Royal Holloway celebrates top 20 UK university ranking

Royal Holloway has risen five places to become a top 20 UK university in The Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2020. At position 19 in the national rankings, Royal Holloway was also shortlisted for University of the Year 2020.

Through a series of investments to improve the student experience, including a £57m library and student services centre, Royal Holloway’s position has risen in a number of league tables over the last few years, including in the Complete University Guide 2020 where the university sits at 23rd in the UK. In the 2019 National Student Survey (NSS) results, Royal Holloway’s score for overall student satisfaction rose to 88%, which exceeded the sector average. The NSS is an independent student survey carried out by the Office for Students on behalf of the UK higher education funding and regulatory bodies.

Professor Paul Layzell, Principal at Royal Holloway, said: “We are delighted to be recognised as a top 20 UK university in this prestigious league table.

“The distinguishing features of our university are our strong sense of community, and the academic experience we offer to students delivered through high quality teaching and world-class research. By bringing these elements together, our goal is to be a source of inspiration for our students who strive to achieve excellence. This ranking, and our shortlisted position, are a clear endorsement of our approach and are a testament to the outstanding contribution and achievements of our students and staff.”

Alastair McCall, editor of The Sunday Times Good University Guide, said: “Royal Holloway has moved stealthily back into our elite top 20 institutions after three successive rises in our rankings. This university has a happy band of students who buck the trend of poor scores for student satisfaction that afflicts many London institutions.

“Heavy recent investment on campus sets up the university well for the future. A new science building which opened last year aims to attract more women into these subjects, an appropriate ambition for an institution that was once women-only. Today’s institution is ambitious for the future, ambitious for its students and delivering on all fronts.”

BAFTA win for Media Arts academic

Professor Victoria Mapplebeck and her son, Jim with their BAFTA

Victoria Mapplebeck, an academic from Royal Holloway’s Department of Media Arts has won a BAFTA for her short film Missed Call, about her young son’s journey to reconnect with his absent father.

It is one of the first professional documentaries in the world to be filmed on an iPhone X. Victoria and her production team received their award at the BAFTA Television Awards in May, at the Royal Festival Hall in London.

Missed Call begins with the last message Victoria receives from the father of her son Jim before he moved abroad in 2006. The film ends with the first phone call to Jim from his father 11 years later when the boy reaches out via his mother.

To find out more about the Department of Media Arts, please visit royalholloway.ac.uk/mediaarts

Community Matters is going digital!

As of September 2020, Community Matters will only be available to read digitally and will no longer be delivered to your door. If you would like to receive a digital copy of Community Matters, please email us at community@royalholloway.ac.uk
Royal Holloway joins international cybersecurity consortium

Royal Holloway has joined five universities from the UK, the United States and Japan to establish a new consortium to tackle the growing international challenges facing cybersecurity experts in our increasingly connected world.

The International Cybersecurity Centre of Excellence (INCS-CoE) will serve as a hub for international cybersecurity research, advocacy, and education. Its members will help governments develop global cybersecurity standards, conduct research to stay ahead of evolving threats and help train students to handle the cybersecurity challenges of the future.

Professor Paul Layzell, Principal of Royal Holloway, who signed the charter to establish the International Cybersecurity Centre of Excellence, said: “We are pleased to join this international network of research institutions to help tackle the global challenges presented by cybersecurity.

“With Royal Holloway recognised in the UK as an Academic Centre of Excellence in Cyber Security Research, being able to collaborate with other international universities cements our Information Security Group’s global reach and impact.”

Several large corporations have already provided funding for the new centre, including CISCO, Adobe, Hitachi, NEC, Fujitsu, and Northrop Grumman. The centre is also dedicated to training the next generation of cybersecurity professionals to understand the international challenges they will face.

To find out more about the Information Security Group please visit royalholloway.ac.uk/isg

Opportunities to better understand the university’s future development plans

Royal Holloway is continuing to develop its historic estate to provide a 21st-century campus that meets the needs of everyone studying and working at the university today and in the future.

In July 2019, Runnymede Borough Council granted planning permission, subject to conditions, for a new Enterprise Centre. This will provide the university with the opportunity to create a regional centre of excellence to support businesses in the fields of cyber security and data analytics. The plan is to start work on the development in early 2020.

This summer, Royal Holloway launched a series of public consultation events so that the local community can find out about the estate plans and meet representatives from the university and its consultant teams. There will be further opportunities to attend consultation events over the coming months and invitations will be delivered to homes surrounding the university.

For an opportunity to complete an online questionnaire to help shape these proposals in advance of formal submissions to Runnymede Borough Council and to find out more about the development projects and the dates of the public consultation events, visit royalholloway.ac.uk/local-community

Community Research Hub report

Royal Holloway’s Community Research Hub is a Royal Holloway Volunteering initiative set up in 2016 that matches students who want experience applying research skills with charities and non-profits needing support with surveys, analysis, reports, literature reviews, desk-based research, ethnographic research and more.

In June, Royal Holloway published a report on the progress of the Community Research Hub to understand how it has benefited students and the local community since its founding. The report concluded that the collaborative nature of the Community Research Hub demonstrates a distinct double-edged benefit. The community partners benefit from having the support of students; but the students also develop their skills and abilities.

The report also found that the Hub helps the university to develop its relationship with the local community and thereby contributes to local ‘town and gown’ harmony, in an impactful and positive way.

For more information on the Community Research Hub and the report please visit royalholloway.ac.uk/research-hub
Festival of Volunteering

Following on from the success of last year, Royal Holloway hosted its second Festival of Volunteering on Wednesday 25 September, during the university’s Welcome Week.

The festival, which took place in Founder’s Square at the university’s Egham campus, aims to promote local charities and organisations that make a genuine difference in Egham and Englefield Green, and encourage students to get involved with available volunteering opportunities.

This year’s all-day event saw more than 2,000 students attend and express an interest in being a part of the university’s ever-growing voluntary presence in the local community, for which it has won The Queen’s Award for Voluntary Service.

To find out more about the work of volunteering at Royal Holloway, please visit royalholloway.ac.uk/volunteering

FSA’s Scientific Advisory Committee appointment for Professor Paul Fraser

Professor Paul Fraser from the Department of Biological Sciences has been appointed onto the government’s Food Standard Agency’s (FSA) Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes.

The three-year advisory appointment recognises the research impact and professional respect that Professor Fraser has built up over the years and will help to ensure that the FSA’s policy development and consumer advice is based on sound science and independent expert advice.

Paul Fraser is Professor of Biochemistry and Head of the Plant Molecular Sciences research group at Royal Holloway which has established considerable expertise in the production of high-value industrial and nutritional plant products.

The research group has a long-standing interest in developing and implementing new technological approaches to the generation of crop plants that address economic and societal issues. In particular, it has an important role in coordinating multiple EU programmes in this field, and this will ensure valuable contribution to the FSA novel food and processes committee based on first hand expertise in the field.

To find out more about the Department of Biological Sciences, please visit royalholloway.ac.uk/biologicalsciences

Honorary Doctorates and Honorary Fellows

At the end of the last academic year, Royal Holloway awarded four new Honorary Fellowships and two new Honorary Doctorates.

Honorary Fellowships recognise the outstanding contributions made by individuals to the life and work of the university or to education generally.

In May, Lady (Kitty) Chisholm, Michael Heslop, Gabriel Pretus and Dr Graham Twigg were conferred as Honorary Fellows at this year’s ceremony held at the university.

During summer graduation week in July, Professor Dame Jane Francis DCMG, the Director of British Antarctic Survey and Narayana Murthy, co-founder of Infosys, which today is a global leader in technology services and consulting, received the honorary degrees of Doctor of Science (Honoris Causa), for their outstanding contributions to environmental science and computer science respectively.

Professor Francis and Narayana Murthy received their awards alongside graduating students from the Department of Earth Sciences and the Department of Computer Science.
University events

Royal Holloway invites you to upcoming events on campus.

Keep up-to-date with the exciting events programme at royalholloway.ac.uk/events, where you can register your attendance or book tickets, and find out about new additions to the programme throughout the year.

Spotlight: 20th century art in focus

14 September – 8 December, 10am–6pm daily
Emily Wilding Davidson Building, Exhibition Space

An exhibition of Royal Holloway’s lesser known part of its artwork collection focusing on the works made within the early to mid-twentieth-century.

The exhibition features the works of artists such as Dame Laura Knight, Amy Drucker, William Orpen, John Nash and many more. It brings into focus a part of the collection rarely on public display, alongside a host of free talks and activities. Admission is free, no booking required.

St Cecelia’s concert and reception

Saturday 23 November, 6–8pm
Founder’s Building, Chapel

Join Royal Holloway for this popular annual event in celebration of the patron saint of music.

The concert will feature choral and orchestral scholars from the university. The Choir will also perform works by Ola Gjeilo, James MacMillan and a rising star in the USA, Jake Runestad. The concert is followed by a reception in the Picture Gallery.

General admission is £15, booking is essential.

Festive Market

Thursday 5 December, 10am–6pm
Founder’s Square

Royal Holloway invites you to its annual Festive Christmas Market. Along with a wide variety of market stalls, there will be festive food and drink and live performances from our students. The event culminates at 5.30pm with our annual tree-lighting ceremony. A great way to celebrate the start of the festive season!

Admission free, no booking required.

Royal Holloway in concert with the London Mozart Players

Wednesday 29 January 2020, 7.30pm
St John’s Smith Square, London SW1P 3HA

To mark the 250th anniversary of Beethoven’s birth in 2020, Royal Holloway presents a programme of, and inspired by, his works. The Choir will be joined by the university Chorus and Royal Holloway alumni soloists including soprano, Sarah Fox.

The Royal Holloway Chamber Orchestra will perform side-by-side with The London Mozart Players, the longest-established chamber orchestra in the United Kingdom.

£20 (concessions available). Tickets available on the door or book online.

Community Matters Autumn 2019

Contact us

If you would like to speak to a member of our team, please call 01784 276612 / 01784 443394, email community@royalholloway.ac.uk or write to Community Matters, PR and Media team, Marketing and Communications, Royal Holloway, University of London, Egham, Surrey, TW20 0EX.

Our office hours are 9am-5pm, Monday to Friday throughout the year (including out of term-time).

If you are passing the university, you could also drop your letter into our Visitors’ Centre on the east side of Founder’s Building. Please ensure you mark it for the attention of Community Matters.

If you would like to receive a digital copy of Community Matters, please email us community@royalholloway.ac.uk

Community drop-in session on 25 February

Royal Holloway holds termly drop-in sessions for local residents on its campus. The sessions provide an opportunity for individual members of the local community to come in and discuss topics of concern to them with a representative from the university.

Please join us for the next community drop in session on Tuesday, 25 February from 5pm to 6pm in the Event Space, on the ground floor of the Emily Wilding Davison Building.

Revised opening hours for Spring Rise Gate

Following the opening of the Emily Wilding Davison Building in 2017, the opening times of Spring Rise Gate (the university’s back gate) were revised to enable students and staff to access and exit from the campus via that gate 24 hours per day.

Reflecting the concerns of people living around the back gate and having monitored the situation, the university has re-established closed hours for the back gate. The gate will be locked at 12.30am each night and will re-open at 5am. Swipe card access will not be possible during these times. These changes have been communicated to new and returning students.

The university operates a 24/7 campus and these times ensure that students and staff who work in university outlets that close at midnight, or who leave the library late at night, or who wish to study there through the night, can use the gate. It will also enable people to catch the first train from Egham station and access the gym in the morning.

Royal Holloway will continue to remind students of their responsibility to act respectfully when moving in and around the local community.