.ac.uk/studentlife/studentsunion</td>
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## Disclaimer

All information is correct at the time of going to print and is subject to change.