

# Megan

BA English and Drama



Hello!

I'm Megan and I have just finished my third year studying English and Drama at Royal Holloway. I have had the best three years here and could not have wished for a better university experience. I have loved my time here so much that I am continuing with a master's in English Literature.



## My journey to university

Since a young age, I have loved being in education and knew from the start of sixth form that I would want to continue into university study. At this point, I did not know which career I would like to pursue in the future, and so decided to choose A-level subjects that I was passionate about and interested in, and that would provide a varied combination for different career paths.

I studied:

- English Literature
- Drama
- Psychology
- Spanish

My passions for English and Drama went beyond the course in year 13, to the extent I wanted to pursue them further in university study. I had also been considering career options, and recognised that I would be interested in pursuing a career in teaching and needed a degree in my field to do so. Therefore, I decided I definitely wished to pursue my desire for studying English and Drama at university.

# Megan

BA English and Drama



ROYAL  
HOLLOWAY  
UNIVERSITY  
OF LONDON

## Barriers along the way...

However, coming from a low-income, single-parent household and being the first in my family to attend university, I began to question whether I would really be able to access university. My family were supportive of my wish to go to university, but, having never experienced it themselves, they did not know much about where to even begin searching, and were particularly worried about the financial cost. When I started researching more into university, I came to realise how expensive it can be and started to make myself consider other options, such as finding a job or an apprenticeship instead. I knew that university was really the way for me, but, at this point, did not see how I would be able to afford it

## Pursuing my goal...

I am incredibly grateful that my mum encouraged me to keep pursuing my goal of attending university, rather than finding a different option purely out of financial concern. Determined to go to university, I researched and picked some top choices that I wished to visit on an open day. Royal Holloway was the first university I attended in year 13, and, after that, I just kept comparing the others to it! I immediately fell in love with the campus, the course, the tight-knit community and the overall feel of it.



At the open days, I spoke to lecturers and students not only about the course and university life but also whether there is any support available for those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Royal Holloway were so incredibly supportive and enthusiastic, and it was wonderful to hear how the university focuses so greatly on inclusivity for all and provides excellent help for those in need. I visited the finance stand on the day and spoke to them about my situation, and they provided me with great reassurance that I, and anyone, should be able to go to university.

# Megan

BA English and Drama



ROYAL  
HOLLOWAY  
UNIVERSITY  
OF LONDON

## The support available...

It is definitely important to research, enquire and ask questions on open days regarding the support available to you. Royal Holloway certainly provided the best support and guidance for my personal circumstances and were, for me, the most focused on helping those from disadvantaged backgrounds have access to university. The finance team explained student finance and loans to me, as well as alerting me to the Royal Holloway bursary which is available to any student from a low-income household. This can contribute either to fees, accommodation, living costs or even to help with books, essential travel trips, or whatever the student may need.

This financial bursary has been really beneficial to me throughout my time at Royal Holloway, particularly contributing towards my rent and living costs. There are lots of different bursaries, scholarships and other help available at many universities, so it is definitely worth looking into!

There are also lots of part-time jobs on campus at Royal Holloway, and off campus in the surrounding area, which can also help to finance university study. I have had two part-time jobs throughout my studies to help pay for living costs and extracurricular activities such as Cheerleading club - enabling me to make the most of my university experience!

## My advice...

My advice is to pursue whichever path you wish to take, regardless of the barriers you may think stand in your way! I was incredibly unsure whether I would be successful in university, having been the first in my family to attend, and certainly did not think I could finance it. However, there is such a wide range of support available that has made my undergraduate study a very positive experience.