

Student Accommodation Application and Allocation Policy 2026/27



1. Introduction

This policy details how Royal Holloway provides accommodation for students and should be read alongside the accommodation terms and conditions.

Royal Holloway aims to provide students with a wide range of accommodation options, offering a comfortable home so that you can enjoy and make the most of your time at University. Royal Holloway prioritises applications from new undergraduate and new postgraduate students joining the University and we reserve the majority of our bed spaces to accommodate as many of these students as possible.

Accommodation at Royal Holloway includes University-owned Halls of Residence as well as student accommodation that is owned and managed by third party providers. If you are referred to or allocated a room in a partnered accommodation provider, further details will be provided to you at the time of allocation.

Royal Holloway seeks to encourage and promote an inclusive approach to accommodation provision and to provide a safe, accessible and welcoming environment for all students including those with protected characteristics. If you have a disability or are undergoing gender reassignment, we encourage you to discuss your specific needs at the earliest opportunity with our [Wellbeing teams](#).

2. Eligibility

Only full time Royal Holloway students and affiliated institution students will be able to apply for accommodation in Halls. These groups are:

- New undergraduate students including visiting students, Royal Holloway International Study Centre students and University of Law students studying at Royal Holloway.
- New postgraduate taught, postgraduate research and guest researchers.
- Continuing students.

While getting prepared in advance can help you feel more organised, it's not essential to secure an offer of a room and you can feel reassured that you don't need to rush into choosing Royal Holloway as your firm choice.

If you joined Royal Holloway as a new undergraduate student in 2025/26 and you interrupted your studies on or before **Friday 12 December 2025**, you are eligible to apply for accommodation as a new undergraduate for the 2026/27 academic year, provided you will be returning to your studies in September 2026 on a full-time basis.

3. Accommodation Guarantee

Royal Holloway will guarantee you an offer of accommodation in either University owned Halls of Residence or a nominated partner accommodation provider, if you are in one of the following student groups:

New undergraduate students, new international postgraduate taught*, Integrated Foundation Year or International Foundation Year students progressing into year one:

- To meet the guarantee, you'll need to either:
 - Submit a preference-based application by 10am on Monday 13 July 2026

OR

- Self-select a room and complete the booking process by 10am on Monday 13 July 2026

** If you are an international postgraduate taught student studying primarily on the Egham Campus and starting your studies in September 2026. The guarantee does not apply to students who will be starting their studies in January 2027.*

Under 18's

If you will be aged under 18 at the start of the academic year, you will be guaranteed an offer of accommodation provided that you submit an application by midday (UK time) on 1 September 2026. Applications received after this date will be prioritised for an accommodation offer, subject to availability.

Continuing students:

We have a limited number of rooms for continuing students located in Founders and George Eliot, that are available on a first come, first serve basis. Once all available rooms are booked, applications will be closed and students notified.

If you are a continuing student in one of the following groups, you will qualify for an accommodation guarantee:

- We will guarantee you an offer of accommodation as a continuing student if:
 - You are assessed by Student Finance as being a care leaver
 - You are assessed by Student Finance as being estranged from your parent(s)
 - You are an Asylum seeker
 - You are in receipt of a Sanctuary Scholarship
 - You are registered with Royal Holloway's Disability and Neurodiversity team under disability type 'B'
 - You are taking up the role of either a Hall Life Duty Officer or Hall Life Assistant. You'll receive an invitation to apply for accommodation via email.

To meet the conditions of the guarantee, you need to self-select a room and complete the booking process or submit a preference-based application by midday (UK time) on Monday 2 March 2026. Applications received after the afore mentioned date and time will not be guaranteed and will be processed on a first come, first served basis, subject to availability.

Continuing students with a disability

A recommendation for a specific room or room type may be put forward if you are registered with the Disability & Neurodiversity team and if you meet one of the following criteria:

- You are currently in a room which has been adapted to meet your disability needs.
- You have been given a room with existing adaptations to meet your disability needs.

You will be contacted by the Disability & Neurodiversity team if you meet one of the above criteria and will be provided with information on how to express your interest in a recommendation.

Please note, a recommendation being put forward does not constitute a guarantee of accommodation and any offer of accommodation will be subject to availability.

Guarantee conditions

As we continue to grow our accommodation offering, Royal Holloway may offer you accommodation that was not advertised at the time of your application. Should this happen, we will advise you of this at the point you are offered accommodation.

4. Accommodation Application Process

Preference based applications

All students will be able to submit a preference-based accommodation application, where you will be asked to rank the accommodation options we have in preference order of where you would like to live. We will offer a room that matches the highest preference possible, based on the room availability we have at the time we process your application. Once an accommodation offer has been issued, it cannot be changed.

Self-selection

New Undergraduate and New International Postgraduate Taught students will be offered the opportunity to self-select their own room during their accommodation guarantee window. During this period, you will be able to choose your Hall, flat and room as part of the application process. Once you've started the booking process, you won't be able to change your room or Hall.

Additional living preference

Royal Holloway offers students the ability to specify an additional living preference during their accommodation application. For the 2026/27 academic year, these living preferences are quieter, alcohol free, single sex and show flats. Subject to availability, students who've selected an additional living preference will be placed into a flat or house with other students who've selected that option. Please note, we cannot guarantee that you will be allocated to a room that meets your additional living preference and due to building constraints and demand, we may not be able to offer living preferences at every Hall.

Medical Requirements

As part of the accommodation application process, you'll be asked if you have a disability that requires either adaptations to your accommodation or have other specific accommodation requirements because of your disability. If so, you'll be asked to register your condition with the Disability and Neurodiversity team and continue with submitting a preference-based application. While registering with the Disability and Neurodiversity team, they will ask evidence of your disability and will communicate any accommodation requirements based on disability need directly to the Student Accommodation team.

5. Undergraduate self-selection room release schedule

While getting prepared in advance can help you feel more organised, it's not essential to secure an offer of a room and you can feel reassured that you don't need to rush into choosing Royal Holloway as your firm choice. We'll be releasing a balanced number of rooms from each Hall on these dates, to make sure all applicants have the opportunity to book the room type they'd prefer.

Rooms will be released at 10am BST on:

9 March 2026

13 April 2026

11 May 2026

8 June 2026

Please remember that once you've booked a specific room, you won't be able to change your mind, even if another room you prefer becomes available later. Be sure to carefully consider your options before finalising your reservation!

6. Allocation Principles

We try to allocate so that undergraduates are housed together, and postgraduates are housed together, however we may need to mix undergraduate students with postgraduate students so that we can offer accommodation to as many students as possible.

In mixed sex accommodation, we endeavour to ensure an even mix of students. However, this may not always be possible due to demand and room availability.

Students that do not qualify for a guarantee are encouraged to apply as soon as possible within our application window. Non-guaranteed students will be allocated on a first-come-first served basis (subject to room availability), following the fulfilment of any accommodation guarantee.

If you are assessed as needing a particular type of room by our [Disability & Neurodiversity team](#), you will be offered a room type that best matches the assessment of your needs.

7. Accommodation offers

If you are self-selecting a room, you'll will have 5 days in which to complete your accommodation booking, after selecting your room. In order to accept your accommodation offer, you will need to make a prepayment of £120. This payment will be put towards the first instalment of your accommodation fees and you should manually subtract the £120 from the first instalment, before paying.

If you've submitted a preference-based accommodation application, a notification email will be sent to the email address you registered on the accommodation system to let you know once an offer has been made. You will be able to view your accommodation offer through the [Online Accommodation System](#). We recommend that you regularly check the Online Accommodation System and your registered email, including junk folders, to ensure that you do not miss your offer of accommodation. At least one offer reminder email will be sent to you, prior to your offer expiring.

You will be given **5 calendar days** to respond to the accommodation offer (later applicants will have either **1 or 2 calendar days**). In order to accept your accommodation offer, you will need to make a prepayment of £120. This payment will be put towards the first instalment of your accommodation fees and you should manually subtract the £120 from the first instalment, before paying.

8. Expired offers

If you decline your accommodation offer or let the offer expire, your application for accommodation will be cancelled. If you change your mind, or allowed your offer to expire in error, we may not be able to make you another offer and any previous guarantees will no longer apply. If your offer of accommodation has expired, please [contact Student Accommodation](#) to enquire if another offer can be made.

9. Waiting lists

If you have applied for accommodation and we have allocated all of the bed spaces that we have available and are unable to make you an accommodation offer, your application will be added to a waiting list. Students on the waiting list will be contacted regularly to check whether they still need accommodation. Please be aware rooms may not become available until several weeks into the start of term, therefore this option is mostly suitable for students that are able to commute or make other temporary arrangements for accommodation whilst they wait to see if a room becomes available.

Timelines for students submitting a preference-based accommodation application

STUDENT TYPE	ACCOMMODATION APPLICATION DATE	WHEN CAN I EXPECT TO RECEIVE AN OFFER? ¹	DEADLINE FOR ACCEPTING OFFER
Continuing undergraduates & postgraduates that qualify for a guarantee	Between 23 February and 2 March (before midday)	Within 5 working days ¹	5 calendar days
Continuing undergraduates & postgraduates that do not qualify for a guarantee New postgraduate taught and postgraduate research students	From 2 March (midday UK time)	Within 5 working days ¹	5 calendar days (reducing to 2 days after 13 July)
New undergraduate	Between 9 March and 13 July (before midday UK time)	Within 5 working days ¹	5 calendar days
Visiting students: term one only or full year	Between 13 July (after midday UK time) and 17 August	from 13 August ¹	2 calendar days
Students progressing from an Integrated Foundation Year	18 August and 31 August	Update on application within 7 working days after submission ¹	2 calendar day
	1 September onwards	Update on application within 7 working days after submission ¹	1 calendar day
New postgraduate taught students – January 2027 intake Visiting students: term two and three	1 September onwards	Within 5 working days ¹	2 calendar days

¹ With the exception of applications that qualify for a guarantee, offers of accommodation are subject to room availability.

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