

Provider's name: Richmond, The American International University in London

Provider's UKPRN: 10005470

Access and Participation Statement 2023-24

Summary

Richmond American University London is a small, highly internationalised university that believes in expanding opportunities for students from all backgrounds to access higher education, empowering people who may not have considered university to explore a unique international education.

Our commitment to embracing students from all backgrounds is encapsulated in our university motto of 'Unity in Diversity'. Our broad liberal arts approach helps all our students to build their confidence and self-esteem and provide them with transferable skills. All our undergraduate degree programmes offer the opportunity for internships as well as community work through service learning. This approach produces graduates who have both a rounded education and are equipped for a diverse and changing workplace when they graduate.

As an independent not for profit university which depends entirely on student fees for its income, Richmond currently has limited funds and resources available for a comprehensive access and participation plan. However, we have embedded support in our curriculum, student services and scholarships that will help widen access to Richmond American University London.

A Liberal Arts University

The University's academic environment is based on a US approach, including a US Liberal Arts curriculum. Our degree programmes combine the best of UK and US teaching, with accreditation from both the Middle States Commission for Higher Education (MSCHE) in the US and OfS in the UK, blending the American focus on the Liberal Arts and personal development, with the British emphasis on subject specialisation.

At Richmond, our Liberal Arts approach to teaching and learning, to an extent, already has specific benefits for students who face disadvantages in accessing higher education, succeeding and progressing:

- A 4-year degree with year 1 (Freshman year) designed to improve skills such as English and maths, creative thinking, critical thinking, and research skills.
 - Entry requirements of 96 UCAS tariff points or the equivalent support widening access.
 - We offer an extended degree for students without formal qualifications and those who do not meet the published entry criteria. This option includes an extra summer semester in Year 1 with timetabled academic English and study skill classes. Students are allocated a Personal Academic Advisor with additional support across health and well-being, financial guidance and career advice from the Student Affairs team.
- A US model of student support including:

- Our Student Government supports fellow students and is active in supporting decision making within the university.
- For-credit internships to ensure students get relevant work experience to improve their CV and build confidence.
- Flexibility to switch degrees up to 2 years – our US framework promotes multiple points of entry and student mobility enabling students explore courses (modules) and switch programme pathways.

Scholarships and Bursaries

Richmond have established scholarships, bursaries and hardship funds to ensure that UK students with financial needs have the appropriate support throughout their time with us. The bursaries specifically support to widen access from low-income households and those with care experience.

Scholarships

- As Richmond is not a fee capped provider, the university decided to offer students a discount of £3,085 in tuition fees each academic year. So instead of paying tuition fees of £9,250 each year, students pay £6,165, making studying more affordable and reducing the amount paid back in student loans.

Bursaries

- **Sir Cyril Taylor Unity in Diversity award:** 20 Cash bursaries worth £3,700 each over four years. **Priority will be given to the following groups:**
 - students with experience of care
 - students with refugee status
 - Students with the lowest household income (students with a household income closer to £0 will be allocated in preference to £24,999 for example)
- **One Sir Cyril Taylor Richmond Carer Award** worth £37,140 over four years. Location Hounslow. Varied financial support including:
 - One-year paid accommodation worth £19,000 – 52 weeks
 - Cash bursary of £1200 per year
 - Fee discount of £3085 tuition fees per year worth 12,340

Hardship funds

- The university runs a Student Emergency Fund and a Hardship Fund to support students mainly to cover essential expenditure.

Access and Participation Data

Currently our UK student cohort is relatively small compared with other British universities. With such small numbers, presenting meaningful data on access and participation can be a challenge.

Our US framework, which promotes multiple points of entry, student mobility, and choice following admission, together with the relatively small volume of enrolled students from the UK, presents profound compatibility and comparability problems with HESA datasets, which are based on the British system of single honours degrees.

We aim to improve our data collection, monitoring and research capabilities to inform future access and participation strategies. The University is investing in a new student record system which will improve the collation of data related to access for students in line with practice at other UK providers and will also be in keeping with the [University mission, vision and values](#).

Working towards an Access and Participation Plan

In future, we aim to undertake a complete gap analysis of student data to improve access and participation among underrepresented groups at Richmond. We have started working towards an award of AdvanceHE's Race Equality Charter scheme. We will explore attainment/completion data by ethnicity to support achieving the Race Quality Charter and informing the Access and Participation Plan.

DATA SNAPSHOT

ACCESS

Table 1: Total Enrolled UK Students 22/23 Academic Year

Total UK Students	BAME	Mature	Disabled
143	60	44	27
%	41.96%	30.77%	18.88%

*Mature is 21+ at start of FA22

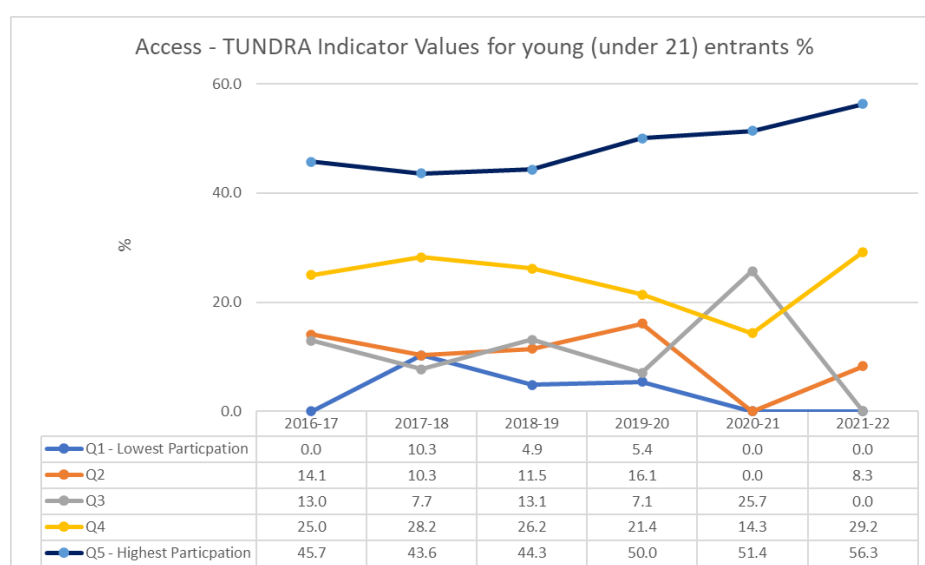
*Disabled is anyone with a recorded SEN at the University

TUNDRA data

(TUNDRA (tracking underrepresentation by area) is an area-based measure that uses tracking of state-funded mainstream school pupils in England to calculate young participation. It is an official statistic. TUNDRA classifies local areas across England into five equal groups – or quintiles - based on the proportion of 16 year old state-funded mainstream school pupils who participate in higher education aged 18 or 19 years.)

Although our location is in an area dominated by Quintile 5 postcodes, our student population from Quintile 3 and 4 has remained steady. With a comprehensive gap analysis planned, we can explore our current UK market student motivation and behaviours to join Richmond. The analysis will further guide where to put our efforts to increase the number of students from underrepresented groups.

Chart 1: TUNDRA data, source Office of Students (OfS)



Outreach Activities

Our Student Recruitment Team implement a range of activities throughout the year including:

- Attendance at UCAS recruitment events and career fairs at local colleges and schools
- Schools & FE Colleges Outreach:
 - Visits to and from targeted schools
 - Working closely with the West London Business Alliance
 - Bi-monthly newsletter updating and informing school heads, careers advisors, head of years etc about developments at Richmond and other news
- Local Community Participation (Green project)
 - The team will be working with Student Affairs to help build relationships with community groups and NGO's where our students help on specific projects, such as a river clean-up for the Wandle Trust, an environmental charity which aims to deliver health river ecosystems across the southeast of England