Royal Holloway is one of the UK’s leading research-intensive universities. One of the larger colleges of the University of London, we are strong across the sciences, social sciences, arts and humanities. We were ranked 19th in the UK (129th in the world) by the Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2015-16, which described us as ‘truly world class’.

As an international community, with students from 130 countries, we focus on the support and development of the individual. Our friendly and safe campus, in Surrey, 40 minutes by train from central London, provides a unique environment for university study where students quickly feel at home.

“One of the 16 most beautiful universities in the world” (Daily Telegraph).

Visit us

Our College and departmental Open Days offer you a unique opportunity to come and find out more about us and get a taste of what university life is really like. Parents and friends are very welcome to come with you. To find out dates and register to attend please visit our website: royalholloway.ac.uk/opendays
Welcome to Geography

Royal Holloway’s Geography Department is one of the world’s leading centres for geographical research and teaching. Our undergraduate degrees have achieved scores of 100% in the National Student Satisfaction Survey (NSS) in recent years, and our overall record in the NSS is among the very best for any discipline at any UK university. This outstanding achievement reflects the excellent standard of courses in both human and physical geography, and the strong pastoral and tutorial support our students benefit from.

We are very proud of our distinctive research and teaching profile. As well as being excellent research training, our extensive programme of fieldwork helps to bring the department together as a real community.

This is a friendly and welcoming place, where you will both feel at home, and be inspired by great teaching by some of the leading lights in UK Geography. We look forward to meeting you at one of our Open Days, and we hope that you’ll apply to join us here.

Professor Katie Willis
Head of Department

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Why study Geography?

Geography is a subject that embraces and challenges the key aspects of modern society. It frames and answers fundamental questions on the environment and the economy, as well as our increasingly inter-connected social, cultural and political lives.

Geography is everywhere. It makes important links with many other academic disciplines, and its diversity enhances the learning experiences and skills of our students.

Geography at Royal Holloway

Internationally recognised for the quality of its teaching and research, the Department of Geography provides students with excellent opportunities to study this diverse and vital subject. We are committed to making a difference in the world at large through innovative research, consultancy and collaborative projects. We offer:

- A flexible undergraduate degree programme with a diverse range of challenging courses led by inspirational staff who are acknowledged experts in the field.
- A choice of five undergraduate degree programmes, providing students with opportunities to maintain breadth of study or to specialise in key areas of the discipline.
- An exciting and varied fieldwork programme with international destinations and study abroad options. Overseas fieldwork is free in the first year.
- Teaching and research links with industry and external organisations that allow students to gain work experience during their degree, including placement dissertations
- Outstanding, state-of-the-art facilities for both physical and human geography, and some of the most modern research amenities of any department in the country.
- A vibrant environment, with dedicated staff including your own personal tutor who is on hand to offer you academic advice and guidance.
- High achieving graduates with skills that are attractive to a wide range of future employers.
- One of the largest graduate schools in Geography, with extensive postgraduate opportunities.

NSS Results 2007 – 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>99% (100% in Human Geography)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>98% (100% in Human Geography)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>95% (100% in Human Geography)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>99% (100% in Physical Geography)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>99% (100% in Physical Geography)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Degree programmes

We offer four Single Honours degree programmes and one Joint Honours programme in Geography. This provides students with the chance to maintain their interests in a broad range of geographical topics and techniques, specialise in particular parts of the discipline and/or combine Geography with another subject.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Programme</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L700</td>
<td>BA Geography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L701</td>
<td>BA Human Geography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F800</td>
<td>BSc Geography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F840</td>
<td>BSc Physical Geography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FL82</td>
<td>BSc Geography, Politics &amp; International Relations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For details on degree programme structure see page 6.

Admissions and entry requirements

We welcome applications from candidates looking for a challenging and dynamic undergraduate course which brings together the best traditions and most exciting developments in Geography. The department admits about 140 students per year.

We encourage prospective students to visit us in the department, to talk to members of staff and students, to visit our website, to interact with us on social media and to find out more about studying at Royal Holloway at one of our Open Days.

TYPICAL OFFERS
Entry requirements vary depending on the degree programmes. Please check our website for usual entry requirements and alternative qualifications.

Most students will have studied Geography, but it is not a requirement for entry onto our degrees.

Applications are considered on an individual basis. We look for potential among our applicants and will consider candidates with lower predicted grades or non-standard qualifications. Mature students are also encouraged to apply. Please contact the Admissions Tutor for further details.

INTERNATIONAL APPLICANTS
Applications are welcomed from all over the world. We recognise a wide variety of qualifications including the International Baccalaureate and various national school-leaving examinations. Candidates from overseas should apply through UCAS.

PART-TIME STUDY
Our degrees are available to study as a part-time student over six years. Part-time students apply directly to the College, not through the UCAS system.

SPECIAL NEEDS
The department considers applications from students with disabilities or special educational needs on academic grounds only. We have a dedicated Departmental Educational Support Officer who is happy to discuss any special arrangements required by email, telephone, or in person when you visit us.

DEFERRED ENTRY
Applications from candidates who wish to take a year off between leaving school and entering university are welcome. If we offer you a place, and you meet the conditions of the offer, your entry into the department the following year is guaranteed.

THE APPLICATION PROCESS
The UCAS code for Royal Holloway, University of London is R72.

Formal applications are made online via www.ucas.ac.uk.

Royal Holloway has a comprehensive admissions policy which sets out how your application will be dealt with. For further information visit royalholloway.ac.uk/admissionspolicy

STUDENT PROFILE

“As a student here you benefit from being lectured by those who are conducting the research and pushing the academic boundaries on a daily basis. You have plenty of contact hours and most of the staff have an open door policy. The lecturers are truly invested in you as a student, but also as a person. There’s a constant positive energy around the department that will keep you driven and engaged.”

Sam Travers, BA Geography
Degree structure

All our degree programmes are based on the course unit system which creates a flexible approach to study whilst maintaining a coherent and developmental structure. Students take 12 units in total, four in each of the three years of the degree course.

The teaching programme emphasises the interdependence of human and physical geography, but also allows students to specialise in key areas of the discipline. The first year is designed to build on your previous geographical knowledge through a broad range of courses across human and physical geography. Following this grounding in Year 1, students are then able to develop their interests in particular parts of the discipline by choosing from a range of exciting and innovative course options in Years 2 and 3. Students are able to specialise in sub-disciplines or themes, such as environmental change, development studies, urban geography or cultural geography, or they can maintain their interests across physical and human geography throughout their three years. In years 2 and 3, students can also opt to take up to a quarter of the degree in option courses from another department.

The table below shows the structure of the Single Honours degrees (L700, L701, F800, F840). More details of the Joint Honours programme (FL82) can be found online at royalholloway.ac.uk/geography/prospectivestudents/undergraduate/coursemodules/

### Degree structure

#### First Year

**Core Courses**
- Physical Geography I: Atmosphere, oceans & geosphere
- Human Geography I: Cultures, economies, histories
- Geographical Techniques I
- Physical Geography II: Biogeography, ecology & scales of environmental change
- Human Geography II: Politics, society, development & environment
- Geographical field methods I (Spain field trip)

#### Second Year

**Core Courses**
- Geographical Techniques II
- Geographical field methods II

**Optional Courses**
- You should choose three (or two plus 1 unit of electives) from the following list:
  - Environmental Systems: Processes & Sustainability
  - Earth Surface Processes & Hazards
  - Environmental Change
  - Biogeography
  - Political Geography
  - Cities: Economies & Societies
  - Cultural Geographies
  - Perspectives on Development

#### Third year

In year 3, students undertake a compulsory dissertation. They also choose 6 options from approximately 20 physical and human geography options. Each module reflects the cutting edge research of our academics, and offers the opportunity to further explore key relevant themes, and build upon the knowledge gained in years 1 and 2. For further details of current year 3 options, please see the department’s website.
Fieldwork

The department actively promotes awareness of geographical issues through a substantial and varied programme of field training, which normally includes at least one overseas field course. This programme provides students with opportunities to develop their knowledge of particular geographical processes and techniques, but also to build on their transferable skills, including teamwork, report writing and time management.

**YEAR 1**

In Year 1, there are human and physical geography field training programmes at local sites as part of the Geographical Techniques course. This involves developing students’ skills in fieldwork techniques such as surveying, water and soil analysis, questionnaire surveys, taking field notes and interviewing.

In addition, in Year 1 there is a residential trip, currently to Nerja, in Andalusia, Southern Spain. All students (taking both single honours and joint honours degree programmes) attend this trip, which runs at the start of the Spring Term. Students investigate physical and human geographical processes in the region, including urban change, tourism, agriculture, immigration, political identities, and coastal and river processes.

**YEAR 2**

In Year 2, students are able to select fieldwork destinations on the basis of their developing interests and specialisms. Each trip is based on a major aspect of Geography and contributes to the development of students’ research skills and knowledge. Current destinations are Sicily, Malawi, New York, London and SE England. Students pay an additional fee for Year 2 overseas fieldwork; the UK fieldwork is non-residential and provides parallel training at no additional cost.

The **Sicily fieldtrip** is for students who are interested in biogeography, geomorphology, and environmental change. Students spend a week carrying out fieldwork in a range of locations, including Mount Etna.

The **Malawi fieldtrip** is for students who are interested in development issues, or are interested in environmental management or physical processes in semi-arid environments. The trip lasts for ten days. Students work in groups with local guides on topics which they have been researching prior to departure. In recent years students have worked on themes such as sustainable agriculture, access to water and community development organisations.

Students interested in urban, cultural, social and economic processes attend the **New York or London fieldtrips**. Students work with their tutors to prepare a research topic before travelling and work in groups to complete the research while in New York. Student projects have included work on urban regeneration, street art and graffiti, the fashion industry and world museums.

The **Southeast England Physical Geography fieldtrip** is for students interested in soil and water quality, air pollution, and the effects of polluted soil, air and water on edible plant life. Students spend a week collecting soil, water and garden plant samples from garden allotments in the Greater London area, before analysing the samples for their heavy metal content in our departmental laboratories. This is a non-residential fieldtrip that is available to students free-of-charge.

**YEAR 3**

Some Year 3 option courses have day-long fieldtrips. In addition, students may conduct local, national or overseas fieldwork as part of their dissertation research.

**FINANCING**

Students are required to complete field courses, lasting from 5 to 10 days in both Years 1 and 2. The cost of the Year 1 fieldtrip to Spain is included in the overall fee, while students pay an additional fee for Year 2 overseas fieldwork. The department is able to arrange for students to pay for their fieldwork on an instalment basis if appropriate. There are also no-cost options available. Financial support may be available from the College for students who have financial difficulties in paying for other overseas fieldtrips.

**STUDENT PROFILE**

“The first year field trip to Spain really helped me to settle in at Royal Holloway; it allowed me to recognise what areas of the subject I had a particular interest in as well as being able to get to know my entire year group.”

Martha Hoskins (BA Geography)
Teaching and assessment

Our department has a strong culture of support for students. Every student has a personal tutor who works with them in providing academic advice and pastoral support throughout the entire degree programme.

The three year programme takes students through increasing levels of intellectual challenge and specialisation and culminates in a final year dissertation based on independent research. We also have placement-linked dissertations available in which students work with companies, charities and other external organisations on a pre-planned project. This provides excellent employability potential. The core of each course is normally a series of lectures, supported by tutorials, seminars, laboratory work, or fieldwork as appropriate. Formal contact time varies depending on the course, but on average students have 10–15 hours of formal contact time per week, with about twenty-five hours per week for independent study, including essay and report writing, library research and seminar preparation.

All units are assessed in the year in which they are taken and students must pass first year units in order to progress to Years 2 and 3. Assessment is by coursework such as field reports, essays, oral presentations or practical write-ups, and end of year examinations. Examinations will contribute about 40–50% of marks in each year depending on course choice. The final degree classification is determined on a student’s performance in eight units in Years 2 and 3, with the final year making up two-thirds of the final degree.

STUDYING OVERSEAS
STUDY ABROAD/ STUDENT EXCHANGE

In common with other departments at Royal Holloway, our students have the chance to study abroad as part of their degree or as an additional year (usually between Years 2 and 3 of their degree).

Exchange links exist with universities throughout the world and Geography students have recently spent years abroad in Australia and Canada. Further details can be found on the Royal Holloway website.
The Department

FACILITIES
The department has modern, well-equipped facilities for both physical and human geography and experienced support staff to advise and assist students. There are excellent computing amenities, including Geographical Information Systems, advanced cartographic and image handling packages. There is also a departmental collection of historic maps and a newly-refurbished library space. These are provided solely for Geography students, and are extensively used in the preparation of work for essays, tutorials and seminars. Our laboratory suites have recently been refurbished and include facilities for:

• advanced chemical analysis of soils and sediments
• palaeological studies of pollen and other microfossils
• physical analysis of sediment and soil
• sediment dating
• research on the response of soils and rocks to physical processes
• image analysis
• water quality
• visual and audio analysis for human geography
• geospatial methods

APPLICANT VISIT DAYS
Our Applicant Visit Days offer you an opportunity to come and find out more about us and get a taste of what university life is really like. Parents and friends are very welcome to come with you.

Invitations to Applicant Visit Days are sent out after we receive an application from you. You do not have to attend, but we strongly recommend it. We offer specific activities for parents and other guests, including a dedicated question and answer session with the Admissions Tutors. Applicants for the Geography, Politics and International Relations (PIR) degree (FL82) meet with both Geography and PIR staff and have a chance to visit both departments.

If you cannot attend one of the formal open days, then let us know as we can arrange for you to visit us on another occasion.

The Geography Society (GeogSoc)

All students are able to join the Geography Society which is run by Geography students who stand for election every year. It does great work in welcoming new students to the department, and settling into university life. The GeogSoc organises events through the year, including regular social events, a Christmas dinner, quizzes, sports matches and trips to external events, including an annual celebration at the end of the academic year in central London. GeogSoc is also very involved in promoting the department and the discipline at Open Days and through school visits and other Geography Ambassador work. Staff members regularly attend GeogSoc events.
Your future career

Geography graduates from Royal Holloway are highly valued by employers. We are committed to helping our students develop career-related skills, such as teamwork, report writing, IT skills and presentations. These skills are integral to the course and manifest themselves in the varied assessment and training methods used throughout the three years of undergraduate teaching.

In the department, we support our undergraduates in a range of ways. We retain contact with our former students (alumni) and their employers, and have an alumni database which can help students contact Royal Holloway Geography graduates to find out more about their particular careers. We also hold an annual careers evening, when past students return to discuss their career pathways after graduation, work alongside the College’s Careers Service and take part in the annual jobs fair.

Our courses provide an unmatched opportunity to integrate ideas from the humanities, social sciences and physical sciences which opens up numerous career opportunities. Our graduates are highly employable and enter a wide range of graduate-level careers in spheres as diverse as financial services, teaching, environmental science, the civil service, human resources, tourism and international development.

Geography’s variety is its strength in both academic and career terms. Over recent years, first destination statistics have shown that less than six percent of Royal Holloway Geography graduates are looking for work six months after graduation. Over a quarter of our graduates are involved in further study, while nearly 70 percent are in employment.

PLACEMENT-LINKED DISSERTATIONS

Placement-linked dissertations offer undergraduate students the opportunity to undertake a substantive and original piece of formally assessed research in conjunction with an organisation that has a professional interest in geographical concerns.

The placements are arranged by academic staff who forge links with the organisations and supervise the students’ respective projects. From work experience, expert training on public communication of their research, to one-on-one CV guidance, the scheme works to enhance students’ employability alongside their independent research skills. Committed to ensure fair and equal access, their research, travel and accommodation expenses are kindly supported by the Royal Holloway Ignition Fund.

The scheme is a great bridge to the working world helping students to develop business awareness, to demonstrate their added value to an employer and to make those all important contacts.

MICRO-PLACEMENTS

This scheme allows students to gain work experience by being placed within relevant organisations for a 2-4 week period during the summer between the 2nd and 3rd years of study. The scheme is run competitively, with the Royal Holloway team placing the top-ranked students in organisations that reflect students’ individual career aspirations. This scheme greatly aids students in a number of key areas – such as preparing CVs and application forms, workplace-relevant skills and the opportunity to build a network of industry contacts. We work with a wide range of employers across a broad spectrum of industries,
ranging from the creative arts to research institutes to finance in the city. We will place students in organisations that reflect their career aspirations, be that marketing, finance, teaching, publishing, journalism, business, accounting, environmental management, GIS and mapping, geoscience, museums and heritage and so on.

POSTGRADUATE OPPORTUNITIES
Our department has one of the largest graduate schools of Geography in the country with about 130 students registered for Masters or PhD programmes. We currently run five Masters degrees:

- MA Cultural Geography (Research);
- MSc Practising Sustainable Development;
- MSc Quaternary Science;
- MSc Sustainability and Management (taught jointly with the School of Management);
- MSc Geopolitics and Security (taught jointly with the Department of Politics and International Relations).

GRADUATE PROFILE

Alumna: Jon Abu-Nackly
Subject: BSc Geography, MSc Sustainability and Management
Graduated: 2008
Place of Work: Carbon Consultant DHL

“Having completed my undergraduate course, I wanted to continue my studies at Royal Holloway. The MSc Sustainability and Management course covered areas of my Geography degree that I really enjoyed, whilst also exposing me to areas of business and society that I took an interest in, such as Corporate Social Responsibility and Business Management.

“I was given the opportunity to become an intern for 6 months at DHL Neutral Services immediately after my Masters. The company assists DHL (the logistics provider) and its customers to reduce the carbon footprint of its operations. This job provided practical applications of so many theories that were learnt in the classroom. After my 6 month internship, I was offered a position permanently as a Carbon Consultant. I now look after the behavioural change element of energy reduction, engaging the workforce at a facility and looking at how systems such as metering onsite energy usage can be used to drive down consumption. This has led me to project manage projects across Europe, and even be involved in projects as far reaching as Dubai and Singapore.

My experiences with the Geography department will always remain with me, and I would recommend without hesitation anyone to come and do both the undergraduate and MSc course at Royal Holloway.”

This brochure was published in October 2015 and the information given was correct at that time. It is intended primarily for those considering admission to Royal Holloway, University of London as undergraduate students in 2016-17. Occasionally it may be necessary for the University to vary the content and delivery of programmes so we advise all applicants to refer to the website prior to making any application. Full terms and conditions of admission can be found at royalholloway.ac.uk/studyhere.