

RH100 Panel 3 Report

Date: Wednesday 8 March 2023

Panellist Attendance – 50%

Departments in Attendance – Student Engagement and Sport

Discussion Topic – Active Lifestyle and Sport

The RH100 panel discussed the current sports and active opportunities on offer and what the barriers to this offer are. They then looked to the future to help co-design what will become the recommendations for a strategic plan.

Panellists informed the university that...

- One of the barriers to being active on campus is the cost of the gym and the termly payment plan.
- There is pressure to be proficient in a sport or activity before joining clubs or attending active sessions.
- Stereotypical 'sports culture' can be a very masculine environment with lots of drinking which can be intimidating and deters people from joining in.
- They would like the Moves app to return.
- The Sports Centre is not accessible to get to and the area can feel unsafe after dark.
- Increase the number of female-only slots/classes.

Panellists therefore suggested...

- Introduce a monthly payment plan so students do not have to pay for the entire term up front.
- Offer activities designed for beginners and for people of different levels of experience.
- Provide an option to participate in a sport or activity casually without having to compete.
- Host more events in other places around campus such as Founders Field or Founders Square.
- Open the gym for longer hours and provide times which are accessible for commuter students.
- Incentivise students to be active through either a points-based system or with free stuff.

What next?

The Active Lifestyle and Sport team will use these responses to help plan the service for the next few years. The outcome of this panel will start to inform the development of recommendations for a strategic plan. The team hope to return to the RH100 in future and complete further consultation with smaller groups in more detail.

Appendix

1) The Royal Holloway System – Does it look right to your group – is there anything missing – please add, remove or move things about.

- Big assumption that you have to have experience and be good at the sport
- 24hr gym
- Timetable clash
- Pricing
- Better communication e.g., newsletter and pre-join survey
- Diversified activities
- Fear of judgement

2) Diagnosing: Using the system diagram - What do you and your peers think could be the barriers and challenges to students being active from an individual and system perspective?

- Exclusion based on manly/drinking culture especially frightening for LGBTQ+ people and other minorities. No inclusion/spaces for queer sports people.
- Class exclusion in specific rich people sports. Make sports accessible in cost terms but also attitudes! Make sports club committee aware and liable for inclusion and welcoming attitudes.
- Individual – lived experience: perception that you need to be good at sports already – have beginner friendly and advertise and introduction videos
- Accessibility for the sports centre – too dark -> lighting (physical environment). Bus/transport to places/events, easier route
- Income – students may prioritise work instead

3) Diagnosing: And what are the enablers that could help you and your peers be more active whilst at Royal Holloway?

- At home sports (YouTube etc.) – fewer intensive sessions, free sports sessions, change rhetoric of sport being for just physical health, more about feeling good
- Give it a Go sports events
- More informal opportunities -> e.g., walk and talk society, free admission
- More free offers

4) The Future: A Royal Holloway Sport and Active Lifestyle offer that it is welcoming and inclusive for ALL students – what does that look like?

- Accessible: location and disability and time
- Varied level of intensity i.e., professional, intermediate, beginner, casual
- Affordable and flexible payment system/options – if it's too expensive/rigid in terms of membership length, people won't join
- Incentives to attend – vouchers/points to collect and redeem – encourages people to attend and might help them form a good habit along the way