

## PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

This document describes the 8 Week and 4 Week Pre-Sessional English Language Programme (PELP). The programme specification is valid from June 2011.

This programme aims:

- o to develop students' knowledge and use of the study skills and academic English required for university study;
- o to develop students' proficiency and confidence in both oral and written English so that they can communicate in a variety of academic situations;
- o to provide an introduction to the academic environment at Royal Holloway;
- o to provide an introduction to some aspects related to contemporary British society, thus enabling students to adapt to everyday life in the UK.

The programme is administered by Royal Holloway International (RHI) and designed primarily for non-native English speaking students whose English language levels do not meet College requirements for entry to undergraduate and postgraduate study, or to full-time preparation courses at Foundation or Pre-Masters level.

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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 College prospectus, the College 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.

## Programme Learning Outcomes

### *Knowledge and Understanding*

The PELP is primarily focused on the development of relevant skills. However, students will acquire some understanding of:

- o the academic environment in which they will be expected to operate at Royal Holloway, University of London;
- o issues related to contemporary British society.

### *Skills and Other Attributes*

The PELP will enable students to:

- o write a well structured and clearly argued academic essay based on secondary sources;\*
- o use appropriate academic conventions when writing a text;\*
- o summarise a text;\*
- o read effectively and critically;\*
- o understand a variety of written sources;\*
- o develop effective listening skills in order to understand lectures and take notes; \*
- o research, plan and deliver a short oral presentation;\*
- o participate effectively in seminars;\*
- o begin to build up discipline specific vocabulary;\*
- o develop general oral communication skills in English;\*
- o develop word-processing skills;\*
- o use the internet as a source of information;\*
- o become familiar with the Royal Holloway library and other information resources including the university's Virtual Learning Environment, Moodle;\*
- o function as an independent learner.\*

\* transferable skills

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## Teaching, Learning and Assessment

The teacher plays a key role within the programme and has the role of language expert, presenter of information, and facilitator in the classroom, as well as monitoring students' understanding and progress. During the programme, students will participate in:

- o lectures;
- o face-to-face and online seminar discussion;
- o individual and group consultations.

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

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

Independent learning will be fostered through learner training in class, which will encourage students to use learning resources on campus and to develop skills of self-reliance. Consultations will provide support and structure in setting and achieving personal goals.

Students can join the PELP for 8 or 4 weeks, depending on their language level. Those students planning to progress to postgraduate degrees in the School of Management will follow separate subject-specific courses for the 8 and 4 week components. Students planning to follow other degree or university preparation programmes will follow generic academic skills courses. For the final 4 weeks of the programme postgraduate students will be streamed separately from undergraduate students. Through class work, consultations and independent study, students will be encouraged to work on grammar, vocabulary, communication and study skills.

The programme 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:

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

Course syllabuses for the 8 and 4 week blocks are designed to reflect an increase in English language proficiency through the programme, in order for students to be able to meet the English language requirements encountered on the programmes to which they will progress.

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

Assessments on the programme are skills based and integrated and reflect the stated outcomes of the programme.

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## Programme Structure

Students admitted to the 8 Week and 4 Week PELPs will join students progressing from Part 1 of the 12 Week PELP.

<b>PELP 2</b> Weeks 5 - 8	Students joining PELP 2 may be mixed into classes with students continuing from PELP 1. Students are divided into: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Postgraduate Management stream</li><li>o General postgraduate and undergraduate stream</li></ul> then sub-streamed into classes according to IELTS scores.
	<b>Course titles:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Lectures</li><li>o Reading and Writing</li><li>o Listening and Speaking</li><li>o Academic Language and Study Skills</li></ul>
<b>PELP 3</b> Weeks 9 - 12	Students joining PELP 3 may be mixed into classes with students continuing from PELP 2. Students are divided into: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Postgraduate Management stream</li><li>o General postgraduate stream</li><li>o Undergraduate stream</li></ul> then sub-streamed into classes according to IELTS scores.
	<b>Course titles:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Listening to Lectures</li><li>o Reading and Writing</li><li>o Seminar Skills</li><li>o Presentation Skills</li></ul>

The programme also includes independent study.

Student's writing and speaking ability will be assessed at the end of PELP 2.

At the end of PELP 3, students will be assessed in the following three elements:

1. Essay
2. Oral Presentation
3. Academic Discussion

In-session English language classes will be advised for students who do not pass one or more of these courses.

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## Student Support and Guidance

- o Weekly consultations with a Personal Tutor in RHI where issues of an academic nature may be discussed;
- o Programme of orientation to the local environment and academic services;
- o Programme Leader, Deputy Leaders and Language Tutors available and accessible by appointment;
- o Staff-student committee meetings (one meeting per PELP block) between senior RHI staff and elected student representatives;
- o Detailed student handbook which details programme resources;

- o Extensive supporting materials and learning resources in College library, RHI Student Resources, via Metalib, via Moodle and in CALL laboratory;
- o Access to all College support services including Student Counselling Service, Health Service, Educational Support Office, Careers' Service, Programme Leader.

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### **Admissions Criteria**

Applicants will normally have been offered a place at Royal Holloway for a particular undergraduate or postgraduate degree. Applications for the PELP are sent to RHI where decisions on admission are normally made by the RHI Admissions team. Students are not normally admitted to the PELP unless they already hold an internationally-recognised English language qualification at a level which indicates they are likely to be successful on the PELP.

The minimum English language qualifications at IELTS (or equivalent) required for students to be admitted to the PELP can be found in the table here:

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

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### **Progression and Award Regulations**

Students must fulfil the programme attendance requirements in order to progress to their chosen undergraduate or postgraduate programme of study. The 8 and 4 Week PELP is non-award bearing and entry to undergraduate and postgraduate study is based upon attending the PELP. There is no pass threshold or requirement.

The results from the three assessed elements (oral presentation, essay and academic discussion skills) form a profile of students' achievements on the programme. They receive a transcript of this information and also a recommendation, if necessary, for future English language study on the In-sessional English Language Programme. A copy of the transcript is also sent to students' future academic department.

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### **Further Learning and Career Opportunities**

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

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### **Indicators of Quality and Standards**

Departmental systems for monitoring and assessing quality include course questionnaires, the departmental feedback box, the RHI Staff-Student committee, peer evaluation of teaching, the monitoring of curricula provision through the departmental Teaching and Learning Sub-Committee, an

annual review report, including a report from the External Examiner, and the Periodic Departmental Review.

The majority of the teachers on the programme are full-time members of staff in RHI; they have experience of both teaching English for Academic Purposes in Higher Education and working on Pre-Sessional programmes. The PELP is validated by Royal Holloway, University of London.

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### **List of Programmes**

The programme is taught by staff at Royal Holloway, University of London. The Banner programme code is given in parentheses.

Four Week Pre-Sessional English Language Programme (1335)

Eight Week Pre-Sessional English Language Programme (1336)

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