



Brief for the position of  
**DIRECTOR OF HUMAN  
RESOURCES  
[INTERIM]**



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# A WARM WELCOME





# WELCOME MESSAGE

**from the Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Professor Julie Sanders**

Dear candidate,

Thank you for your interest in the role of Director of Human Resources (Interim) at Royal Holloway.

This is an exciting time for the University. We are implementing our new strategy, RH2030s as well as working at pace on the transformation efforts required to deliver it successfully. We are striving to be a University of Social Purpose, dedicated to making a positive impact in everything we do across local, national and global contexts. Our values of being open, respectful, daring and innovative, co-created by students and colleagues, will help to shape the future as well as our work in the here and now.

I am constantly struck by the sheer range of innovative activities our colleagues and students are involved in – from our creative educational opportunities to discovery-led endeavours in our performance spaces, sound studios, research laboratories and across our beautiful living campus in Surrey. We're developing exciting opportunities in our central London campus too, expanding our portfolio of programmes and our partnership work as a member of the globally-recognised University of London federation. I like to say that we have the best of both worlds, with everything a close-knit residential campus provides alongside access to all the stimulus and possibility of a great world city.

As Vice-Chancellor and Principal of this amazing institution, I am proud to be responsible for a team of dedicated colleagues, working together across academic and Professional Services, and an astonishing global community of students, past, present and future.



In your role as Director of Human Resources (Interim), you will be central to how we achieve our strategic ambitions and realise the potential of our transformation work. During your time with us, we hope that you will help to lead and shape a values-led, inclusive, ambitious, and future-facing People Services function.

We are looking for someone who wants to be part of reimagining how we work in order to achieve brilliant things.

We really hope that you will want to join us, and I look forward to speaking with you about the opportunity.

**Julie**

Professor Julie Sanders  
Vice-Chancellor and Principal

# OUR HISTORY

Today's Royal Holloway is formed from two colleges, founded by two social pioneers, Elizabeth Jesser Reid and Thomas Holloway. They were among the first places in Britain where women could access higher education. We have gone from strength to strength and are now proud to offer inclusive education and research to over 12,000 students across our two sites in Surrey and central London.



Elizabeth Jesser Reid



Thomas Holloway



Jane Holloway

Original colleges founded by social pioneers, Elizabeth Jesser Reid and Thomas and Jane Holloway.

• 1800s

• 1886

Royal Holloway's iconic Founder's Building was opened by Queen Victoria, allowing the use of 'Royal' in our title.



Queen Victoria



• 1900

We joined the University of London.



History shows that we have been brave from the very beginning. Royal Holloway and Bedford Colleges established an environment that was enabling for those who dared to step beyond what society laid out for them.



**Professor Julie Sanders,**  
Vice-Chancellor and Principal

Both colleges became fully co-educational.

1965 •



Emily Wilding Davison building in Egham is opened by Her Royal Highness, The Princess Royal, Chancellor of the University of London.

• 1985

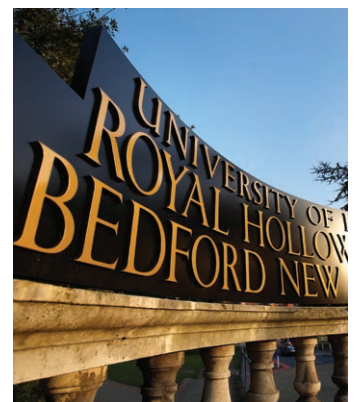
Bedford College and Royal Holloway merged.

2017 •



• 2024

We celebrate the 175th anniversary of the founding of Bedford College.





# ROYAL HOLLOWAY IN NUMBERS

Royal Holloway, University of London, is in the top 35 of all UK universities\*. We were founded in the nineteenth century to provide equity in opportunity, to transform lives through education and create positive change – doing this with bravery, curiosity and care. We have the courage and conviction to think differently, providing a platform to challenge conventions.

With combined and integrated strengths in innovative education and transformative research, we have a passion to create, teach and share knowledge in both established and emerging areas. Through our impactful research, we seek creative solutions to complex challenges to make a real difference in the world. We are a place for growth. We aim to empower individuals and transform lives through inclusive education, an active, and close-knit community, and partnerships that link us with local and global industry and culture.

We are a University of Social Purpose, creating positive change, for what matters – for our students, for society and for the world.



## TOP 25%

of all UK research in Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021



### 15<sup>TH</sup> IN THE UK

for the overall quality of its research outputs - Times Higher Education's (THE) analysis and rankings of the REF 2021 results (May 2022)



### 34<sup>TH</sup>

The Times and Sunday Times  
Good University Guide 2025



### 49<sup>TH</sup>

UK), top 500 (world) - Times Higher Education (THE) University Rankings 2025



### 37<sup>TH</sup> IN THE UK

in the category of 'International Outlook', Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings 2025 recognising our broader outlook as a global university





**12,195**

Students\*

**2,599**

International students

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**10,324**

Undergraduate  
students

**1,200**

Postgraduate  
taught students

**670**

Postgraduate  
research students



**80%**

of recent graduates  
in graduate level  
employment  
or study\*\*



**OVER  
110,000**

alumni of Bedford College,  
Royal Holloway College and  
Royal Holloway, University  
of London and Bedford New  
College worldwide



**2**

**CAMPUSES**

Surrey and  
Central London



**CONTRIBUTES  
£657.1M**

to the UK economy\*\*\*

\* Correct as of March 2024.

\*\* Data from Government run Graduate Outcomes  
Survey (GOS) of 2021 leavers.

\*\*\* Biggar Economics, 2019/2020.

# RH2030s: OUR NEW STRATEGY

RH2030s outlines our ambitions reaching into the next decade and how we will respond to global needs and challenges, building on the incredible platform of outstanding research, education, and civic and global engagement that is already taking place at Royal Holloway and in the context of an ever-changing world.

Royal Holloway has a proud history of being at the forefront of social change, equality, and inclusion. Our RH2030s strategy aims to carry this ethos

forward with energy and ambition, helping us take advantage of emerging opportunities to make an ever-greater positive impact on the individuals and the communities we serve.

Our vision is to be a forward-thinking University of Social Purpose: one that is committed to enabling outstanding educational and student experience; research and innovation; and local and global engagement with partners to drive social change for a better, more inclusive future.

## Our Strategy



## Our Values

We are a values-led organisation, with a clear sense of who we are and what we stand for. Our values guide us in being a University of Social Purpose in all we do.

**Respectful:** An inclusive community built on kindness, trust and understanding.

**Innovative:** Relentlessly curious and ambitious.

**Daring:** Challenging ourselves and others to make a positive difference in the world.

**Open:** Working collaboratively with integrity, honesty, and transparency.



## Our Strategic Ambitions



### Inclusive Education and Research

We will be a research-intensive University that fosters ambition and innovation. We will provide our students and colleagues with exceptional opportunities to grow and lead, tackling global challenges through inclusive education and socially impactful research, and developing inclusive leaders for the future.



### Skills for Choice and Opportunity

We will provide tailored learning experiences that combine research and practical knowledge, fostering a supportive community where students and colleagues develop skills, confidence, and values to shape their futures and positively impact the world.



### Civic Minded, Globally Engaged

We will celebrate and build on our global community by connecting with our international alumni, and global and local partners across industry and other sectors. Our University will contribute to economic and societal wellbeing through world-leading research and by supporting and enabling our global student community.



### Partnerships and Collaboration

We will develop future-facing, inclusive partnerships that enhance our social purpose. We will utilise our global reach and our status as a University of London federation member to tackle societal challenges and improve the quality, scale, and relevance of opportunities for all those we work with.

## Our Strategic Enablers

Our strategic enablers are the three core inputs that will contribute to the successful delivery of the RH2030s strategy. They will be embedded throughout our strategic ambitions and everyday activities.



### Infrastructure for the Future

We will provide adaptable, high-quality learning and research spaces, both physical and virtual, fostering a sustainable and inclusive environment. We will enable seamless, user-centred digital experiences and an environmentally sustainable infrastructure to support net zero targets and remove outdated spaces and technology.



### Environmental Sustainability

We will be one of London's most sustainable universities, embedding environmental sustainability in all aspects of our operations and empowering our community through research, education, and partnerships to mitigate climate and biodiversity crises, and reduce our environmental footprint. We will empower our students, colleagues, and partners to be environmental game-changers, drawing on our creative strengths and leveraging the decarbonisation of our estate.



### People, Culture, and Inclusion

We will foster a vibrant, diverse, and inclusive community where everyone feels empowered and valued. We will inspire everyone to reach their potential and have a positive impact on both local and global communities.

## Our Areas of Strength

As a University of Social Purpose, we have identified five areas of interdisciplinary strength which thread through our work, from the skills that our graduates will be able to demonstrate to the world to the challenge-led research and impact we undertake with partners, locally and globally.



Four decorative corner brackets, each composed of a solid blue square and a pixelated blue square, are positioned at the corners of the text area: top-left, top-right, bottom-left, and bottom-right.

# THE ROLE



## Main purpose

The Director of Human Resources (Interim) is a vitally important role within Royal Holloway. The success of our students, our colleagues and our education and research, as well as the overall delivery of our RH2030s strategy is dependent upon effective and innovative ways of working. The role holder will provide leadership across all aspects of human resources and organisational development, improve services to all service users and stakeholders and foster an ambitious and compassionate organisational culture that prioritises high quality performance and efficiency while being values-led.

The role provides direct and confidential counsel to the Vice-Chancellor on all relevant matters and is a member of the University Executive Board. They work in partnership with the Provost on the University's People, Culture and Inclusion priorities as well as our work with our trade union partners.

RH2030s outlines a bold vision of Royal Holloway as a university of social purpose. A significant transformation programme is underway to reimagine our academic provision and associated services. As an enabling function, Human Resources needs to adapt to future-facing ways of working to better support that vision. Central focus for this role therefore will be to lead and support the reshaping of the Human Resources Directorate to better enable that objective with a focus on improving efficiency and financial sustainability as part of a longterm plan for people strategies at Royal Holloway. The plan must adopt a holistic approach to attracting, recruiting and developing colleagues, supporting employee experience and alignment with RH2030s vision.

## Main contacts

Reporting to the Executive Business and People Services, your key contacts across the University will be the Human Resources Directorate; the Senior Leadership Team; Executive Board and members of the governing body which is the University Council; Directors of Professional Services, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion leads and networks; Trades Unions.

It will be important to maintain an effective internal and external network, as well as interaction with equivalent role-holders at other higher education institutions.





# MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

## 1. Strategic Leadership and Operational Management

- Implement and optimise Human Resources and people strategies to support the University's transformation goals.
- Lead the reshaping of the Human Resources Directorate with a People Services approach to enhance its capacity to support the change programme and the RH2030s vision.



- Develop and implement workforce strategies that contribute to the sustainability and efficiency of the University.
- Manage relationships with trade unions to ensure smooth transitions and foster positive partnership working during periods of change.
- Ensure effective financial management and high-quality service delivery within the Human Resources Directorate.
- Oversee the delivery of transactional services to maintain operational efficiency.

## 2. Performance Management

- Foster a high-performance culture across Human Resources and the wider University to support strategic objectives, including through the development of directorate performance indicators and service standards.
- Review and develop reward and recognition strategies that underpin high performance and reward outstanding contributions.
- Provide frameworks and operational support for effective performance management throughout the University.

## 3. Organisational Development

- Lead the design and implementation of organisational development strategies that align with the University's RH2030s strategic goals, fostering a culture of continuous improvement and innovation.
- Drive the development and delivery of effective workforce planning, building institutional capability and support succession planning across academic communities and professional services.
- Provide a framework for building on our institutional values, enhancing employee engagement, wellbeing, and inclusion, using data-driven insight to inform interventions and measure impact.
- Champion the development and delivery of performance management frameworks and associated training and development programmes that support individual growth, team effectiveness and organisational excellence.
- In partnership with the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) support the development of an effective research culture, researcher development and research workforce planning.





## 4. Organisational Change

- Collaborate with senior leaders to support change management and organisational design, ensuring effective communication, staff involvement, and alignment with institutional values.
- Support collaborative and partnership working across the University to enable change, actively challenging silo approaches. This includes close partnership with Strategic Planning and Change as well as our Transformation Team.
- Enable ongoing transformation to improve efficiency and financial sustainability while retaining the richness of the University's diverse discipline mix.

## 5. Talent Acquisition Management

- Engage in inclusive talent acquisition management to ensure the University can recruit and retain staff of appropriate quality in support of its academic and organisational aims.
- Develop the University's recruitment brand to attract outstanding academic and professional services staff and a diverse staff body.

## 6. Representation

- Represent the Human Resources function professionally both internally and externally to the University.
- Proactively build good working relationships with wider leadership forum of the University.
- Purposefully engage with and contribute to relevant external, national HR professional networks, bringing policy insight and resultant briefings to the University leadership and more widely as appropriate.

### Additional Responsibilities:

Make a significant contribution to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion agenda within the University, supporting the delivery of an inclusive workforce and ensuring Human Resources Directorate embody and enable the agenda.

Contribute to creating a culture that supports individual wellbeing and delivers a supportive and healthy environment for all staff.

Continue to develop a culture that values the contribution of every member of staff and supports the principle of dignity at work.

Any other task commensurate with the role including supporting Gold response to emergencies out of hours from time to time.

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The above list of duties may be adjusted in the light of the expertise of the appointed candidate. As the needs of Royal Holloway change so the above job profile, duties and location of the role within the University will be adjusted accordingly.



# THE PERSON

We are looking for a colleague who can embody Royal Holloway's core values and demonstrate an unwavering commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion. You will have a passionate dedication to student success and wellbeing, coupled with a strong belief in the social purpose and civic engagement mission of higher education. You will also share our commitment to environmental sustainability and possess the ability to enhance the University's reputation both locally and globally through your leadership and actions. You will have a high level of personal and professional resilience to deliver and enable significant change in the institution.



## Qualifications and knowledge

- Degree or qualification in Human Resources, or a related field.
- Membership of a Human Resources Professional Body (e.g Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development)
- Good understanding of UK employment law (including that related to employment rights, equality, working time regulations, TUPE regulations, Immigration and Asylum and health and safety).
- Thorough understanding of and experience of engaging with employment tribunals including effective and efficient working with external and internal legal advisors in this regard.
- Awareness of the main issues affecting Higher Education and their implications for Human Resources.

## Experience

- Significant experience in leading Human Resources in a large, complex environment, e.g Higher Education or similar culture.
- Significant experience in successfully leading complex organisational change at pace.
- Significant experience in trade union negotiations and excellent understanding of relevant legislation and practice.
- Proven track record of making strategic workforce interventions leading to increased efficiency and effectiveness.
- Experience in managing Human Resources departments/directorates and delivering customer-focused services.

## Strategic thinking and innovation

- Capacity to drive positive change in complex environments.
- Skill in translating strategic goals into implementable plans.
- Highly developed skills in report writing and presenting complex issues to senior colleagues.
- A personal and professional commitment to EDI, with a strong background of practical involvement in EDI work.

## Values-led leadership and interpersonal skills

- Proven track record of making strategic workforce interventions leading to increased efficiency and effectiveness.
- Strong influencing, negotiating, and interpersonal skills, including the ability to deal with sector trade unions.
- Ability to inspire confidence and form strong and productive working relationships.
- Comfortable working in a formal committee structure.
- Good levels of empathy to effectively engage with colleagues coupled with a strength of focus, assertive confidence, and resilience to ensure the best outcomes are achieved for the University in line with its values.



# HOW TO APPLY

Applications should be sent by the closing date of **Friday 13 June 2025**.

Please apply on the University's online recruitment system including a comprehensive CV, information setting out your interest in the role and details of how you match the role requirements. You should also include the names and contact details of two referees.

If you are unable to apply online, please email your application to [recruitment@rhul.ac.uk](mailto:recruitment@rhul.ac.uk).

All candidates are also requested to complete an online Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form which will be found at the end of the application process. This will assist the University in monitoring selection decisions to assess whether equality of opportunity is being achieved. Any information collated from the Equal Opportunities Monitoring forms will not be used as part of the selection process and will be treated as strictly confidential.

## Key dates

Interviews will take place on campus on Tuesday 17 June 2025.

## Queries

Anyone wishing to discuss the role is invited to contact the Executive Director of Business and People Services by email:

[stephen.mcauliffe@rhul.ac.uk](mailto:stephen.mcauliffe@rhul.ac.uk)





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