



DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGES, LITERATURES
AND CULTURES

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

2023/2024

Disclaimer

This document was published in September 2023 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.

Contents

1	INTRODUCTION TO YOUR DEPARTMENT	4
1.1	WELCOME	4
1.2	HOW TO FIND US: THE DEPARTMENT	4
1.3	MAP OF THE EGHAM CAMPUS	4
1.4	HOW TO FIND US: THE STAFF	5
1.5	HOW TO FIND US: THE SCHOOL OFFICE	5
1.6	THE DEPARTMENT: PRACTICAL INFORMATION	5
1.7	STAFF RESEARCH INTERESTS	5
2	SUPPORT AND ADVICE	5
2.2	SUPPORT WITHIN YOUR SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT	5
3	COMMUNICATION	6
3.1	POST	6
3.2	NOTICE BOARDS	6
3.3	PERSONAL TUTORS	6
3.4	QUESTIONNAIRES	6
3.5	SPACE	6
4	TEACHING	7
4.1	STUDY WEEKS	7
5	DEGREE STRUCTURE	7
5.1	DEPARTMENT SPECIFIC INFORMATION ABOUT DEGREE STRUCTURE	7
5.2	CHANGE OF COURSE	7
6	FACILITIES	7
6.1	FACILITIES AND RESOURCES WITHIN YOUR DEPARTMENT	7
6.2	THE LIBRARY	7
6.3	PHOTOCOPYING AND PRINTING	7
6.4	COMPUTING	7
7	ASSESSMENT INFORMATION	7
7.1	ANONYMOUS MARKING AND COVER SHEETS	7
7.2	SUBMISSION OF WORK	7
7.3	PENALTIES FOR OVER-LENGTH WORK	8
7.4	WHAT TO DO IF THINGS GO WRONG – EXTENSIONS TO DEADLINES	8
7.5	SUPPORT AND EXAM ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS FOR STUDENTS REQUIRING SUPPORT	8
7.6	WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE DIFFICULTY WRITING LEGIBLY	ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.
7.7	ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT - PLAGIARISM	8
8	HEALTH AND SAFETY INFORMATION	9
8.1	CODE OF PRACTICE ON HARASSMENT FOR STUDENTS	9
8.2	LONE WORKING POLICY AND PROCEDURES	9
8.3	FIELD TRIPS	9
8.4	PLACEMENTS	9
8.5	PRACTICALS	9
8.6	SPECIALIST EQUIPMENT	9
9	DEPARTMENT CODES OF PRACTICE	9

1 Introduction to your department

1.1 Welcome

Welcome (or Welcome back) to Royal Holloway. Royal Holloway, University of London (hereafter 'the College') is one of the UK's leading research-intensive universities, with six academic schools spanning the arts and humanities, social sciences and sciences.

The Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures at Royal Holloway brings together students of Modern Languages, 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. We 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 your academic staff are available here: [Academic Staff in the Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures \(royalholloway.ac.uk\)](#). You will each 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.

I hope that we can continue to support one another as we begin a new academic year. Qualities of flexibility and resilience have never been more important. The College, 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.

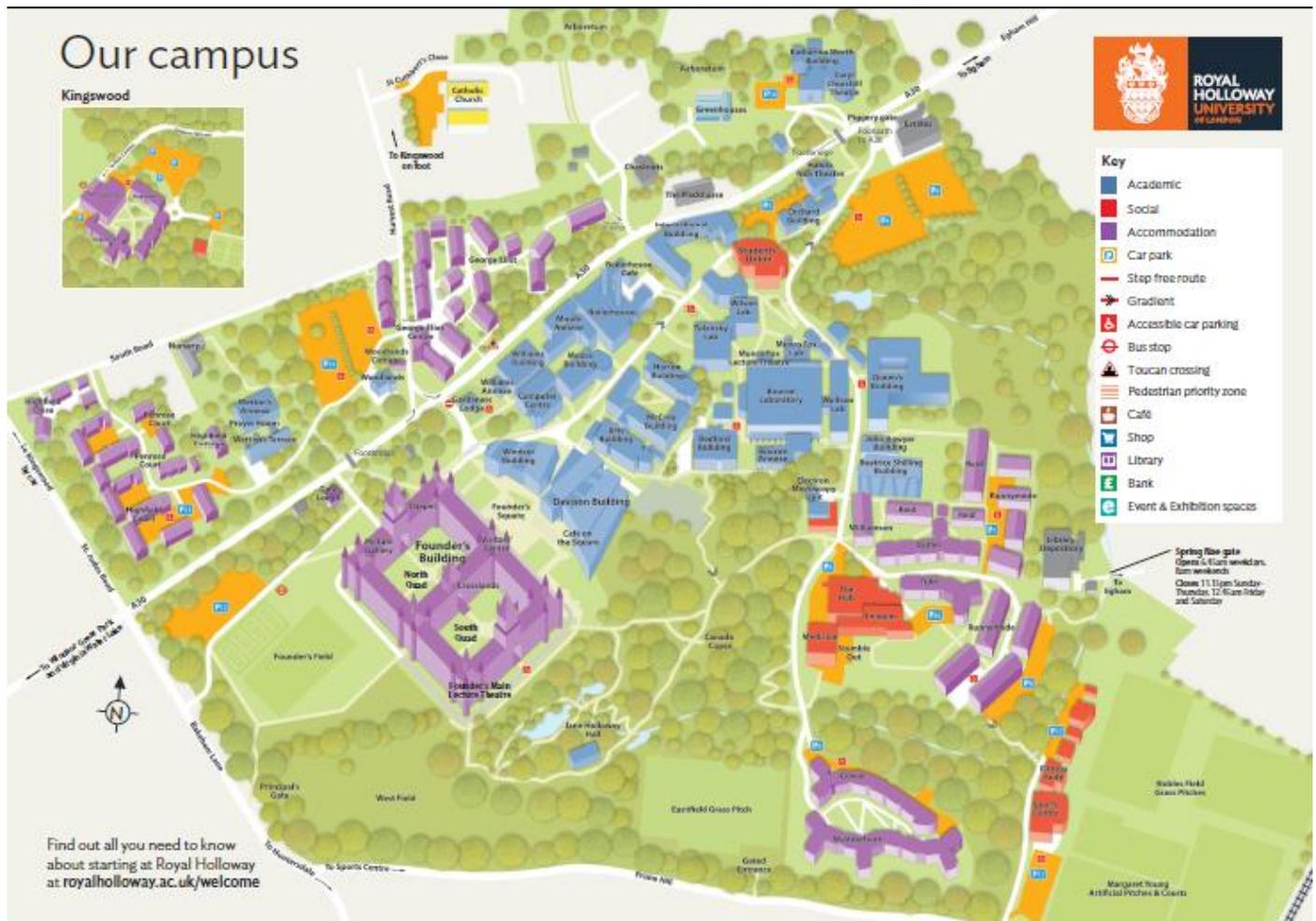
I wish you every success in the year ahead.

Professor Ruth Hemus
Head of Department, Languages, Literatures and Cultures
Royal Holloway, University of London
<http://tinyurl.com/ruthhemus>

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

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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 out about the latest staff research and publications through Pure, Royal Holloway's Research Portal: <https://pure.royalholloway.ac.uk/>.

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) has research interests in the field of modern and contemporary German and Austrian culture, in particular that of the interwar period (1918-1939), and in the history of sport and cultural responses to sport in the German-speaking countries. He has specialised in the work of the Austrian novelist and journalist Joseph Roth, the subject of his monograph *Facing Modernity* (MHRA, 2006). He is also the author of an interdisciplinary study of the cultural, social and political significance of the German boxer *Max Schmeling: Max Schmeling and the Making of a National Hero in Twentieth-Century Germany* (Palgrave Studies in Sport and Politics, 2017). Other research and teaching interests include the *Neue Sachlichkeit* (New Objectivity); 'generational' discourses and youth culture in Germany; 'Amerikanismus' and responses to the USA in German culture; film, especially in the Weimar Republic; the literature of the anti-fascist exile; the postwar memory of National Socialism in German culture; the work of Hermann Hesse.

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 during opening hours, ring 01784 276882 or email humanities-school@rhul.ac.uk. Depending on your query, the Helpdesk will answer your questions then and there, put you in touch with a colleague 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, including from your Personal Tutor, College Wellbeing services, and the School of Humanities office staff. There are scheduled slots each term when you are expected to meet with your Personal Tutor, but you are also welcome to meet them during their Consultation and Feedback office hours and at other times by prior arrangement if/when the need arises.

The School Office team and academics work together to maintain an overview of your attendance and engagement at lectures and seminars, and your performance across modules. They also deal with on-going problems and issues which may be beyond your Personal Tutor's remit.

3 Communication

3.1 Post

You are expected to check your College email daily during the week throughout term and regularly outside these times. Please do not use personal, non-College accounts for College business. 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.

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. Your Personal Tutor is keen to offer you advice and feedback about your work and to discuss your choice of courses with you. Personal Tutors are also willing to discuss personal difficulties, but they understand that you may prefer to take such matters to the College 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 higher degree programmes 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: while you only have one Personal Tutor in the Department, each Personal Tutor has many – past and present – personal tutees.

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.

We also advise that students see their Personal Tutor during their 'Consultation and Feedback' hours in the last week of each term.

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 fill in a questionnaire giving your evaluation of the teaching you have received, the effectiveness of library provision and the overall quality of the module. It is College 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 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, taking into account student feedback.

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 2023-2024 are scheduled as follows:

Term One Monday 30 October – Friday 3 November 2023

Term Two Monday 19 – Friday 23 February 2024

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 for the second half of the term.

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

The structure of your university education is provided by formal teaching (lectures and seminars), but you, the student, have to read and prepare, and be ready to present and discuss your work. The staff provide you with key guidelines, advice and information to enable you to do the research and the reading and the thinking. A lecture will never give you all the answers to the examination questions, and the last thing a lecturer wants to read is a regurgitation of their own lecture notes. You will learn to be critically aware of the quality of your own 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.

One of the biggest differences between school and university is the control you have over the learning process. At university your lecturers are aiming to help you to teach yourself and obtain the skills to learn for yourself. They will expect you to take initiative, to research subjects for yourself, to anticipate problems, to find ways of solving them, and to work successfully within a structure that is probably much looser than that which existed at school or college. Deadlines may be several weeks distant and need to be planned for;

similarly, texts need to be read some time in advance. The subject itself is divided into sections that are probably much larger than school pupils are accustomed to; the lecturers' monitoring of your work will not be on a daily basis, but rather week-by-week, or in many aspects even term-by-term. All this gives you, as a learner, greater freedom, **but because supervision and scrutiny will not be so immediate, you have to be very careful that work does not pile up and that things are not left undone along the way.**

We are often asked how much time students should spend on their studies. The best guide is for 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). There will of course be times when you find yourself concentrating temporarily on one module rather than another because a deadline for an assignment is close. But look carefully at the deadlines, keep a diary of your commitments, and develop the self-discipline that enables you to plan ahead and meet your deadlines.

Naturally, people work at different speeds. Whatever your speed and efficiency, the chances are that you can improve them. Train yourself to be a more efficient user of time, for example by being thoroughly organized, by developing regular work habits, by resisting distraction, and by ensuring the right balance between work and relaxation. This self-training is one of a successful graduate's most valuable assets for the future. In addition, courses in study skills are offered widely within the College 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 fluency in one or more foreign languages, and/or an in-depth knowledge of one or more foreign cultures. In addition to these, each and 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.

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 not always easy, especially in the first month or two, but it does produce dramatic results. Just as important, however, for obtaining a good degree result, is practising your written language. One factor which distinguishes the excellent student is the ability to recognise and use their language skills in the appropriate register according to circumstance, and this applies equally to the written and the spoken language. You would be well advised to read as much and as widely as you can, and to make a note of new words and expressions as you encounter them.

In addition to its considerable benefits to your language skills, the experience of living abroad is of immense value in terms of your broader intellectual or professional as well as personal development. Almost without exception, students consider the YA to be one of the most enjoyable and rewarding times of their lives. And, however hackneyed it may be to say so, it is none the less true that the more you put into it, the more you will get out of it.

The Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures offers advice on the different ways in which you can spend your YA (in a work placement, as an assistant in a school, studying at a university, or taking up a work placement). We cannot, however, dictate to you where you should choose to go, or what you should do, as this will depend on your interests, character and career aims. For this reason, it is essential that you familiarise yourself as fully

as possible with the different possibilities open to you, and that you make a reasoned, informed choice. Places at our partner universities, while numerous, are nevertheless limited, both in overall number and in the number of places available at each institution. We cannot, therefore, guarantee that you will be offered a place at the university of your choice, though we always do our very best to ensure that this happens. If you are interested in working as a teacher after you graduate, or if financial considerations are important to you, then an Assistantship would offer you useful teaching experience, as well as a regular income during your YA. If, on the other hand, you wish to experience life at a university, or in another work environment, then this may influence your choice. It is important to be aware that your living costs abroad may be significantly higher than in the U.K., depending on where you decide to live. There may also be costs associated with visas.

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 by College 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

The YA is a fundamental part of your degree programme. 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 or colleges of the University of London.

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](#).

For this reason, you are strongly advised not to leave to the last minute any matter relating to assessed work: 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. As with allowing time to get through security at an airport, when you know you have to allow a generous margin or you might miss your flight, you must allow for such upload queues as the time of submission is recorded electronically by the system and that is the time the upload is completed, not the time your essay starting queuing. 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 Exams
All Open Book Exams in Term 3

7.5 Support and exam access arrangements for students requiring support

Some students at the College 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.

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](#).

8 Health and safety information

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

8.1 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](#).

8.2 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.