A-Z guide
to staying safe and secure
Royal Holloway takes your personal safety very seriously. Campus Security are here to look out for everyone on our campus, and we restrict access to campus and our Halls at certain times and to non-students.

We’re lucky to live in a very safe area (the safest in the UK, according to StuRents.com in 2015) and most crime that does happen is petty and opportunistic, and could often have been avoided with some simple precautions.

This guide is intended to support you in staying safe.

A Alarms

Personal alarms can be very effective in helping students to stay safe and secure as they are an effective means of summoning help plus a deterrent to would-be attackers. Anyone who has heard the noise the alarm makes would undoubtedly agree! Therefore, we recommend that students carry a personal alarm when they are out, particularly at night. They are available free of charge to all students and can be collected from Support & Advisory Services (Founder’s West, first floor), so pop by and pick up yours. When you are out, you can carry the alarm so that it can activated easily.

The effectiveness of the alarms is based on the fact that they are only used if there is trouble. Please do not use them for pranks, as people will get accustomed to ignoring them and their value will be lost.
Students can be seen as lucrative targets for burglary as they tend to have computers, phones and a number of other gadgets, so take precautions to make sure you do not become their victim. Whether you are in halls or a rented house, make sure you close and lock all doors and windows when you go out. Even leaving a window open when you are not in a room can be a risk if there is an opportunistic burglar about.

Valuables should not be visible through windows, especially in ground floor rooms and we recommend you draw your curtains when you’re not in so that people cannot see in.

If you live off campus, it is important to keep your keys safe. It is never a good idea to leave a door key hidden under a flowerpot or something similar outside your property. Equally, you should never put your name and address on your keys!

The College operates a Campus Watch scheme to encourage staff and students to look out for each other on campus and locally, and to report anything suspicious to the Police or College Security. College Security operates 24 hour security cover for the campus and halls of residence and it is contactable 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for your protection.

If there is an emergency on campus, please call the dedicated security line on 444 on internal phones.

For non-urgent matters, contact Founder’s Security on 01784 443063 or email securityrhul@royalholloway.ac.uk.

CCTV cameras are also in operation across campus and Safer Runnymede has a network of CAITIFF cameras locally which are monitored 24/7.
D Drink spiking

Drink spiking occurs when a substance, such as alcohol or drugs, is added to your drink without you knowing about it and this results in you becoming unexpectedly drink or drug affected. Alcoholic or non-alcoholic drinks can be spiked. There are a number of steps you can take to reduce the chances of your drink being spiked. The safest approach is to buy your own drinks when you are out so that you know what you are drinking, and never to leave your drink unattended. If someone offers to buy you a drink then go with them to the bar, and do not drink anything that you have not seen opened and poured. You can also collect an AlcoTops from Founder’s West first floor to use on top of your drink to stop anyone from slipping anything into it. If you are concerned that your drink has been spiked, then just leave it. Should you start to feel dizzy or unwell, then ask someone you trust – perhaps venue staff or friends – to take you to a safe place. If one of your friends becomes very unwell or even unconscious, call an ambulance immediately (dial 999) and do not leave them alone.

F Fire Safety

Whether you live in Halls or simply attend the College for lectures, you need to be aware of The College’s regulations on fire safety (royalholloway.ac.uk/iquad/services/healthandsafety/firesafety/policiesandprocedures.aspx). In particular, you should ensure you know what to do in the event of a fire and the fire assembly points for all the buildings you visit.

If you live in private accommodation, there are many potential fire hazards. There is a leaflet containing advice specifically written for people living in shared or rented accommodation on how to avoid these hazards at gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/49765/Fire_Safety_in_Shared_or_Rented_Accommodation_-_Version_2.pdf.
This leaflet includes advice on never leaving your cooking unattended, taking care when smoking inside, keeping candles away from flammable surfaces, never overloading plug sockets, securing portable heaters, fitting and testing a smoke alarm in your property and knowing your escape route. It also sets out what your landlord is expected to do, so that you know your legal rights.

**G Gas safety**

Call **0800 111 999** at any time of the day or night if you smell gas at any time on the College campus or elsewhere. Your call will be free if you ring from a landline. A trained operator will answer your call, take all the details and arrange any response.

You should also call this number if you suspect there has been an emission of carbon monoxide. This is a colourless, odourless but poisonous gas that can be given off as a result of the incomplete burning of gas by household appliances.

This number is only to be used for emergencies and if you have any problems with a gas appliance in your home, you should contact a Gas Safe registered engineer or your gas supplier.

**H Halls and House security**

In addition to addressing the risk of burglary, there are a number of other security risk factors to consider. Dealing with visitors can also present problems. It is always important to check who is at the door before you open it, and if you are unsure who they are then ask to see their ID. Honest visitors won’t mind. Also think about the risks involved before inviting someone you have only just met into your room or back to your house.
There are also specific risks to consider if you live in Hall. You should not hold the door to your building open for strangers as you enter or leave it, unless you check their ID. Residents will have their own keys or access card and visitors should contact the person they are visiting to gain entry. If you see anything suspicious or discover an intruder, call Security on 01784 443063.

If you live in private accommodation, you should not let strangers in when you are at home alone and never mention that you are alone when answering the door or phone. Be careful what you write on the door buzzer to your property, particularly if you live alone. If you have a back gate or entrance to your house, make sure it’s kept shut and secure at all times. If you discover intruders, do not challenge them yourself but ring 999 for the Police.

Insurance

When you move to University, your possessions are not insured under the University’s, your landlord’s or even your housemate’s insurance policies. Taking out insurance to protect your possessions when you go to University may seem like an unnecessary expense. However, if you add up the value of your possessions and consider the cost of replacing them if you were to be the victim of a crime, you should quickly realise that the insurance premium is only a fraction of any claim you could make. In addition, different policies offer different levels of insurance – and some will even cover you if you accidentally lose your possessions.

If you are unfortunate enough to lose your possessions as a result of a crime, then subject to the deduction of the excess (your contribution to the claim which is set in your insurance policy), you can make a claim for the value of your goods. You will need to complete a claim form obtained for your insurer and provide details of the crime number that you obtain from the police. The insurance company will then consider your claim.
J jewels and other valuable possessions

You should always take care of your possessions in public places and cover up expensive or eye-catching jewellery. When you are walking in the street, carry your bag close to you with the opening facing inwards and any zips closed or straps tied firmly. You should never leave your wallet, mobile phone or any valuables visible to others as this can make them easy targets to an opportunistic thief. When you are out, be aware of your bag or other possessions and never leave them unattended.

If you witness or are the victim of a theft/robbery, it may not be safe to fight back against the criminal. Defend yourself at all times, but don’t risk your life defending your property.

K Keys

Always make sure you remember to take your keys with you when you leave your accommodation. In that way, you won’t have to rely on your housemates to come back with you at the end of the night or disturb your neighbours when you try to find someone to let you in!

When you are returning home after a night out, make sure you have your keys in your hand as you approach your front door so that you are not distracted and vulnerable as you search for them.

L Lighting

When you are out walking in the dark, it is better to keep to well-lit roads and always avoid taking shortcuts through poorly lit alleys, parks or waste ground areas - even if this adds time to your journey.
**Mobile registration**

All phones have a unique IMEI number which is found behind your phone’s battery or by dialling *#06#. If your phone is lost or stolen, this number will identify the phone as yours if it is recovered. You can register your IMEI number for free with your network provider, the National Mobile Property Register (www.thenmpr.com) or www.immobilise.com and this will help the recovery of your property.

**Night time safety**

The area around the College is generally safe, but it is always advisable to take care when walking around at night.

Remember there is safety in numbers so try to avoid walking home alone in the dark. Before you go out, plan your route and use well lit, main routes rather than taking short cuts through poorly lit areas. When you are walking along the streets, walk confidently and avoid carrying too much so you are free to protect yourself. It is also better to face the traffic as you walk along so that you can see any approaching vehicles.

If you have to go out alone, make sure you tell someone where you are going and what time you expect to be back. When you are alone, it is important to stay alert so you should avoid using headphones or speaking on your phone when you are out at night, as these can prevent you from noticing what is going on around you. In any event, you should try to keep items of value out of sight when walking at night. It is also a good idea to carry a personal safety alarm in a way that allows you to activate it easily if you feel vulnerable. These can be collected from Founder’s West first floor.

Finally, it is particularly important that you use the footbridge to cross the A30 at night.

There is, however, an excellent alternative to walking at night if you live within a 3 mile radius of The College. You can use the SSHH! bus to get home from campus or Egham train station at night. The service costs just £1 per journey, although you can get a discounted ticket to cover the academic year. It starts at 9pm & runs on venue nights during term time.
Online safety starts with keeping your smartphone, computer or tablet safe. At the very least, always set a password and make sure you keep your login and password private. You can also consider installing an app that allows you to track them if they are stolen, delete data, and even sound an alarm remotely.

Before you go online, ensure you have installed up to date security software on your computer or tablet. You should only shop on trusted and reputable sites, which have the padlock symbol. Once online, never publish personal details such as your name and address and don’t give them to people you haven’t met in real life. You should use a different password for each account and avoid obvious words like family names and dates of birth. It is also advisable to keep all your records of online transactions.

You can get more information and practical advice on how to protect your computer and other mobile devices at 
getsafeonline.org

Identity theft occurs when criminals use your personal details to open bank accounts, take out loans, obtain a driving licence or passport etc. The information that is useful to criminals includes your name, date of birth, address, National Insurance (NI) number and bank and credit card details. Therefore, it is essential that you protect this information.

Websites such as www.identitytheft.org.uk, as well as www.getsafeonline.org offer tips on how to do this. These include informing the issuer immediately if your passport, driving license or credit card is lost or stolen, shredding documents that contain personal details and using the Royal Mail’s redirection service to ensure your post arrives at your new address. If you are concerned you have been the victim of identity theft, you can get a copy of your credit file from one of the credit reference agencies to find out if someone else has been applying for credit in your name.

If you become the victim of identity fraud and identity theft, or want to report a computer scam or virus, contact Action Fraud & Internet Crime on 0300 123 2040 or complete a form online at www.actionfraud.police.uk
There are two numbers you need to remember if you want to contact the police:

Dial **999** in the event of an emergency

Dial **101** if it is a non-emergency

It is a good idea to store these numbers on your phone.

Also, if you need to meet with the police to discuss any issue, contact the Community & Wellbeing Office **01784 443394/276612** or wellbeing@royalholloway.ac.uk and we can arrange it for you. We work closely with the police to ensure that our students stay safe.

If you have any questions or issues about safe and secure issues that you would like to raise, please call the Community & Wellbeing team on **01784 443394/276612** or email wellbeing@royalholloway.ac.uk. Alternatively talk to the campus security team at their Founder’s control centre or whilst they are on patrol around campus.

When you are walking along the roads around the College, you should pay attention to what is happening in the area around you. Do not walk in the middle of the road and remember that it is easy to be distracted if you are listening to music or talking on your phone. Always use the footbridge to cross over the A30 or the crossing at the crossroads. It is a very busy road and in parts, it can be difficult to judge how fast vehicles are travelling.

If you are driving, you must follow the Highway Code. In particular, remember not to talk on your phone while driving. You should be aware of the speed limits in the residential areas around the College and reduce your speed in built up areas. In addition on a more practical note, you should bear in mind that it is best to avoid parking in dark, isolated areas.
Stay Safe, Stay Well event

Each year the College welfare team and campus security hold a Stay Safe, Stay Well event. This purpose is to offer tips and advice on all aspects of staying safe and maintaining your personal wellbeing. In previous years, Surrey Police, Neighbourhood teams, Runnymede’s Crime Reduction Adviser, TfL and Surrey Fire & Rescue have been there to give out advice. It is a fun but informative day - with lots of freebies!

Taxi & public transport safety

It is understandable that after a late night out, you are keen to get home as quickly as possible. However, if you are planning to go home by taxi, make sure your journey is as safe as possible. Ideally, carry the number of a reliable taxi company with you and always make sure you have kept enough money to pay for your taxi fare home.

If you order a licensed mini-cab over the phone, ask the company to tell you the driver’s name and what type of car they will send. When the cab arrives, make sure you ask the driver who they have come to collect and don’t give the driver your name first. Always sit in the back behind the driver.

Only use reputable licensed companies rather than unlicensed taxis touting for business. You can tell if the taxi is licensed by checking the driver is wearing a Drivers Badge with their photo on it and if not ask to see it. You should also check that the vehicle is displaying a local authority plate on the rear of the vehicle or a disc on the windscreen.

If you have any doubts, do not get into the vehicle. Any driver trading legally will be happy to show identification if requested and will have been through a rigorous licensing process and have undertaken a Disclosure & Barring Service check and a medical. If you have suspicions about any vehicle, please report it to the Licensing team: licensing@runnymede.gov.uk
UV property marking

This is a great way to label your valuable possessions discreetly because the mark from a permanent ultra-violet (UV) marker pen is invisible unless viewed under a UV lamp. Therefore, as criminals will not see the marking, they will not try to remove it. Permanent ultra-violet (UV) marker pens are widely available in most large stationers.

Sunlight can cause the UV marks to fade after about 18 months, so it is advisable to re-do the markings after that time.

Vulnerability

As we have said before, the area around the College is generally safe. However, there are steps you can take to make yourself less vulnerable to crime or accidents. These include being aware of what is going on in the street around you and not being distracted by your music or mobile phone. If you are ever in a situation where you feel threatened, or think that you are being followed, cross the street. If the feeling continues, go to the nearest place where there are lots of people, such as a pub or a shop and stay there until you feel safe enough to leave. In addition, you should never hitch or accept lifts from strangers as this puts you in an extremely vulnerable position.

Walking routes

The College has restrictions on who can bring a car to the University so it is important to identify good walking routes. Maps are available from the Community & Wellbeing team or on the website at: rhul.ac.uk/aboutus/locationmap/home.aspx

When you are walking, it is advisable to walk confidently towards traffic so that cars cannot pull up behind you without you noticing.
Xmas, Easter, summer break
safety & security -

When you go home for the holidays, take all your valuables with you and make sure all doors and windows are locked. If you know and trust your neighbours, you may want to ask them to keep an eye on your property while you are away.

Your possessions

Always take care of your possessions in public places. Make sure that you carry your bag close to you when you are walking in the street with the opening facing inwards and any zips closed or straps tied firmly. You should never leave your wallet, mobile phone or valuables visible to others as this can make them easy targets to an opportunist thief. When you out, never leave your bag or other possessions unattended.

Sleep is an essential part of feeling physically and mentally well. At University, there can be so many things to do and try that sometimes sleep can hardly seem a priority! However, to ensure you look after yourself, stay alert, and make sensible decisions, you need to have enough sleep.