



Megan

Hello! I'm Megan and I have just recently finished my third year of studying English and Drama at Royal Holloway, University of London. I have loved my time at my university so much that I am continuing with a master's study in English from September!

Upon finishing my GCSE's five years ago, I did not know what particular career path I wished to take and so chose A-Levels that I was interested in and that would provide me with a varied experience. I chose to study English Literature, Drama, Psychology and Spanish at the Sixth Form College, Farnborough and thoroughly enjoyed my two years there. My four subjects worked well alongside each other and placed me in good stead for starting university.

My passion for English and Drama developed through my A-Level study and I knew I wanted to pursue it further – I did not want to just leave them behind. Coincided with this, I began to recognise that I would be interested in a career in teaching and knew that I would need a degree in my field to do so. Therefore, I knew in my first year of A-Levels that I would like to go to university, not only for the career path I wished to take but also to delve further into my passion for my subjects.

When it came to choosing university, I knew I had specific things I was looking for. Specifically, I knew I wanted a campus university, which could provide a close-knit community experience where everything was in one place, rather than spread around a city. I also knew I would like to be in close proximity to London, particularly as it is important for my course to experience as much theatre, galleries, museums and culture as possible. Most importantly, I was looking for a supportive and friendly environment. Royal Holloway ticked all of these boxes for me, providing a wonderful campus community but within easy access to central London. These are all personal preferences and vary from person to person, but it is important to recognise your top factors when deciding your university.

Like most others, I felt nervous and apprehensive about starting university, but soon found that everybody is in the same position, all trying to settle in and make new friends. University, for me, has been an incredibly rewarding experience. You are challenged, you learn and try out new things, you meet new people from around the world and you most certainly develop and grow overall as a person ready for the 'real' world. My time at Royal Holloway has been the best three years I could have asked for and I would do it all again in a heartbeat!



How did you find the shift from A-Levels to university?

The shift from A-Levels to university was, for me, a big life shift but not such a big academic shift. I was certainly nervous when starting university, finding its larger size a change from the size of my college, and living away from home an initially daunting prospect. I had never lived away from home before and at first found it challenging and a big change from college, but soon realised that most others were in the same boat and soon settled in. This for me was the biggest shift, but there is so much support and a wonderful community feel at Royal Holloway which made it quickly feel like home.

Unarguably there is a shift in workload and expectation overall between A-Level and Undergraduate work, however Royal Holloway made this a smooth and seamless process in my first year of study. My course classified it as a year of building foundations, gradually developing from A-Level standard and introducing the expectation for undergraduate work. The biggest change for me was learning how to effectively research and reference, as I had never done it before. However, there is so much guidance and support readily available that it did not feel a massively overwhelming or challenging shift.

Do you have any suggestions for preparing for university work?

I would highly recommend getting a head start during the summer before starting university by reading widely around your course, and perhaps enquiring with your department whether there is a specific reading list you could start on before your course commences. This would definitely place you in great stead for starting university!

What was your experience of first year? Do you have any tips for how to make the most of it?

Once I had settled in to university, my first year was absolutely amazing! Everybody was so friendly, enthusiastic and supportive, and there were more opportunities available than I

had ever dreamt of. My main top tip would be to challenge yourself, put yourself out there and meet as many new people and sign up for as many opportunities as possible because it will be worth it. I attended the Fresher's Fair during the first week and signed up to try numerous societies, some I knew I would be interested in and others because I simply wanted to give them a try. I met loads of friends from different courses and even different year groups this way and it was a great way of getting involved in university life.

I have had the best time ever at Royal Holloway! Putting myself out there, challenging myself to try new things and really putting 100% into everything I did has made it very rewarding and an overall life-changing experience.