

RH100 Panel

End of Year Report

2018-19



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An Introduction to the RH100 Panel

Introduction

RH100 is now operationally delivered by the Student Engagement & Sport Department within the Academic Services Directorate. Lead contact for any enquiries are Sandro Gunther (Campus Engagement Manager). The panel had 29 returning students and a further 75 new students were recruited.

A termly report was provided to Student Experience Committee to give a regular update to all members. The panel met on three occasions with detailed panel input, which was fed back directly to the topic owner.

Purpose of RH100

The main aim for the RH100 is to ensure Student Voice is represented as the College implements strategic change projects across the breadth of student experience. The panel has balanced representation from all degree levels and departments as well as different student groups, including mature, commuting, joint honours and international students.

The RH100 panel is not intended as a **feedback** mechanism for professional services or academic departments i.e. you said, we did/surveys on business as usual activity. Instead, the panel is challenged with providing **input** on how they want to shape and steer 'live College' that requires complex thought and representation from a diverse student body.

RH100 Operations

1) Recruitment

This year's RH100 Panel saw the application process continue to run with a formal Stonefish job application. The applicants were asked to provide evidence on their communication & time management skills and reasons why they believe Student Voice is important in College strategic decisions. The improved application process ensured a high quality of applicants and raised awareness of the professionalism of the panel.

We received **125 applicants** for the panellist position, **120** of whom were shortlisted to attend an assessment centre held the following week. These applicants were in the running for approximately 79 panel positions (the remaining 26 are already held by returning panellists).

1.1) Assessment Centres

We used group assessment centres to best judge the suitability of the applicants. Following on from feedback from the previous year's panellists, the assessment centres consisted of a smaller number of applicants but used a similar format in their content. The assessment centres challenged the students with discussing the distribution of the Student Opportunities Fund budget and then presenting their findings to the room. Throughout this activity, the Student Engagement and Sport department assessed the applicants' critical thinking, teamwork, communication and presentation skills, as well as monitoring the applicants' overall contribution to the task, their peer dynamic and the clarity of expressing their ideas.

Based on this activity, the applicants were scored and our **final 105 panellists** were selected (allowing a contingency for dropouts). As the charts in Appendix 1 demonstrate, the panellists are a sample reflecting the demographics of our highly diverse student body at Royal Holloway.

2) Training

Both the returning and newly recruited student panellists were expected to attend a training session, where they were trained on various aspects of their role, how the panel feeds into the College's strategic objectives and the importance of **student voice** on all levels of the student experience. The training also provided an opportunity to inform the new panel of its legacy and the visible impact it has had, thereby **closing the loop** from last year.

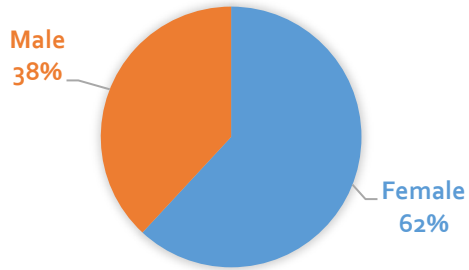
The training was modified from last year according to feedback from previous panellists. Improvements included holding a practice panel in small groups where newly recruited panellists could understand the process of the panel and how to be constructive with their input. We are hoping that this training session ensures a more productive and efficient panel format.

3) Proposed panel discussions

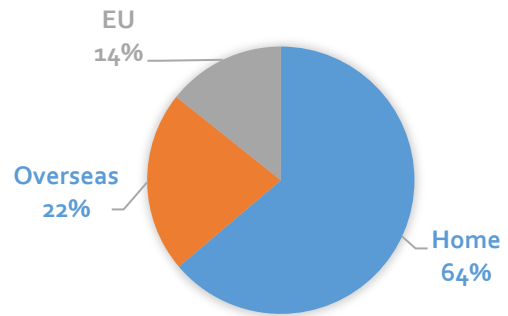
Panel	Date	Discussion Topic	Topic Sponsor	SU Sponsor
Panel 1	Tuesday 20 November	Digital Futures	Roy Harper	Jack O'Neill
		Advancing the synergies between teaching and research	Dr. Rebecca Thomas	
Panel 2	Tuesday 22 January	Scholarships and Bursaries	Natasha Jones	Clem Jones
		Cross-college courses	Tom Wainwright	
Panel 3	Tuesday 12 March	Library: Online and Digital Teaching Provision	Greg Leurs	Clem Jones
		Royal Holloway Volunteering	Phil Simcock	Clem Jones

Panel Demographics

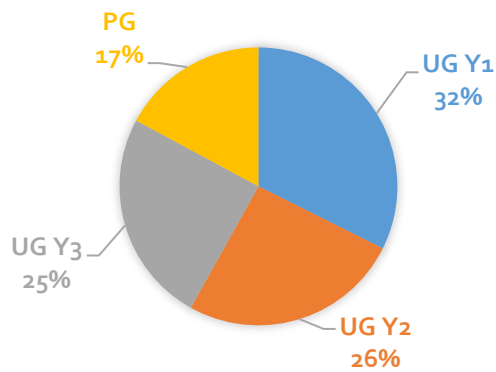
GENDER



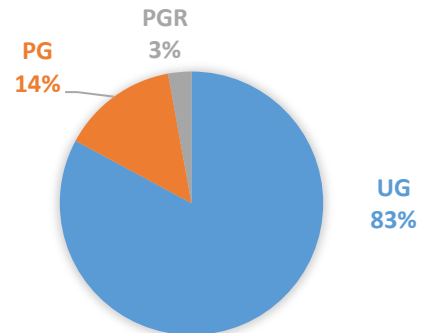
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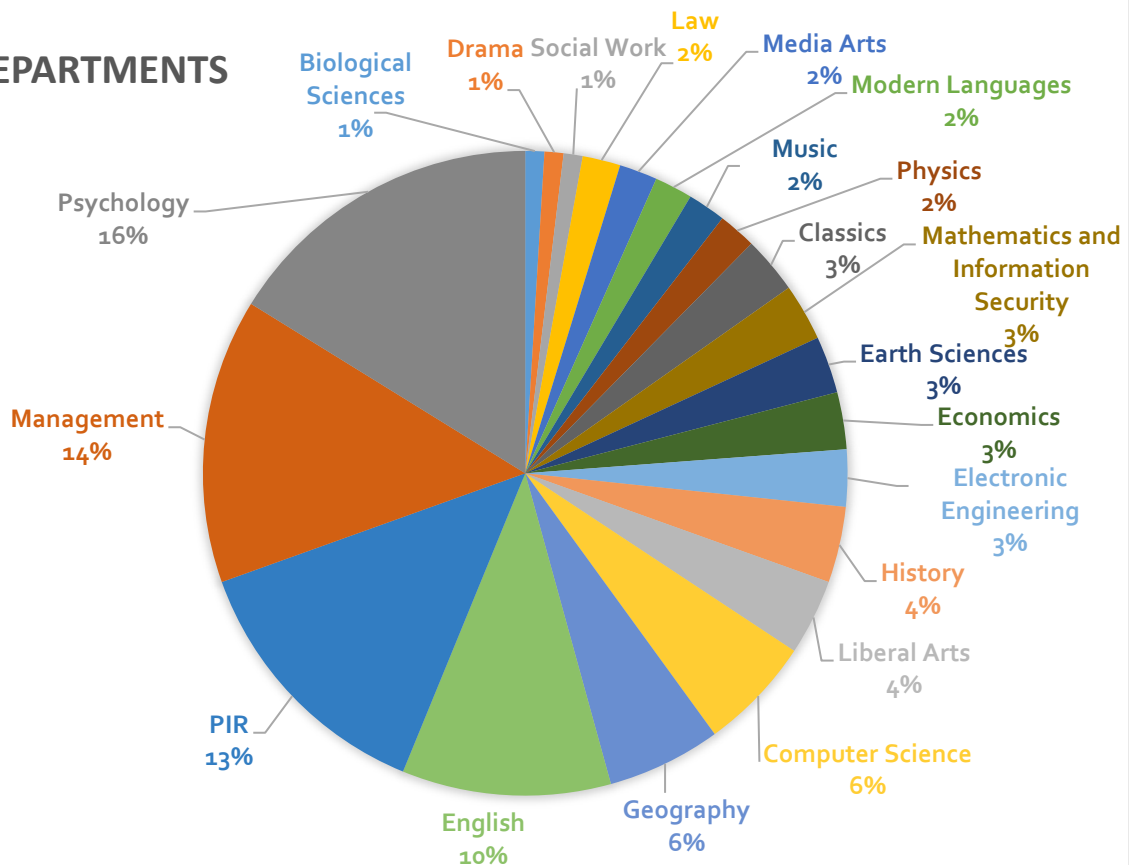
YEAR GROUPS



LEVEL OF STUDY



DEPARTMENTS



RH100 Panel 1 Report



Date: Tuesday 20 November
Panellist Attendance – 93.2%
Departments in Attendance – Campus Engagement, Strategic Planning and Change, IT, Dr Rebecca Thomas (Biological Sciences)

Discussion Topic 1 – Digital Futures

The RH100 panel discussed how current and emerging technologies could enhance their student experience.

Panellists suggested...

- The recording or live-streaming of lectures and the use of supportive technologies (e.g. smartboards, virtual reality).
- Careers and Employability resources could use Artificial Intelligence technology for mock interviews.
- The streamlining of key information and services in an app by which students can make appointments, payments, search for events, etc.
- Improved functionality of e-learning platform(s) such as Moodle.
- Displaying live availability of parking and study spaces on digital signage.
- Online-based Wellbeing services (e.g. therapy chatbots).
- Investing in the development of digital skills for both students and staff.

Discussion Topic 2 – Advancing the synergies between teaching and research

The RH100 panel discussed the relationship between teaching and research at the College.

Panellists informed the College that...

- Students are unaware/unsure of the research that is being undertaken in their department.
- It was not always clear when lecturers were including their own research in lectures.
- Experience with research can be vastly different across departments and at different levels of study.

Panellists therefore suggested...

- Providing more information to students on research undertaken by academic staff
- Running in-class open discussions on research
- A compulsory research-based module for all first-year students
- Cross-course research opportunities and making these widely available to students
- The opportunity to shadow staff or postgraduate students partaking in research to gain first-hand experience
- Student-led journals/publications in each department so students gain experience of publishing academic research

RH100 Panel 2 Report



Date: Tuesday 22 January

Panellist Attendance – 88.4%

Departments in Attendance – Campus Engagement, Strategic Planning and Change (Amelia Tomany), Marketing (Lisa Hutchinson), Dr Tom Wainwright (Management)

Discussion Topic 1 – Cross College Courses

The RH100 panel discussed the implementation of optional interdisciplinary courses.

Panellists suggested...

- A range of course names to engage students such as 'RH-eal World Opportunities', 'Beyond Learning' and 'Courses+'.
- Principles such as 'Engaging and changing the world' are too vague and may be hard to assess
- Interaction with students and staff from departments outside their own is of high importance.
- Themes should include general life skills such as 'An Introduction to Personal Finance' and 'Adulting 101', issues on current affairs both in the UK and globally and an introduction to advanced technologies.
- Distance and blended learning would be beneficial.
- The courses should be advertised through all College communications channels with a dedicated webpage, which includes short video trailers.
- Having dedicated spokespeople and options fairs would be useful in engaging and recruiting students.

Discussion Topic 2 – Scholarships and Bursaries

The RH100 panel discussed how scholarships should be disbursed across the student community.

Panellists informed the College that...

- The more students that can be supported through scholarships, the better – smaller awards to more students.
- Minimising accommodation costs through scholarships and awards is attractive to both home and overseas students.
- Scholarships should be used to incentivise academically gifted students to attend Royal Holloway.
- Cash awards are valued – students should be able to spend the money on what they prefer.
- Scholarships should be used to take financial pressure off those from disadvantaged backgrounds

RH100 Panel 3 Report

Date: Tuesday 12 March

Panellist Attendance – 77.8%

Departments in Attendance – Campus Engagement, Library, Volunteering

Discussion Topic 1 – Library: Online and Digital Teaching Provision

The RH100 panel discussed their ideal Library Search platform.

Panellists suggested...

- A simple, attractive and easy-to-use homepage/dashboard using the same log in details as other College platforms.
- A variety of media sources should be used to display information using tools such as AdobeConnect and Video Scribe.
- Video tutorials should be used to demonstrate Library features.
- The platform should provide a 'Search History' tab.
- The platform should suggest books, articles and journals related to the reference you are searching.
- The 'Live Chat' pop up should be accessible 24 hours a day.
- The platform should feature a FAQs page which is made reference to by the 'Live Chat' if key words are used.
- The platform should provide information on all referencing styles.
- The platform should feature an interactive map which displays the location of books.

Discussion Topic 2 – Royal Holloway Volunteering

The RH100 panel discussed volunteering opportunities at the College and the option of volunteering as part of an additional 'Year Out'.

Panellists informed the College that...

- Volunteering aids an effective CV and provides a high number of transferable skills.
- A number of barriers prevent students from volunteering including financial concerns, academic commitments and time commitments.
- Volunteering opportunities are difficult to find.
- The idea of a whole Year Out is unrealistic – students would prefer to volunteer for a term or throughout the year.

Panellists suggested that...

- Volunteering opportunities should mainly be linked to academic departments.
- A full year in industry is more attractive as it is course-specific and paid.
- If students did take a full year out to volunteer, they would still want access to all College services.
- More volunteering opportunities should have course accreditation.

Discussion Topic Updates

Panel Discussion Topic	Update
Digital Futures	This project has been taken further through College governance with updates to follow.
Advancing the synergies between teaching and research	This project has been taken further through College governance with updates to follow.
Cross-College Courses	<p>Before Easter, the RH100 panel input was integrated into the project documents and updated accordingly. These were then circulated to the project team who met. Further discussions were had, project risks identified, and mitigating solutions proposed.</p> <p>Tom Wainwright is meeting with Katie Normington to discuss the documents and next steps. The project will be going ahead later this year, and is on track with the project delivery timeline.</p> <p>RH100 names for the project, proposed themes and communication channel ideas have fed into the plans.</p>
Scholarships and Bursaries	The RH100 session and the invaluable insights from students have informed the recommendations for the value and type of awards that College are proposing to offer for 2020/21 entry.
Library: Online and Digital Teaching Provisions	The Library have analysed the feedback from the pre-work and the task students completed during the panel. From this they have identified trends and preferences the attendees had for the different types of learning resources. This will be used to guide us in how we develop and provide the library's online teaching and learning resources. The aim is to have a suite of resources on our Moodle page available for students at the start of the next academic year (2019-20).
Volunteering Strategy	The panel have provided a general steer for and input into an external consultation process, which has now been launched.

RH100 Panel Satisfaction Survey results



Panellists were asked to complete the satisfaction survey following the final panel on March 12. 79% of panellists completed the survey.

Below is a summary of the results:

- 96% of respondents rated their experience on the panel as Very Good or Good.
- Respondents rated 'Digital Futures' and 'Library: Online and Digital Teaching Provision' as the topics that they believe will have the most impact on student life at Royal Holloway.
- 93% of respondents rated the general administrative aspects of the panel as Very Good or Good. However, consideration needs to be taken on the Payroll aspects of the administration process.
- **84% of respondents felt their voice had been heard/listened to as a result of the panel.**
- Respondents found presentation and decision making skills to be the key skills they've gained from the role.
- 91% of respondents would recommend being on the panel to a friend.

Comments from the panellists include:

*'RH100 was a **valuable** and interesting experience, and well worth being involved with.'*

*'I love the RH100 and **feel proud of be a part of it...***

*'Being on the RH100 panel has been such an amazing and enjoyable experience. This is such a great way to **amplify the student voice** and allow us as students to have an influence on the future running of the university.'*

*'A really **fulfilling experience** – as someone who has been a student at Royal Holloway since 2015, for the first time I have felt as though I am **making a difference** at the university thanks to the RH100..'*

*'I really enjoy the panels and everything about them. It's **an environment like no other** so I really enjoy everything about it'*

*'I've learned to look (at) things in **different perspectives** through talking and discussing in group discussions.'*

'Being on the panel for the past 2 years I can see the changes from last year being implemented.'

Reapplications



The panellists had the opportunity to reapply for the RH100 in the next academic year. The panellists completed a 'Reapplication' form where they asked questions about future topics they'd like to see addressed by the panel.

The 26 panellists who reapplied put forward the following discussion topic suggestions:

- Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Student Housing ✓✓
- Careers
- Accessibility on Campus
- Extra-curricular opportunities (visibility) ✓✓
- Upgrading university facilities
- Cross-course socials
- Counselling services
- Life/Adulting Skills ✓✓
- Personal finances
- Student-community relations
- Transitions for disabled students
- Hands-on research experience
- Online learning – particularly for those on a year out
- Campus Sustainability
- Advancing BAME representation
- PhD issues
- Commuting student issues ✓✓
- Catering – prices and food allergen information ✓✓

RH100 Panel 2018/19 – Recommendations

The RH100 team will address the feedback from panellists and staff members involved in the panel to continuously improve the structure, delivery and content.

Recommendations include:

Feedback from 2018/19	Recommendations for 2019/20
45mins – 1 hour per topic – sometimes rushed	Extend the time frame of the panel to 3 hours
Discussion topics are structured in the same way – small group discussions which are presented back to the entire panel	Allow more flexibility in how the sessions are run. Give topic facilitators a range of options on how to run their discussion.
Training focused on practical aspects of panel	Increased focus on how to present back concise answers that aren't repetitive
Some topics used surveys prior to panel	Encourage all facilitators to make use of surveys before the panel
Pre-reading was useful but sometimes panellists didn't understand the context	Ensure complete clarity in pre-reading. Check language and terminology is covered
Only panels – no follow up sessions	Consider follow up sessions with returning and some new panellists where required