



DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGES, LITERATURES AND CULTURES

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

2024/2025

Disclaimer

This document was published in September 2024 and was correct at that time. The department* reserves the right to modify any statement if necessary, make variations to the content or methods of delivery of courses of study, to discontinue courses, or merge or combine courses if such actions are reasonably considered to be necessary by the University. Every effort will be made to keep disruption to a minimum, and to give as much notice as possible.

* Please note, the term 'department' is used to refer to 'departments', 'Centres and Schools'. Students on joint or combined degree course should check both departmental handbooks.

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1 Introduction to your department

1.1 Welcome

Welcome (or welcome back to Royal Holloway (hereafter 'the University')). Your department, **Languages, Literatures and Cultures**, belongs to the **School of Humanities** and brings together students of **Modern Languages** (incl. **Translation Studies**), **Comparative Literature and Culture**, **History of Art and Visual Culture**, and **Liberal Arts**. We foster a diverse, creative, and friendly community of students and staff, and are proud of our reputation as a sector-leading department both for research and teaching.

There is a lot of information to take in as you embark on your studies. This is especially the case for new students but also for returning students. Please do read through this Handbook and consult it when queries arise. Of course, we are also happy to hear from you directly with questions and feedback. The **names, emails and contact details of our academic staff** are available [here](#). You will be assigned a **Personal Tutor** who will act as an important point of contact. The **School Office** is also a vital source of support. The team, which deals with staff and students in Classics, English and History too, can be reached at: Humanities-school@rhul.ac.uk.

The University, School and Department are committed to doing as much as we can to support you. We urge you to keep up to date with information and communications and to maintain close contact with your teaching and support staff.

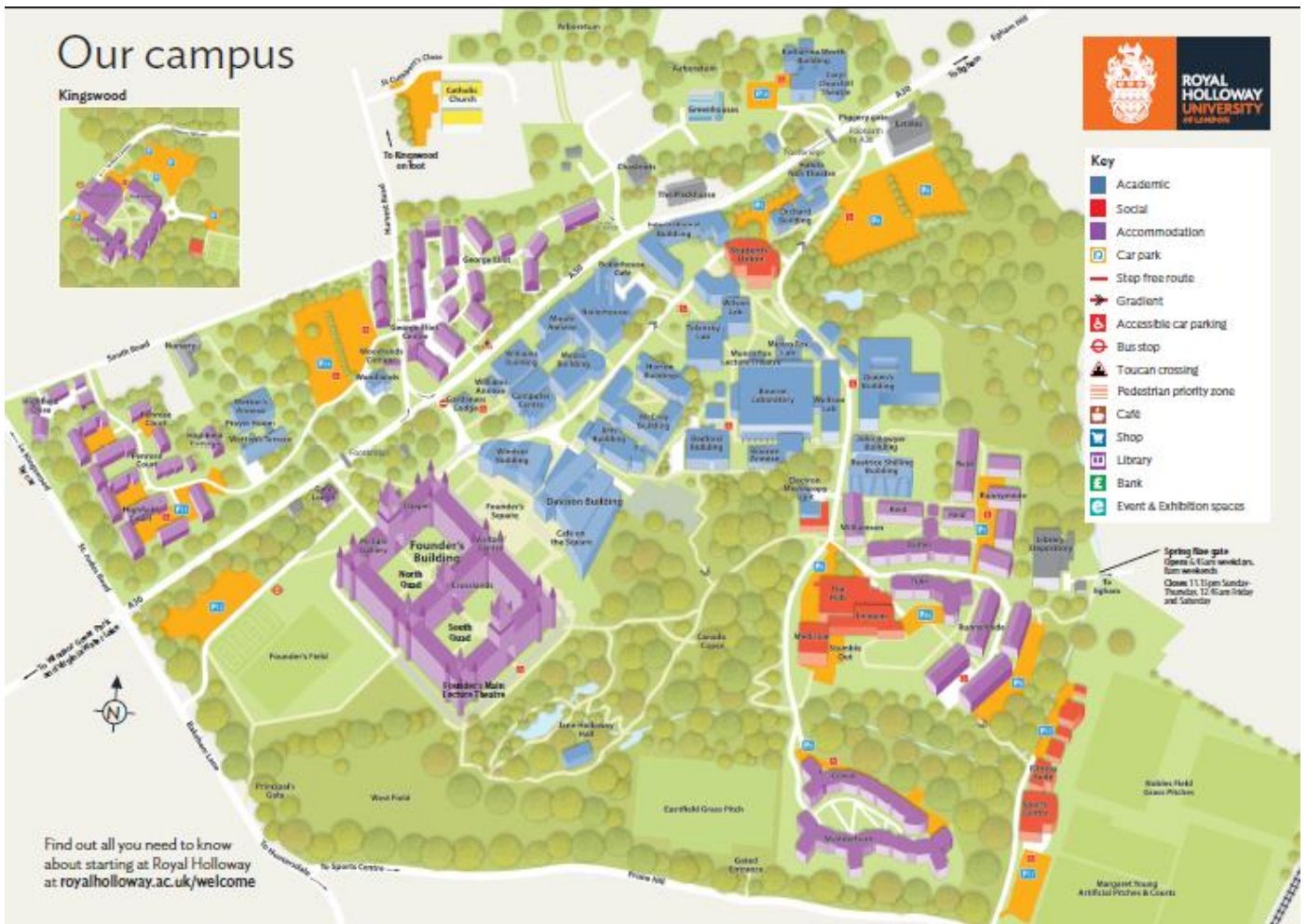
I wish you every success in the year ahead.

Professor Sarah Wright
Head of Department, Languages, Literatures and Cultures
Royal Holloway, University of London

1.2 How to find us: the Department

The Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures is located in the **International Building**. This can be found on the College [campus map](#) as building 15.

1.3 Map of the Egham campus



Please note, student parking is very limited and is not available if you live in Halls or within 1.5 miles of campus. If you do live more than 1.5 miles away or have a particular reason why you need to come to campus by car, you must apply for a parking permit. If you have a motorbike or scooter you must also register the vehicle with University. Find more information about the Parking Permit portal [here](#).

1.4 How to find us: the staff

CONTACT DETAILS

Executive Dean:

Professor Giuliana Pieri

INTER146

G.Pieri@rhul.ac.uk

Head of Department:

Professor Sarah Wright

INTER125

sarah.wright@rhul.ac.uk

Dr Ambra Anelotti	IN165	ambra.anelotti@rhul.ac.uk
Ms Alba Chaparro	INT108	alba.chaparro@rhul.ac.uk
Dr Ruth Cruickshank	INT112	ruth.cruickshank@rhul.ac.uk
Dr Fabrizio De Donno	INT163	fabrizio.dedonno@rhul.ac.uk
Professor Joseph Harris	INT120	joseph.harris@rhul.ac.uk
Mr Michael Hofer-Robinson	INT115	michael.hofer-robinson@rhul.ac.uk
Dr Jon Hughes	INT107	jon.hughes@rhul.ac.uk
Ms Marion Joassin	INT116	marion.joassin@rhul.ac.uk
Professor Emily Jeremiah	INT103	emily.jeremiah@rhul.ac.uk
Dr James Kent	INT105	james.kent@rhul.ac.uk
Dr Arantza Mayo	INT104	arantza.mayo@rhul.ac.uk
Dr Lili Owen-Rowlands	INT151	Lili.OwenRowlands@rhul.ac.uk
Dr Carlotta Paltrinieri	INT101	Carlotta.Paltrinieri@rhul.ac.uk
Ms Barbara Rassi	INT166	barbara.rassi@rhul.ac.uk
Ms Odile Rimbart	INT110	odile.rimbart@rhul.ac.uk
Mr Samuel Risquez	IN 164	Samuel.risquez@rhul.ac.uk
Professor Eric Robertson	INT121	e.robertson@rhul.ac.uk
Dr Danielle Sands	IN 106	danielle.sands@rhul.ac.uk
Ms Marie-Amance Schwartz	INT102	Marie-Amance.Schwartz@rhul.ac.uk
Dr Danielle Sands	INT106	danielle.sands@rhul.ac.uk
Dr Rachel Scott	INT119	Rachel.Scott@rhul.ac.uk
Professor Hannah Thompson	INT124	hannah.thompson@rhul.ac.uk
Professor James Williams	INT111	james.williams@rhul.ac.uk

1.5 How to find us: the School Office

The School Office is located to the right when entering the **International Building**, in **IN149**.

1.6 Staff research interests

You can find an online overview of our staff and their teaching and research interests [here](#).

Dr Ruth Cruickshank (BA Leeds, MSt, DPhil Oxford) is a specialist in post-war fiction, film and thought, with particular interests in consumption, globalization and neo-imperialism. Her recent monograph, *Leftovers: Eating, Drinking and Rethinking French Post-war French Fiction* was published in 2020, and her current work explores the critical potential of food and drink across geographies, periods and genres, identifying how representations of eating and drinking can simultaneously reveal the workings of ideology, carry traces of meanings and of trauma and destabilize conventional aesthetic boundaries. Ruth is author of *Fin de millénaire French Fiction: The Aesthetics of Crisis* (Oxford University Press, 2009) and of articles on fiction (including Beauvoir, Duras, Ernaux, Houellebecq and Redonnet); film (symbolic violence and global market economics in recent filmic images of Paris, the cinema of the *Trente glorieuses*, Chomet, Denis, Moullet and Varda); and

critical theory (structuralism; poststructuralism; and theories of food culture). She supervises PhD and Masters students of French and of Comparative Literature and Culture working on post-war and contemporary literary and visual culture, as well as on food culture.

Dr Fabrizio De Donno (BA, MA London, PhD Cambridge): has research interests which revolve around modern and contemporary Italian literature and culture in a transnational context; colonial and postcolonial studies; and translingual and world literature. He is the author of *Italian Orientalism: Nationhood, Cosmopolitanism and the Cultural Politics of Identity* (2019), which explores the development of an Italian expression of European Orientalism, as well as discourses of race, identity politics and racial legislation in Italy and the Italian colonies between Unification and Fascism. He has also co-edited collections of essays on colonial and postcolonial Italy, as well as on religious themes in Italian culture, and has written on nationalism and colonial culture in the Italian and British contexts. He is currently working on two new projects. The first explores the memory of Italian Somalia, with a particular focus on interracial relations, the East African Campaign during World War II, the British Military Administration, and the Italian protectorate leading to Somali independence. The other longer term project deals with contemporary translingual writers in world literature – authors writing in more than one language such as Jhumpa Lahiri, Yoko Tawada, Elif Shafak, Xiaolu Guo, Amara Lakhous and others – and explores the dynamics of the relationship between language, emotion, identity, (self-)translation and creative writing as authors switch their languages.

Professor Joseph Harris (BA, MPhil, PhD Cambridge) is a specialist in early-modern French literature, especially seventeenth- and eighteenth-century drama. His research interests include gender and sexuality, comedy and laughter, psychology, audience response, death, and misanthropy. He is the author of *Inventing the Spectator: Subjectivity and the Theatrical Experience in Early Modern France* (Oxford University Press, 2014) and *Hidden Agendas: Cross-Dressing in Seventeenth-Century France* (Gunther Narr, 2005), and editor of *Identification Before Freud: French Perspectives* (2008), and he wrote the introduction to *Four French Plays* (Penguin Classics, 2013). He is currently working on two projects: one on death and murder in Pierre Corneille, and one on misanthropy in Europe from the Renaissance to the early nineteenth century.

Professor Ruth Hemus (BA Bath, MSc and PhD, Edinburgh) has a background in French and Visual Arts. Her research specialism is the European avant-garde, especially women artists, writers and performers connected to Dada and Surrealism. She is the author of two monographs: *Dada's Women* (Yale University Press, 2009) and *The Poetry of Céline Arnaud: From Dada to Ultra-Modern* (Legenda, 2020). Ruth has worked on events with arts institutions in the U.K. including The National Theatre and Southbank Centre in London, Wasps Studios in Glasgow, and Hatton Gallery in Newcastle. Beyond the U.K. she has collaborated on exhibitions and catalogues in Denmark, Italy, Switzerland, and Norway. Underpinning each of these ventures is a will to recognise and showcase innovative and radical artists. Ruth's work on Dada's women has given rise to a longstanding creative team project. Together with a composer, Sonia Allori, and visual artist, Vaia Paziana, she collaborates on workshops and installations characterised by accessibility and interactivity.

Dr Jon Hughes (BA, MSt Oxford, PhD Swansea) teaches and researches in the field of modern and contemporary German and Austrian history and culture, in particular literature and cinema in the interwar period (1918-1939). His books include *Facing Modernity: Fragmentation, Culture and Identity in Joseph Roth's Writing in the 1920s* (MHRA, 2006), *Max Schmeling: Max Schmeling and the Making of a National Hero in Twentieth-Century Germany* (Palgrave, 2017) and *People on Sunday* (BFI Film Classics, forthcoming 2025).

Professor Emily Jeremiah (BA Oxford, MA London, PhD Swansea) is a specialist in contemporary German-language literature and culture, as well as a comparatist and gender-studies scholar. Her research interests include ethics, mothering, translation and transnationalism. She is the author of three monographs: *Troubling Maternity: Mothering, Agency and Ethics in Women's Writing in German of the 1970s and 1980s* (Maney/MHRA, 2003), *Nomadic Ethics in Contemporary Women's in German: Strange Subjects* (Camden House, 2012), and *Willful Girls: Gender and Agency in Contemporary Anglo-American and German Fiction* (Camden House, 2018). With Frauke Matthes she is co-editor of *Ethical Approaches in Contemporary German-Language Literature and Culture* (Edinburgh German Yearbook 7, 2013). With Gill Rye et al., she is one of the editors of *Motherhood in*

Literature and Culture: Interdisciplinary Perspectives from Europe (Routledge, 2017). Dr Jeremiah is also a prize-winning translator of Finnish poetry and fiction. With Fleur Jeremiah, she was co-translator of Aki Ollikainen's *White Hunger*, long-listed for the Man Booker International Prize 2016. She is a long-standing judge of the Schlegel-Tieck Prize for Translation from the German.

Dr James Clifford Kent (BA, MRes, PhD Royal Holloway) Senior Lecturer in Hispanic Studies and Visual Cultures in the Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures and Associate Director of the Humanities & Arts Research Institute at Royal Holloway, University of London. He is a practising photographer – specialising in documentary and portrait photography – and his work has been exhibited in both the UK and Cuba. His AHRC-funded project “Yo Soy Fidel!: Post-Castro Cuba and the Cult of Personality” explored the presence of iconic revolutionary images in contemporary Cuban society. The accompanying exhibition for this project, *This is Cuba: Documentary photography after Fidel* (Royal Holloway, 2019), included images taken by award-winning photographers such as Raúl Cañibano and Michael Christopher Brown. Following the success of this exhibition, Kent worked as Exhibition Liaison for Cañibano's first UK solo exhibition *Raúl Cañibano: Chronicles of an Island* at The Photographers' Gallery, London (2019). James has published several essays on Cuba in the Western imagination and is the author of the book *Aesthetics and the Revolutionary City: Real and Imagined Havana* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2019).

Dr Arantza Mayo (BA Kent, MSt Oxon, MLitt Oxon, MA Cantab, PhD London) specialises in Early Modern literature and culture, particularly religious poetry and the relationship between literature and the visual arts in Spain and colonial America. Her work on *La Lírica Sacra de Lope de Vega y José de Valdivielso* (Iberoamericana Vervuert, 2007) has been awarded the Real Academia Española's 'Conde de Cartagena' prize. Publications include essays on Spanish Golden Age, colonial and 20th-century Latin American poetry, representations of sanctity, book ownership in 17th-century Spain and the translation and reception of Cervantes's work in Britain. Her current research interests are representations of the Passion in early modern Spain and America as well as the works of Teresa of Avila, the subject of her next monograph. She also has an interest in Bolivian literature and culture, in particular 20th-century poetry and the social contexts of its production, and is completing a monograph on the works of Pedro Shimose.

Dr Carlotta Paltrinieri (BA, MA University of Bologna, PHD Indiana University) received her PhD in Italian Studies at Indiana University Bloomington. Before joining Royal Holloway, she was Assistant Director of the Medici Archive Project, and Senior Researcher within the program *Towards a National Collection*, funded by the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council. She has held research fellowships at University College Cork, the Bibliotheca Hertziana - Max Planck Institute for Art History, and at the Institute of Modern Languages Research. Her research interests lie at the intersection of Italian artistic literature, intellectual history, and digital humanities, which are also at the core of her teaching.

Dr Lili Owen-Rowlands (BA UCL, MA Oxford, PhD Cambridge) is a Leverhulme Early Career Fellow. In her research project, 'Dirty Work: Labour and Life Writing in Twenty-First Century France', she is examining what contemporary French and Francophone first-person textual and filmic works reveal about disparaged, dangerous and overlooked forms of work, notably casualisation, deregulation and the increased encroachment of labour on life as experienced and narrated by cleaners, sex workers and migrant labourers. She plans a public film series that will extend this investigation to compare how French and British filmmakers imagine social relations and working conditions amid endemic precarity.

Professor Giuliana Pieri (Dott.Lett. Pavia; MA Kent; DPhil Oxon) is a specialist in Italian visual culture and 19th- and 20th-century Italian literature and culture. She is a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy and has been the recipient of two RHUL teaching prizes: the 2017 Teaching Excellence Prize, and the 2020 Teaching Excellence Prize (commendation). She has a particular interest in the visual culture of Italian Fascism and interdisciplinary perspectives in modern Italian culture. Her expertise includes curatorial practice, with two exhibitions held at the Estorick Collection of Modern Italian Art in London: *Against Mussolini: Art and the Fall of the Regime* (2010); and *The Making of Modern Italy. Art and Design in the early 1960s* (2019). She has published extensively on Fascist iconography and Italian art under Fascism. She is also author of several articles on the interrelationship between art and literature in the 19th and 20th century, Anglo-Italian cultural and artistic relations, and Italian crime fiction. She was co-investigator on the AHRC funded project *The Cult of the Duce: Mussolini and the Italians 1918-2010* (2006-10) and is currently Principal investigator of the HARC

research grant *Interdisciplinary Italy 1900-2020: Interart/Intermedia*: <http://www.interdisciplinaryitaly>

Professor Eric Robertson (MA, PhD Aberdeen) is a specialist in modern French and European literature and visual arts, with a particular focus on the European literary and artistic avant-garde movements. He has also worked extensively on bilingual and multilingual writers. He is the author of *Arp: Painter, Poet, Sculptor* (Yale, 2006, winner of the 2007 R. H. Gapper Book Prize), *Writing Between the Lines: René Schickele, 'Citoyen français, deutscher Dichter', 1880-1940* (1995), *Arp: the Poetry of Forms* (2017, with Frances Guy) and *Blaise Cendrars: the Invention of Life* (Reaktion, forthcoming). He is the co-editor of *Yvan Goll - Claire Goll: Texts and Contexts* (1997, with Robert Vilain), *Robert Desnos: Surrealism in the Twenty-First Century* (2006, with Marie-Claire Barnet and Nigel Saint), *Dada and Beyond Vol 1: Dada Discourses* (2011, with Elza Adamowicz) and *Dada and Beyond Vol 2: Dada and its Legacies* (2012, with Elza Adamowicz). He has written for numerous art museums and galleries in the UK, Europe and the USA. With Frances Guy, he curated the international touring exhibition, *Arp: the Poetry of Forms*, which attracted 250,000 visitors to the Kröller-Müller Museum (Otterlo, Netherlands) and Turner Contemporary in 2017-18.

Dr Danielle Sands (BA Durham, MSc Edinburgh, PhD London) is a specialist in critical theory, continental philosophy and contemporary literature. Her research interests are interdisciplinary and include philosophy of religion, literary and philosophical representations of animals and the natural world, and the relationship between philosophy and literature. She is the author of *Animal Writing: Storytelling, Selfhood and the Limits of Empathy* (EUP 2019) and the editor of *Philosophy and the Human Paradox: Essays on Reason, Truth and Identity* (Routledge 2020). She is Fellow at the Forum for Philosophy, LSE.

Dr Rachel Scott (BA Hons Cantab; MA King's College London; PhD King's College London) is a specialist in medieval and early modern Spanish literary and textual cultures, with particular focus on the Iberian Peninsula's transnational and global intersections. She is interested in the mobility of culture and concepts across time and space and the renegotiations that take place in the act of translation and reception; in philosophical ideas about the human condition, questions of gender, race, and sexuality, and, increasingly, in contemporary ideological uses of the past. She is the author of *Celestina and the Human Condition in Early Modern Spain and Italy* (Tamesis, 2017) and is co-editor of an edited volume of essays in preparation titled *Al-Andalus in Motion: A Travelling Concept*; her current research project traces the reception of a medieval Arabic collection of exemplary fables known as Kalila wa-Dimna between the 13th and 17th centuries in Europe.

Professor Hannah Thompson (BA, MPhil, PhD Cambridge) is a specialist in nineteenth- and twentieth-century French fiction, French and Anglo-American Disability Studies and Representations of Paris in fiction and film. She is the author of *Reviewing Blindness in French Fiction* (Palgrave, 2017); *Taboo: Corporeal Secrets in Nineteenth-Century France* (Legenda, 2013) and *Naturalism Redressed: Identity and Clothing in the Novels of Emile Zola* (Oxford: Legenda, 2004), co-editor of *Corporeal practices: (Re)figuring the Body in French Studies* (2000) and editor of *New Approaches to Zola* (2003). Her current research projects focus on the intersections between French Studies and Disability Studies; audio description as creative and inclusive practice, and the body in the French Canadian novel. She also writes the popular Blind Spot blog: <http://hannah-thompson.blogspot.com/>

Professor James S. Williams (BA, PhD London) specialises in modern French and Francophone literature; French, European and African cinema; gender and cultural studies; critical and postcolonial theory. He is the author of *The Erotics of Passage: Pleasure, Politics, and Form in the Later Work of Marguerite Duras* (1997), *Critical Guide to Camus's La Peste* (2000), *The Cinema of Jean Cocteau* (2006), *Jean Cocteau (a 'Critical Life')* (2008), *Space and Being in Contemporary French Cinema* (2013), *Encounters with Godard: Ethics, Aesthetics, Politics* (2016), and *Ethics and Aesthetics in Contemporary African Cinema: The Politics of Beauty* (2019). He is also (co-)editor of *Gay Signatures: Gay and Lesbian Theory, Fiction and Film, 1945-1995* (1998), *Revisioning Duras: Film, Race, Sex* (2000), *The Cinema Alone: essays on the work of Jean-Luc Godard 1985-2000* (2000), *Gender and French Cinema* (2001), *For Ever Godard* (2004), *Jean-Luc Godard. Documents* (2006) (catalogue of the Godard exhibition held at the Centre Pompidou in 2006), and *May 68: Rethinking France's Last Revolution* (2011). His most recent book, an edited collection entitled *Queering the Migrant in Contemporary European Cinema*, appeared in 2020.

Professor Sarah Wright (BA Strath, PhD Cambridge, Dip Trans IoL) has research expertise in twentieth-

century Spanish culture, theatre and film. Theoretical interests include psychoanalysis, film theory and gender studies. Professor Wright is author of an interdisciplinary study focused on the legendary Spanish seducer, Don Juan, and a monograph *The Child in Spanish Cinema* (Manchester: MUP, 2013).

2 Support and advice

2.1 Support within your School

The School Helpdesk is there to help you with any questions or concerns you might have about your studies. It is situated in **International Building, room IN149**. Opening hours are 9:00am to 5:00pm. The Helpdesk is staffed throughout these opening hours. You can call in person, ring 01784 276882 or email humanities-school@rhul.ac.uk. Depending on your query, the Helpdesk may answer your questions there and then, put you in touch with someone who can help, or find out the answer and get back to you. If you wish, you may also talk to them in private and they will make sure you receive the support you require.

The Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures offers students a range of different kinds of practical and personal support, for example from your **Personal Tutor** (see below), the University's **Wellbeing** services, and the School of Humanities office staff.

Our administrative and academic staff work together to maintain an overview of your attendance and engagement at lectures and seminars, and your performance across modules.

3 Communication

3.1 Post

You are expected to check your Royal Holloway email daily, Monday to Friday during term and regularly at other times. Please do not use other personal e-mail accounts for communication with staff. Any post addressed to you in the Department is delivered to the student pigeonholes in the International Building Foyer. It is comparatively rare for students to receive important information by post: by and large you should be reading your emails regularly instead, as that is by far the most common way for important information to be given to you. Please do not use the Department to receive personal post.

There are also notice boards in the Department which we will use to post information about events, opportunities, clubs and societies or job opportunities that may be of interest to you, but all essential information is either sent by e-mail or published on relevant Moodle pages.

It is your responsibility to check the times and venues of all class meetings and of any requirements (e.g. essay deadlines) relating to your courses, so, if in doubt, please ask!

3.2 Personal Tutors

Each student is assigned to a **Personal Tutor**. If you are a Joint Honours student you may have more than one Personal Tutor. Staff will advertise the times when they are available to see students.

Your personal tutor is normally available to see you at the beginning of each term and is also available during their regular weekly '**Consultation and Feedback**' hours during term time. Arrangements may also be made by them, or by you, to meet at other times, either in person or remotely via Microsoft Teams. Your Personal Tutor can offer you advice and feedback about your work, answer questions you may have relating to your studies in general, and discuss your choice of modules with you. Personal Tutors are also willing to discuss personal difficulties, but they understand that you may prefer to take such matters to the student counsellors or other Wellbeing services.

Your Personal Tutor will probably be the person best equipped to write you **references** for jobs during your university career, and (along with the people teaching you in your Final Year) to act as a referee for jobs or postgraduate applications after graduation. It is, therefore, very much in your interest to make sure that you keep in regular contact with your Personal Tutor. But before you name your Personal Tutor as a referee on an application, you should always ask them if this is all right. You should also make sure that you give them ample time to complete any references.

You should regard your Personal Tutor as a first port of call in the Department, although it may be that on occasions they will direct you to another colleague, either in the Department or elsewhere, or to some other source of guidance or advice, such as the School Office, the Student Administrative Centre, the Health Centre, the Student Counsellors, or Wellbeing.

Any help you get from any of these sources, or from anyone in the Department, is **confidential** if you prefer it that way. The Department reserves the right to inform appropriate bodies or persons if it considers that an individual is at significant risk, but you may assume that conversations with staff are confidential unless otherwise stated.

3.3 Questionnaires

Modules are evaluated every year. Towards the end of the teaching on a module you will be asked by your tutor to complete an online feedback questionnaire giving your evaluation of the teaching you have received, the effectiveness of library provision and the overall quality of the module. It is University policy that such module evaluations are completed by all students. These are anonymous and your co-operation in making these evaluations is of great help to the Department. The results of the evaluations are useful for your tutor(s) and are considered by the School of Humanities Education Committee as well as the relevant Head of Department, and form part of the Department's Annual Monitoring Report, which aims to improve modules. Moreover, all modules and degree courses are reviewed periodically by the School and within the Department, taking into account the student evaluations as well as issues raised at the Student-Staff Committee

4 Teaching

4.1 Study weeks

Study Weeks in 2024-2025 are scheduled as follows:

Term One	Monday 4 – Friday 8 November 2024
Term Two	Monday 24 – Friday 28 February 2025

Study Weeks are weeks that do not normally have scheduled teaching (although they can be used as a space to make up any teaching lost earlier in the term to staff illness). They are an opportunity for you to consolidate what you have learnt, work on your coursework assignments, and do preparatory reading.

5 Degree structure

Full details about your degree course, including, amongst others, the aims, learning outcomes to be achieved on completion, modules which make up the course and any course-specific regulations are set out in the course specification available through the [Course Specification Repository](#).

5.1 Department specific information about degree structure

In each year of your degree programme you will take **120 credits** of modules, which will be made up of **mandatory core modules** and a selection of **optional modules**. If you have questions about the requirements for your specific degree or your module choices please contact your Personal Tutor, the Programme Director, or the Humanities Office.

The structure of your university education is provided by formal teaching (lectures and seminars), but remember that the most important element is what you, the student, invest: you will have to read and prepare, and be ready to present and discuss your work. You will be given advice and support in all your courses but remember, your learning experience in Languages, Literatures and Cultures requires your commitment and hard work.

Deadlines and key dates are published on **Moodle** at the start of term and need to be planned for; similarly, set reading, viewing or other preparation will require time and advance planning. ***Be careful that work does not pile up!***

We encourage students to develop work habits and routines that work for them. In terms of **time**, we generally suggest that you to regard your studies in term-time (a combination of class work and private study) as a normal full-time job (**40 hours weekly**), with a very substantial amount of work needed also in vacations as preparation for the following term (for example, the reading of texts). In term, you should spend at least 4 solid hours of work per week on each half-unit (15 credit modules), and 8 hours per week on each full-unit (30 credit modules).

Naturally, people work at different speeds. Whatever your speed and efficiency, the chances are that you can improve them. Try to be organized – and don't forget you can consult your personal tutor or take a **course** in study skills offered by the **Centre for Academic Skills (CeDAS)** and via other routes. Details can be found on the [Skills Gateway](#) pages.

Languages, Literatures and Cultures degree courses: aims and transferable skills

Each subject area in the Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures has developed its own set of **generic aims** for its degree programmes which can be found under each subject heading in this section of the Handbook. All students in the Department develop **discipline-specific skills** such as a high level of competence in one or more foreign languages, and/or an in-depth knowledge of one or more foreign cultures. In addition to these, every degree course delivered in the School is designed to help students to develop a broad range of **key transferable skills**. These, too, form an essential part of the portfolio of skills that you will take with you into the workplace on graduation, skills highly valued by employers. They include the ability to:

- motivate yourself, manage and improve your own learning and performance, especially in relation to time-management and working under pressure;
- work effectively and constructively with others;
- identify, analyse and solve problems;
- confidently initiate ideas or critically evaluate those of others;
- listen effectively and critically;
- participate actively in structured and focused discussion and argue a position persuasively, in English or in any other language/s studied
- communicate and present material effectively, using a wide range of appropriate resources, both traditional and those supported by information technology
- relate to your social environment with intellectual integrity, insight, adaptability and creativity
- display an understanding of, and sensitivity to, cultural difference
- read, understand, analyse and evaluate a wide variety of written materials
- identify, understand and reproduce the essential arguments and structures of a variety of written materials
- write accurately, concisely and effectively in English as well as in any other language/s studied
- analyse, annotate and prepare material (written or audio-visual) with a view to presenting its content orally, in English or in any other language/s studied, and to taking an active part in discussion and development of its subject
- engage confidently in independent research, in particular through the identification and critical

evaluation of appropriate textual materials and on-line resources

The Year Abroad (YA) - General Information

The Year Abroad is a **fully integral and essential part of all BA degrees involving Modern Languages as a principal subject** (Single, Major and Joint). **It is also an integral part of the programme Liberal Arts with a Language Year Abroad.** Exemption from it is **not** normally granted as it is an integral and mandatory part of the BA degree course.

Almost without exception, students consider the YA to be one of the most enjoyable and rewarding times of their lives. It is crucial that your third-year YA be spent in a way which gives you the most opportunity to develop academic and life skills, to prepare you as thoroughly as possible for the final year of your course and your future career. This means, most obviously, speaking as much of the language as you can, by integrating as fully as possible into the environment. This is an exciting and formative opportunity, and we offer structured support both before and during your YA, and during your Second Year you will receive all the information you need about the options available to you during the Year, whether you choose to study, teach or do another sort of work placement.

SECOND YEAR STUDENTS PLEASE NOTE:

Second-year students preparing for their third-year YA are reminded that progression to the YA is conditional on successful completion of the second year. Students required to re-sit any course unit or half unit in order to attain the requisite number units for progression may not begin their YA until such resits are confirmed as having been passed. It should further be noted that a pass in compulsory language units is always a requirement for progression to the next level of study, including the YA.

Year Abroad Waivers

If the Year Abroad is an integrated and mandatory part of your degree programme then only in **wholly exceptional** circumstances will you be granted a waiver. Requests for a waiver should be made in writing to the Head of Department. The decision will be taken by the Head of Department after consultation with the Department's YA Tutor. For further information see the YA Handbook (usually published in November).

5.2 Change of course

You may transfer to another degree course subject to the following conditions being met before the point of transfer:

- (a) you must satisfy the normal conditions for admission to the new course;
- (b) you must satisfy the requirements in respect of mandatory modules and progression specified for each stage of the new course up to the proposed point of entry;
- (c) the transfer must be approved by both the department(s) responsible for teaching the new course and that for which you are currently registered.
- (d) if you are a student with Tier 4 sponsorship a transfer may not be permitted by Tier 4 Immigration rules.
- (e) you may not attend a new course of study until their transfer request has been approved.

Please contact your personal tutor, in the first place, to discuss your plans. Further information about changing courses is available in Section 8 of the [Undergraduate Regulations and in this link](#).

6 Facilities

6.1 The Library

The Library, which lies at the heart of a student's learning experience, is housed in the **Emily Wilding Davison Building**. Online electronic resources are also available via the Library's website and via other library collections (e.g. Senate House). Details, including Library Search, dedicated subject guides and opening times can be found online on the [Library home page](#).

The Ground Floor of the Library contains a High Use Collection which includes many of the books assigned for undergraduate modules. The rest of the Library collections are on the upper floors. There are plenty of study areas and bookable rooms to carry out group work, as well as many areas where you can work on your own. The Library contains a large number of PCs and has laptops to borrow on the ground floor to use in other study areas.

The Information Consultants for the School of Humanities are Emma Burnett (emma.burnett@rhul.ac.uk) and Vicky Falconer (victoria.falconer@rhul.ac.uk).

The Library provides a range of training sessions designed to enhance your existing library and research skills and you are encouraged to attend these. These are available in both class-based and self-study formats. For information on available sessions and to book a place, see [here](#).

One of the most important resources for you as a student of Languages, Literatures and Cultures is the library. The Languages, Literatures and Cultures sections comprise essentially two large collections which were built up over decades at Bedford College and Royal Holloway College and have been augmented steadily, with regard for the needs of undergraduate students as well as the need to maintain high standards for a scholarly library, in both primary and secondary literature. Historical, media-related, or philosophical secondary material will be in a different area of the Library than the Languages, Literatures and Cultures material; for example, foreign language dictionaries are located on the upper floors. There is also a growing collection of DVDs and streaming resources, useful especially for Film courses. The majority of journals and an increasing number of books are available online, and there is a small collection of printed journals on the upper floor.

Whilst the Library Grant made to the School each year is not infinitely extendable, we are always happy to consider students' recommendations for acquisitions. If you think that the Library does not possess a book potentially useful for a course you are following, or for a dissertation you are writing, please contact the course tutor. Be aware, however, that not all requests can be satisfied and that there is sometimes a delay of up to two months between ordering and receipt that is beyond the School's control. A request may be made by the Staff-Student Committee on behalf of a larger number of students.

There is a subject page specifically for students in the LLC [here](#). This contains links to the most useful resources for you. The Library has some 5,000 journal titles in electronic, full-text format and a virtual library of texts and images. You should also get used to consulting the MLA (Modern Languages Association) and JSTOR on-line databases. These can be accessed on-line via the subject page. Ask your Information Consultant for details of how to use these databases. They are valuable resources, listing a large number of journal articles and books and, in the case of JSTOR, providing easy access to full-text articles.

Early in your first term at Royal Holloway, you should have a training session with your Information Consultant who will introduce you to the Library and the resources on offer. Please make sure you attend one of these sessions, as the proper use of the Library is essential for any University Arts degree. On no account should you miss this introduction to an invaluable resource.

6.2 Photocopying and printing

Copier-printers (MFDs) for students are located in the Library, the Computer Centre and many PC labs, which will allow you to make copies in either black and white or colour. Further information is available [here](#).

6.3 Computing

[How to find an available PC](#)

There are ten open access PC Labs available on campus which you can use, including three in the Computer Centre. For security reasons access to these PC Labs is restricted at night and at weekends by a door entry system operated via your College card.

Many of the PC labs are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Alternatively, there are computers available for your use in the Library, and Computer Centre.

7 Assessment Information

7.1 Anonymous marking and cover sheets

It is College policy that all examination scripts and assessed coursework essays or dissertations will be identified **only by means of the Candidate Number**.

Anonymity thus applies throughout the marking process, as in the discussion of results and degree classification at examiners' meetings. It is therefore essential that you ensure that you know your **Candidate Number** (this is **not** your student number and it changes every year). Candidate numbers will be allocated to students early in October and will be available to students through the **Campus Connect Portal**. All students will be e-mailed when the numbers have been allocated. **You must then ensure all work submitted on Turnitin has your Candidate Number as the submission title, and nothing else.**

Marking of examinations and coursework

Examinations are set and marked by the lecturers and tutors in each subject area, together with External Examiners from outside the College. Their main function is to ensure that examination standards and procedures in the Department are fair and are equivalent to those used elsewhere in equivalent degrees in this country. They comment on drafts of question papers, see candidates' scripts and essays, attend examiners' meetings and advise on all aspects of the examination process. Members of the Department also act as External Examiners at other universities.

In accordance with College Regulations, all second- and final-year written examinations and assessed project or coursework assessments are marked by the lecturer who set the work and then moderated by a second internal examiner. Final-year dissertations (full or half-unit) are double-marked. Moderation duties are evenly distributed across the Department to ensure parity of marking standards. Moderators for second- and final-year work are required to read all performances given a first-class or a fail mark, any that are borderline or for which the examiner specifically asks for a second opinion and a sample across the range constituting at least 20% of the total. If the moderator finds the marking in general too harsh or too lenient, s/he may recommend that they should all be raised or lowered by an agreed number of percentage points. An external examiner will be informed of any such across-the-board adjustments and asked to approve them or discuss an alternative course of action. For first-year work, all fail marks are checked and confirmed or adjusted by the moderator. That is why marks that you will receive via Turnitin are 'provisional' until the final Department Assessment Board ratifies them at the end of the academic year.

Oral Assessments

Students taking a language will be tested by oral as well as written assessments. Most are held early in the Summer Term (Term 3). The YA oral assessment sat by students after their Year Abroad is held early in Term 1 of your final year, usually during Welcome Week.

Important Information on Language Assessment

Please note that in order to graduate with a degree in Languages, Literatures and Cultures with French, Spanish, Italian and/or German named in the title, you must pass both the oral and written examinations in final

year.

In order to progress from first year to second year and from second year to the year abroad on any of the language programmes in the School, you must pass the core language unit overall AND the written language assessment.

Further details are available from the relevant module convener.

7.2 Submission of work

Deadlines for the submission of essays and other written work for those courses taught within the Department will be published on the **Moodle page** for each course as early as possible each term; this is intended to help students plan their work during the term. **It is your responsibility to plan your work and manage your time so that you are able to meet all deadlines.** Whilst we try and spread deadlines out across the year, this is not always possible due to the numerous course and module combinations we offer as well as to ensure that all teaching is completed ahead of assessments. Mid-terms, the end of term 1 and 2 and the start of terms 2 and 3 typically concentrate submission dates. The management of multiple deadlines is a valuable employability skill which you should develop as part of your course. Please plan ahead and remember that the deadline is the final point at which you can submit work: you can always submit work before the deadline. All students must adhere to all deadlines set for coursework, essays, projects, dissertations, etc. **Please refer to instructions posted on Moodle for detailed information about coursework deadlines.**

Your course tutors will explain the schedule of work for each course. There are deadlines for the submission of work and these deadlines are fixed. **Coursework submitted late will always be penalised** unless there are documented extenuating circumstances. Deadlines are necessary in the interests of fairness to all students; work has to be completed on schedule in order to progress through the course and complete the programme. Tutors also require adequate time to mark and assess work.

You are expected to allow for minor problems that might affect essay submission (e.g. last-minute internet connection problems, computer breakdown on the day of submission of an essay; minor illness, a short train delay, a traffic jam a little worse than usual). 'Extenuating circumstances claims' relating to this level of problem will **NOT** be accepted. You can find more information on 'Extenuating circumstances' via this [page](#).

Never leave uploading your essay to the last few minutes before the deadline as Moodle is often overloaded at this time and that means the upload is placed in a queue, which can take up to an hour.

Always keep back-up versions of your work somewhere other than the machine you are working on (e.g. by emailing them to yourself) and date them so you do not accidentally upload an old draft.

7.3 Penalties for over-length work

It is an important transferable skill to be able to complete a task to the brief set. For that reason, in the School of Humanities we stop marking at the allocated maximum word length or time limit. You will not receive marks for content beyond the limit set. In addition, the failure to produce a fully structured assignment constructed within the parameters of the task may negatively affect the success of what is submitted and marked (e.g. the lack of a conclusion will leave an argument unfinished). Please adhere closely to the task parameters and assessment rubric set to avoid such potential negative effects on your assessment outcomes.

Work which is longer than the stipulated length in the assessment brief will be penalised in line with Section 13, paragraph (5) of the University's [Undergraduate Regulations](#):

Section 13 (5)

Any work (written, oral presentation, film, performance) may not be marked beyond the upper limit set. The upper limit may be a word limit in the case of written work or a time limit in the case of assessments such as oral work, presentations, films or performance. In the case of presentations, films or performance these may be stopped once they exceed the upper time limit.

In addition to the text, the word count should include quotations and footnotes. Please note that the following are excluded from the word count: candidate number, title, course title, preliminary pages, bibliography and appendices.

What is included in the word count:

In addition to the text you have produced, **the word count should include quotations and footnotes**. Please note that the following are excluded from the word count: candidate number, title, course title, preliminary pages, bibliography and appendices. While there is no formal penalty for under-length work, any pieces that fall significantly below the word length indicated by the assignment are unlikely to meet its requirements.

7.4 What to do if things go wrong – Extensions to deadlines

Please refer to the Extensions Policy and guidance on the University's webpage about [Applying for an Extension](#).

Please note: Not every assessment is eligible for an extension.

Listed below are the assessments for which extensions cannot be granted (i.e. are exempt):

- Language Oral Examinations
- In-person Language Examinations (in Term 3)
- Open Book Examinations

7.5 Support and exam access arrangements for students requiring support

Some students may have a physical or mental impairment, chronic medical condition or a Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD) which would count as a disability as defined by the Equality Act (2010) that is, "a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial effect on your ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities". It is for such conditions and SpLDs that [Disability and Neurodiversity Services](#) can put in place adjustments, support and exam access arrangements. Please note that a "long-term" impairment is one that has lasted or is likely to last for 12 months or more.

If you have a disability or SpLD you must register with the [Disability and Neurodiversity Services Office](#) for an assessment of your needs before adjustments, support and exam access arrangements (*) can be put in place. There is a process to apply for special arrangements for your examinations – these are not automatically put in place. Disability and Dyslexia Services can discuss this process with you when you register with them. Please see section 2 above for further guidance about registering with the Disability and Neurodiversity Office.

Please note that if reasonable adjustments, including exam access arrangements, have been put in place for you during the academic year, the Sub-board of Examiners will not make further allowance in relation to your disability or SpLD.

7.6 Academic misconduct - Plagiarism

The Department requires its students to use a recognised system of academic referencing their written work. MHRA (Modern Humanities Research Association) is recommended but other systems (Harvard, or MLA) are accepted. Each assignment should make use of a single system consistently and throughout.

Find out more about correct referencing via the [Library's Moodle support pages](#).

Proper use of referencing protects you from allegations of plagiarism, by allowing the reader to understand precisely which ideas are yours and which are those of your sources. When you write essays or dissertations, therefore, it is essential that you indicate the precise source of information and ideas

that are not your own. You should always give as much information as possible in your footnote, using precise page numbers. This will enable you to find any information again, if necessary. By referencing in this way, you are also allowing the reader to understand the breadth and depth of your reading, and where to find a source if they wish to consult it too.

Turnitin

The Turnitin plagiarism prevention and originality checking service is recognised as the worldwide standard for detecting, deterring and ultimately preventing internet plagiarism, collusion, 'assignment recycling' and 'essay banking'. It also protects students' original work from being used without citation by another person, and serves as a learning tool to help academics and students better identify and correct unintentional plagiarism, poor referencing and other issues concerning academic presentation of work.

Turnitin's comprehensive plagiarism prevention system allows academics quickly and effectively to check students' work in a fraction of the time necessary to scan a few suspect papers using a search engine.

Further information on Turnitin - how to access it, enrolling and submitting - and information on avoiding plagiarism - can be found on [Moodle](#). See also Sections [7.3](#), [7.4](#) and [7.6](#).

Artificial Intelligence

The Department does not permit the use of generative AI platforms such as ChatGPT for the preparation of written assignments, and cautions against using them for research purposes unless you are doing so in consultation with a tutor (e.g for a creative project). You may be charged with Academic Misconduct if submit text generated by an AI platform as if it were your own writing.

8 Attendance and Engagement Requirements

The Department expects you to engage fully with your studies, and to all attend timetabled classes. Remote attendance of in-person classes is not permitted. You should log your attendance in class as instructed in the [Engagement web pages](#). If you are unable to attend, for example because you are unwell, we ask that you contact the module convenor or tutor to let them know. Tutors may be willing to speak to you about catching up with work missed in class.

We do not routinely record all classes and lectures, though exceptionally this may be possible.

If we notice that your attendance is poor your Personal Tutor may contact you to discuss it. Persistence unexplained absences can result in formal warning and other penalties. Please let us know if you are experiencing problems of any sort that are impacting your ability to attend or engage with your modules.

See the [Attendance and Engagement Policy](#) for full details

9 Health and safety information

The [Health and Safety webpage](#) provides general information about our health and safety policies.

9.1 Code of practice on harassment for students

The University is committed to upholding the dignity of the individual and recognises that harassment can be a source of great stress to an individual. Personal harassment can seriously harm working, learning and social conditions and will be regarded and treated seriously. This could include grounds for disciplinary action, and possibly the termination of registration as a student.

The University's [Code of Practice on personal harassment for students](#) should be read in conjunction with the [Student Disciplinary regulations](#) and the [Complaints procedure](#).

9.2 Lone working policy and procedures

The College has a 'Lone Working Policy and Procedure' that can be found [here](#). Lone working is defined as working during either normal working hours at an isolated location within the normal workplace or when working outside of normal hours.

Any health and safety concerns should be brought to the attention of the School's Health and Safety Coordinator, Penelope Mullens (Penelope.Mullens@rhul.ac.uk), or the College Health and Safety Office.

It is likely that most activities will take place on College premises. However, the principles contained in the above section will apply to students undertaking duties off campus.

Further information about how this applies to your Year Abroad, and Health and Safety information relevant for year abroad students, will be circulated in the second year during the Year Abroad planning process. There are also further details in the Year Abroad Handbook.

10 Core Student Handbook

The [University's Core Student Handbook](#) has further information about the following: -

- Support and Advice
- Communication
- Teaching
- Attending Classes and Engaging with your Studies
- Degree Structure
- Facilities
- Assessment Information
- Careers information
- Complaints and academic appeals procedure
- Equal opportunities statement and University codes of practice