

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

This document describes the 12-, 8- and 4-week Pre-Sessional English Language Programme (PELP). The programme specification is valid from **September 2015**.

This programme aims to:

- Develop the language and literacy skills appropriate for study in English medium higher education through engagement in a range of representative academic tasks and associated practices.
- Enhance students' intercultural understanding and communication skills by working on tasks on a range of relevant topics.
- Encourage students to acquire and practise study strategies that will foster effective autonomous learning.
- Develop general and academic English language competency through regular practice and feedback.
- Familiarize students with support facilities and online tools available at Royal Holloway, University of London.

The programme is administered by the Centre for the Development of Academic Skills (CeDAS) and designed primarily for non-native English speaking students whose English language levels do not meet Royal Holloway requirements for entry to undergraduate and postgraduate study, or to a full-time preparation course at Pre-Masters level.

This document comprises the following further sections:

[Learning Outcomes](#)

[Teaching, Learning and Assessment](#)

[Details of the Programme Structure\(s\)](#)

[Student Support and Guidance](#)

[Admissions Requirements](#)

[Progression and Award Requirements](#)

[Further Learning and Career Opportunities](#)

[Indicators of Quality and Standards](#)

[List of programmes, with details of awards, degree titles, accreditation and teaching arrangements](#)

This document provides a summary of the main features of the programme(s), and of the outcomes which a student might reasonably be expected to achieve if full advantage is taken of the learning opportunities provided. Further information is contained in the Royal Holloway prospectus, the Royal Holloway Regulations and in various handbooks issued to students upon arrival. Whilst Royal Holloway keeps all its information for prospective applicants and students under review, programmes and the availability of individual courses are necessarily subject to change at any time, and prospective applicants are therefore advised to seek confirmation of any factors which might affect their decision to follow a specific programme. In turn, Royal Holloway will inform applicants and students as soon as is practicable of any substantial changes which might affect their studies.

Learning Outcomes

The PELP will enable students to:

- Understand the importance of evidence-based reasoning in knowledge creation.

- Better understand the role of critical thinking in academic contexts and particularly the role of language in showing this.
- Write in an appropriate style as evidenced by pattern of organisation, coherent argument, sequencing of ideas to produce logical progression, and academic language.*
- Select and synthesize information from texts effectively according to the purpose.*
- Identify and analyse the functional and rhetorical features of academic texts of different genres.
- Understand the relevance and status of different text types.
- Understand and adhere to academic conventions.
- Increase repertoire of academic vocabulary and structures.
- Communicate appropriately orally and in written form in the academic context.*
- Employ strategies to cope with lengthy monologues (lectures), rapid speech and unfamiliar/non-native speaker accents.*
- Demonstrate effective presentation skills for an academic context.*
- Participate effectively in academic discussions.*
- Access available support and resources to complete tasks appropriately.
- Take responsibility and control for independent or group learning, by setting objectives and making informed pedagogical decisions.*
- Become familiar with university policies and practices and the reasons behind them.

* transferable skills

[Back to top](#)

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Teaching on the PELP includes classroom-based instruction, guidance and practice, and independent study around structured and progressive tasks. Students' understanding and progress are closely monitored by tutors. During the programme, students will participate in:

- workshop-style classes;
- lectures;
- individual and/or group tutorials.

A range of formal and informal activities are used to promote learning, including:

- discussion activities in small groups or involving the whole class;
- information gathering and problem solving activities;
- oral presentations;
- individual research.

Independent learning will be fostered by setting structured tasks which require students to work independently either individually or in groups and to use learning resources on campus, thus developing skills of self-reliance. Guidance and feedback will be given in class, during tutorials and on formative assessments to aid this process.

Students can join the PELP for 12, 8 or 4 weeks, depending on their language level. Where possible, students progressing to postgraduate study will be streamed separately from those progressing to undergraduate study. Students may be broadly streamed according to subject area where this is deemed to be both beneficial and practical.

The PELP is intensive in nature with 40 notional learning hours per week (approximately 40% of these hours will be teacher–student contact).

The PELP focuses on the following core language skills:

- Reading Skills
- Writing Skills
- Listening Skills
- Speaking Skills

Course syllabuses are designed to reflect an increase in English language proficiency, in order for students to be able to meet the English language requirements encountered on the UG and PG courses to which they scheduled to progress.

Marking on the programme is progressive, with increased levels of challenge to the student at each stage of the programme.

Assessments on the PELP are skills-based and integrated; they reflect the stated outcomes of the programme.

[Back to top](#)

Details of the Programme Structure

Teaching on the PELP is divided into three 4-week blocks: part 1, part 2 and part 3. The start date of each block corresponds to the start of the 12-, 8- and 4-week PELP respectively.

Part 1 Weeks 1 - 4	Where possible, students are divided into: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Postgraduate stream • Undergraduate stream
	Course titles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading and Writing • Listening and Speaking
Part 2 Weeks 5 - 8	Students on the 12-week programme may be mixed into classes with students on the 8-week programme at the beginning of Part 2. Where possible, students are divided into: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Postgraduate stream • Undergraduate stream
	Course titles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading and Writing • Listening and Speaking • Lectures
Part 3 Weeks 9 - 12	Students on the 12- and 8-week programmes may be mixed into classes with students on the 4-week programme at the beginning of Part 3. Students are divided into: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Postgraduate stream • Undergraduate stream Further divisions may be made according to broad subject group on some courses.

	<p>Course titles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading and Writing • Listening and Speaking • Lectures
--	--

Parts 1, 2 and 3 of the programme all include independent study.

[Back to top](#)

Student Support and Guidance

- Pre-departure correspondence and information pack upon arrival;
- Detailed student handbook;
- Orientation to the campus and academic services;
- One-to-one or small group academic tutorials with personal tutor, where progress in assignments can be discussed.
- Personal tutor available and accessible by email or appointment;
- Bookable one-to-one or small group consultations with a tutor from CeDAS where issues of an academic or pastoral nature can be discussed;
- Designated point of contact for student enquiries relating to PELP;
- Programme Leader and Deputy Programme Leaders available and accessible by appointment;
- Student-Staff committee meetings (one meeting per PELP block) between senior departmental staff and elected student representatives;
- Extensive supporting materials and learning resources in Royal Holloway libraries, via RHUL website, and via Moodle.
- Access to Royal Holloway support services, including Student Counselling Service, Health Centre, Careers' Service, International Student Support Office, Student Services Centre.

[Back to top](#)

Admissions Requirements

Applicants to the PELP will normally have been offered a place at Royal Holloway for a particular undergraduate or postgraduate degree. In addition, applicants are required to meet the relevant English language requirements for the PELP prior to enrolment.

The minimum English language qualifications at IELTS (or equivalent) required for students to be admitted to the PELP can be found via the link below:

<http://www.rhul.ac.uk/international/programmesandapplying/universitypreparation/pre-sessionalenglishlanguageprogrammes.aspx>

[Back to top](#)

Progression and Award Requirements

Students on the 12-week programme must fulfil the programme attendance requirements and pass the programme at the required level in order to progress. In order to pass the programme, students need to achieve a minimum mark of 40% overall. Individual assessment weightings are as follows: 1) an essay based on research of academic texts which assesses reading and writing skills (65%); 2) an oral assessment where both presentation and discussion skills are assessed (20%); 3) a lecture comprehension assessment (15%). Failure to

complete all summative assessments and achieve the minimum mark will normally result in an automatic failure of the programme.

Students on the 8- and 4-week programmes must fulfil the programme attendance requirements and complete all summative assessments in order to progress. Failure to do so will normally result in an automatic failure of the programme.

The 12-, 8- and 4-week programmes are non-award bearing. Students on all three programmes who have not already demonstrated English language competence at B2 level (Common European Framework) must also achieve a minimum mark of 30% in the summative assessments, either overall or in a particular sub-score.

Students receive a transcript stating their overall outcome and are informed of their outcome on each of the individual assessments. Students' receiving academic departments are also informed of their overall outcome.

[Back to top](#)

Further Learning and Career Opportunities

On completion of the PELP and fulfilment of any conditions set by Royal Holloway, students will progress to undergraduate, pre-Masters or postgraduate study.

[Back to top](#)

Indicators of Quality and Standards

Departmental systems for monitoring and assessing quality include Royal Holloway's formal course evaluation questionnaires, Student-Staff committee meetings, observations of temporary tutors, the monitoring of curricular provision by programme leaders, an annual review report, including a report from the Visiting Examiner, and the Periodic Departmental Review.

The programmes are delivered by a combination of established teaching staff and temporary tutors contracted to work on the PELP. All tutors have a relevant degree, relevant teaching experience and understanding of the needs of non-native English speaking students at HE level in the UK. The PELP is validated by Royal Holloway, University of London.

[Back to top](#)

List of Programmes

The relevant Banner programme code is given in parentheses.

12-week Pre-Sessional English Language Programme (2472)

8-week Pre-Sessional English Language Programme (1336)

4-week Pre-Sessional English Language Programme (1335)

[Back to top](#)