

Belonging Commitments

January 2025



OUR AIM

Through our accommodation, values and services, we will deliver to our students a home that positively facilitates them to thrive personally, academically and socially which will enhance the University's reputation and financial sustainability.

The aims of our Belonging Commitments are as follows:

- To create an inclusive and welcoming environment for all our students and staff
- To ensure we provide a home where every student feels they belong
- To promote equality, embrace diversity and foster an environment where every student feels included and respected
- To continue to learn, listen to our community and constantly adapt as necessary

OUR STRATEGY

Ensuring that our students of all identities, backgrounds and nationalities have a genuine sense of belonging whilst living in our accommodation is core to the University's strategy and values generally but also within the strategic context of the RH 2030 strategy:

Inclusive Education and Research Workstream

Enabling social justice and addressing inequalities

People, Culture and Inclusion Strategic Enabler

Transforming lives for what matters

The EDI Framework 2023-28

Most notably under:

Objective 3

Ensure all staff and students are supported to succeed and all barriers are identified and removed and

Objective 4

Ensure all physical and digital spaces are accessible, eliminating barriers to participation and Guiding Principle of Inclusion by Design.

OUR COMMITMENTS

1. Leadership and accountability

For our community to feel like they belong we need to demonstrate our commitment to EDI

- We are committed to selecting Equality, Diversity and Inclusion champions within Residential Services responsible for assisting with the delivery of our commitments and to work as champions within the teams
- We are committed to establishing an EDI Committee composed of staff, residents, and EDI Officer and relevant stakeholders to ensure diverse perspectives are represented in decision-making processes
- We ensure representation from Residential Services on University wide EDI committees, such as the Inclusive Infrastructure Strategy Working Group so that new initiatives, strategy and projects can be fed back and implemented locally

2. Access and inclusive design

- We regularly review (at least annually) our accommodation facilities and allocations to ensure our accommodation meets our students' needs and is accessible and inclusive for all residents, including disabled residents.
- We provide accommodation options to meet diverse needs, such as single-gender, mature student and accommodation that is more suited to neurodivergent residents. We always consider how design can support belonging in every refurbishment, by engaging with Equality Impact Assessments to consider diverse needs
- We prioritise our adapted halls accommodation for students with special needs as identified by the neuro diverse team
- We give priority to students with specific additional requirements when allocating accommodation and entitlement to apply

3. Recruitment and training

- We implement diversity and inclusion training for accommodation staff to enhance cultural competence and understanding of diverse needs
- We ensure that recruitment processes prioritise diversity and consider candidates from different backgrounds
- We ensure diverse recruitment panels and that all members of staff on the recruitment panels have completed unconscious bias training

4. Publicity and marketing

- We ensure web-based material is accessible to those using assistive technology
- We are committed to ensuring that all staff members creating this material have been on the EDI training session

5. Policies and procedures

- We are committed to liaising with Royal Holloway Students' Union to develop and communicate a clear set of policies and procedures that promote equality, discourage discrimination and outline processes for reporting and addressing incidents

6. Community Engagement

- We signpost students to Hall Life events in support of the EDI calendar to help celebrate cultural events and promote cross-cultural understanding.
- We work with student groups to provide information about living at Royal Holloway

7. Monitoring and Reporting

- We are committed to regularly monitoring our Belonging Commitments to evaluate their effectiveness
- We collect and analyse data on residents' communities, including RHSU data, to identify any disparities and adjust planning accordingly
- We collect data from our customers and share these results to maintain transparency and accountability
- These Belonging Commitments are reviewed annually by the Head of Residential Services and up-dates are communicated to residents and stakeholders

Our action plan for 2024/5

- We will appoint an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion lead with Residential Services responsible for assisting with the delivery of the plan and to work as a champion within the teams
- We will ensure representation from Residential Services on the University wide EDI committees, so that new initiatives, strategy, and projects can be fed back and implemented locally
- We will establish an EDI Committee composed of staff, residents, an EDI Officer and relevant stakeholders to ensure diverse perspectives in decision-making processes
- We will ensure our teams engage with the existing EDI training, not only the mandatory EDI training but also the optional EDI training sessions
- We will ensure all our publicity and marketing information is conducive to belonging for all student communities
- We will consider offering LGBTQ+ hall allocations
- We will ensure there is clear information about adjustments to accommodation and how students can engage with us to ensure reasonable adjustments are in place prior to their arrival
- We will complete equality impact assessments for changes in policies and procedures to ensure they enhance a sense of belonging
- We will regularly review and update policies to align with best practices and legal requirements

- We will clearly communicate our commitment to EDI and ensure students have easy access to the help available should they encounter harassment or discrimination, by clearly signposting to RH Be Heard, the Harassment Officers and the University's Wellbeing Team
- We will ensure that any central EDI activities are communicated and promoted to students.
- We will communicate "You said, we did" action plans twice per annum

Our priorities for 2025/6

- We will ensure that EDI is an agenda item at team meetings and away days
- We will monitor and report on our diversity as a service and compare with the student community we serve
- We will publish an annual report on the progress of the EDI plan, highlighting achievements, challenges and areas for improvement
- We will work with student groups to provide information to student communities about living at Royal Holloway
- We will work with our contractors to ensure our commitment to diversity in recruitment is also delivered through their teams
- We will include EDI considerations into any new procurement processes
- In liaison with Royal Holloway's Student Union, we will facilitate meetings to gather feedback from residents and address concerns related to EDI on an annual basis.