



**RICHMOND**  
THE AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL  
**UNIVERSITY**  
IN LONDON

**ALUMNI RELATIONS OFFICE**

**GUIDELINES FOR**

**ALUMNI CHAPTERS OF**

**THE RICHMOND ALUMNI**

**ASSOCIATION**

**Alumni Relations Office**  
**Asa Briggs Hall, 7-17 Ansdell Street,**  
**London W8 5BN**  
**Tel: 020 7368 8468/9**  
**Fax: 020 7368 8470**  
e-mail: [alumni@richmond.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@richmond.ac.uk)

## INTRODUCTION

Richmond's Alumni Relations Office has operated in different dimensions since 1987 when Audra Longley, formerly Dean of Students, initiated the office. The purpose of the office has and will always be to develop, maintain and strengthen relationships with Richmond's graduates, former students and friends. Today, Richmond is in touch with more than 5,100 alumni in 135 countries. Each year the members of the Alumni Association grow by about 250 graduates and include graduates from different academic programmes as follows:

- ❖ Richmond's first AA candidates graduated in 1974;
- ❖ the first BA class graduated in 1980;
- ❖ the first MBA class graduated in 1993; and
- ❖ the MBA graduates began in 1999.

Richmond's alumni include former students from a period of over more than thirty years, who have been awarded the Richmond diploma, or who have transferred from Richmond, or come to Richmond as Study Abroad Students.

Located in the Kensington campus, the Alumni Relations Office works to establish an active Alumni Association world wide. To this end, local Alumni Leadership Committees are the first stage to setting up official Alumni Chapters. An Alumni Leadership Committee will be established in areas where large enough populations of Richmond alumni live and work. The backbone of this network is a group of dedicated individual alumni volunteers who give their time to support and promote Richmond and to organize relevant activities for the local alumni population.

Leadership of local Alumni Leadership Committees (ALC) is carried out by alumni volunteers from the area in liaison with the Alumni Relations Office in London. Alumni interested in serving on an ALC, can go to the Alumni web site under Alumni Chapters for information.

The ALC organizes and runs the activities for the local Richmond alumni chapter and its members. These events and activities accomplish two important aims: to develop the personal and professional networking among alumni friends and colleagues and, to promote and represent Richmond, The American International University in London.

The following guidelines provide information and support for ALC Chairs and members who wish to set up and run alumni activities in their geographic region or local area. Regular liaison between the ALC Chair and the ARO in London supports and develops this alumni programme.

We look forward to working together.

Deirdre Simpson  
Director of Alumni Relations and Assistant to the President for External Relations  
The Alumni Relations Office  
Asa Briggs Hall  
7-17 Ansdell Street  
London W8 5BN  
Tel: 020 7368 8468/9  
Fax: 020 7368 8470  
E-mail: [alumni@richmond.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@richmond.ac.uk)

# I HOW TO BEGIN AN ALUMNI CHAPTER

In order to set up a local alumni group, the following important ingredients are needed:

- ❖ The enthusiasm, willingness and commitment of several individuals who will promote the idea to other alumni, liaise with the Alumni Relations Office, and organize events.
- ❖ A reasonable number of alumni in the geographic area, enough to participate in activities and events organized by the group.
- ❖ An interest in Richmond and in assisting to develop the University and its alumni network.
- ❖ An alumnus/a who is willing to Chair the ALC to guide the members in their planning of events and into the eventual set up of Alumni Chapters with individual constitutions.

## A. THE SET UP

**THE PURPOSE OF ALC'S** is to enable volunteer alumni to work together to develop local alumni activities and events in order to strengthen the Richmond alumni network. A local ALC also provides a channel for alumni feedback to the Alumni Relations Office.

- A local ALC is set up and run by local alumni who volunteer to serve at least a 2 year term with other alums to organise events.
- The Committee size of the ALC depends on the number of alumni in the local area and usually constitutes a minimum of 3 members and a maximum of 10 members. It is important that there be a large enough number of members in order to share the work and responsibility for planning and executing reunions and events.
- The members of each ALC represent different graduating classes in order to ensure that varied interests are considered when planning events. Where possible, having men and women from different professions on the committee is important.
- Committee members serve a 2 year minimum term, and are able to renew their term for up to 4 terms or a total of 8 years. It is hoped that there will be a mixture of new and continuously serving members in order to help with continuity and leadership development within the committee.
- The Chair is also able to renew the 2 year term of service for up to 4 terms or a total of 8 years.
- The timing for setting up the leadership structure of each local ALC varies according to local needs and conditions. As soon as possible, a committee Chair is elected by the members of the committee. Other positions are decided in a similar way.
- Notes or Minutes of each meeting are taken so that there is a record of decisions and actions taken. These minutes are e-mailed to the Alumni Relations Office in London for the record. In the early stages of a local Alumni Leadership Committee, it is a good idea to work closely with the Alumni Relations Office in London for support—e.g. setting dates of meetings and events, sending e-mails to all local alumni, sending news for publication, development of ideas.
- The Alumni Relations Office works closely with each ALC and is responsible to ensure that rules and regulations about data and university policies apply. (Only members of the local ALC who have signed the Data Disclaimer Form are able to receive the contact information of alumni in the local area.) UK Data Protection law forbids Alumni Relations sharing alumni

information except with permission and for organizers of alumni events, where this information is needed.)

The ALC meets as frequently as appropriate for the area—to plan events as often as suits the local area. Members of the committee carry out designated roles as the local committee needs designate.

The leaders of the local group need to check with the local laws of their country to determine whether a constitution is required for registering the group officially.

## **B. STEPS TO START A LOCAL ALC OR CHAPTER**

There are 5 steps to starting a local Alumni Chapter:

1. Interested alumni read the Set Up of ALCs on the alumni web site and volunteer to serve in this role by signing the Agreement for a Chair or a Member of an ALC and sending the signed agreement to the London Alumni Relations Office.
2. The leadership of the committee is established with help from the London Office.
3. The committee meets to discuss the plan for events and to focus on a specific launch event, and sends a copy of the notes of the discussion to London ARO
4. Once the date, time and location of the event are decided, the Alumni Relations Office assists by e-mailing alumni in the area and by sending their contact information to the organizers to enable them to follow up the announcement by contacting local alumni and urging them to attend the event.
5. A launch event is organized, to appeal to as many alumni as possible. Enough lead time is given to the London office for planning and to enable other alumni who are visiting the area to join in.

## **II. LEADERSHIP OF LOCAL ALUMNI LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE or CHAPTER**

Throughout the existence of a Local Alumni Committee, strong leadership is needed to promote and develop the events. The decision as to the number and types of leadership roles will depend on the number of local alumni and type of events to be planned. It is also important that there be a process of renewal and change built into the leadership positions in order to avoid burn out.

We recommend set terms of committee membership or office holders for each position, and that these terms be no shorter than 2 years and no longer than 4 terms renewable for a maximum total 8 year term. An agreement, found on the web, is signed for each 2 year term.

### **A. LEADERSHIP ROLES**

The number and type of elected roles will depend entirely on the size and needs of the local group. These officers will constitute the Chapter Committee. To carry out the business of the Chapter, the Alumni Relations Office suggests an organisational structure with some or all of the following roles:

**Chair or co chair**—to set the agenda for each meeting, to preside over all meetings of the local ALC, to monitor and supervise events planned and monies collected; to liaise with the Alumni Relations Office in London; to represent the chapter to people outside it; to oversee other officers and committee work.

**Vice-chair**---to perform the duties of Chair in his/her absence and assist the Chair as needed. This position could be a Chair elect for a smooth leadership transition and for providing opportunities to develop volunteers.

**Secretary**—to record minutes of all meetings and communicate them by e-mail to each committee member and London ARO; to arrange venues as needed; to publicize events and visits from Richmond personnel; to handle all correspondence, and notices of meetings; to liaise with local media if there is no Communication Coordinator. To maintain and update the local contact information list. (This role could be combined with that of Treasurer).

**Treasurer**---to keep all financial accounts of monies raised; to liaise with the local bank in matters about the local account; to keep accurate records and prepare periodic and annual statements of the chapter's accounts. (This role could combine with that of Secretary or Vice Chair).

**Communications/Volunteer Coordinator**---to work with the London ARO to seek alumni to serve as Alumni Representatives, Mentors, Class Representatives; to liaise with ARO about alumni and chapter news; to coordinate reunions; to make use of other available communication channels for the local alumni chapter; to provide publicity or coverage in the local media about local chapter and relevant university matters.

**Membership and Events Officer**—to maintain contact information of chapter members and liaise with ARO; to implement strategies for increasing membership; to suggest and arrange venues for events; to plan and coordinate events.

The Alumni Relations Office suggests a minimum of three leadership positions combining, as appropriate, the work needed to run a local group effectively

## **B. ALC LEADERSHIP**

In selecting leaders for a local ALC, it is important to keep in mind the following:

1. The leadership should be representative and not be dominated by any one group—age, graduation class, gender, profession, locality, etc.
2. No member of the leadership committee should benefit financially or personally from this position.
3. The leadership will work together with the Alumni Relations Office in order to provide the best service to its members.
4. The use of University logos and name is to be cleared before local publication
5. Publicity before and information about the event afterwards should be sent to the London office for inclusion in relevant publications.
6. University literature is available from the London office.

## **III GOALS OF LOCAL ALC or CHAPTER**

While each group will reflect the interests relevant to the location and the membership, the following will assist in establishing over all goals for the chapter:

1. To promote lasting ties between the alumni and Richmond.
2. To provide local alumni with enjoyable social occasions, professional networking and intellectual stimulation.
3. To create opportunities for volunteer activity to benefit both the individual and Richmond.

4. To support Richmond's objectives.
5. To enhance and promote the awareness of Richmond in the local community.

#### **A. IDEAS FOR LOCAL EVENTS:**

The events planned should reflect the goals of the group, but some of the following suggestions may prove especially successful.

- 1 Working with the University Admissions Office, host pre-departure meetings for new Richmond students and their families.
- 2 Support recently returned alumni in terms of cultural re-entry and networking for work.
- 3 Organise a presentation/talk by an alumnus/a when faculty or staff are visiting.
- 4 Welcome newly arrived or relocated alumni to the region.
- 5 Obtain discounts to local events (music, theatre, dancing, talks etc.) and plan a social gathering before or after.
- 6 Visit campus to meet the next set of graduates to discuss career issues.
- 7 Sponsor local seminars and conferences on professional issues.
- 8 Plan professional networking events to allow members to meet for job networking as well as business exchange and development.
- 9 Plan social events suitable to local population: dinners, dances, wine tastings, receptions, trips, local culture evenings etc.
- 10 Celebrate UK holidays e.g. Guy Fawkes Day (5 November) with an event.
- 11 Organize fund raising events for the University.

#### **B. ORGANIZATION & OPERATIONS**

All events must be self financing and all costs including postage, room hire, publicity, photography, tips, etc. must be covered by the participants' payments. Any resulting profit could be used to finance in the future free events or be donated to the University, according to a formal and recorded decision by the committee members.

When planning an event specifically to raise funds for the University, it is imperative to work with the Alumni Relations Office and the President's Office about the nature, purpose and timing of the event. Where possible, it is appropriate to have a member of the University's administration present at such an event.

Bookings and pre payments are an essential part of planning an event, as is keeping an accurate record of these bookings and all monies collected.

With enough notification (6 weeks), the Alumni Relations can publicise events on the web and in the Newsletter /Updates to encourage other alumni living in other places to participate if business or personal needs take them to where an event is planned.

The Alumni Relations Office contact information is given on the cover page of this document, in the introduction of these guidelines, and on the web site.

The Alumni Relations staff is available to support and advise alumni as appropriate in order to develop local groups, alumni events, and alumni networking worldwide.

### III ALUMNI INFORMATION

Details of alumni worldwide are kept on an alumni database managed by the Alumni Relations Office in London. Alumni are able to update their own information when and as they need by logging on to the alumni web site and updating the relevant information. Alumni contact information is made available according to the UK Data Protection Act and for the limited purposes of conducting University and alumni business. The alumni database exists to enable the promotion of closer links among the alumni and between them and the University. Richmond's Alumni Relations Office uses publications, website news, the alumni post box, alumni events, local ALC events, links with academic departments as ways to maintain and develop these links.

Specifically the university will use alumni information to

- ✓ Promote links between the university and the alumni through publications and events
- ✓ Promote alumni and university activities such as careers, recruitment, departmental programmes.
- ✓ Permit local alumni chapters to notify alumni of events and plans
- ✓ Canvass for financial and non-financial support for the university
- ✓ Create administrative reports as needed on the outcomes of a Richmond education as measured in the success of the alumni

#### A. UK DATA PROTECTION ACT

The UK Data Protection Act 1998 legislates the sharing of data with alumni groups and includes the following:

- ❖ Data Protection statements must be written on forms requesting information from alumni and must describe the purposes for which alumni details are kept
- ❖ Alumni must be given the opportunity to request non disclosure of all or some of their data for the specified purposes
- ❖ Confidentiality agreements must operate in which those receiving data guarantee not to disclose it to third parties.

**All alumni Chairs of local ALCs must understand and adhere to the permitted uses of the alumni data as proscribed by the UK Data Protection Act 1998 & 2000.**

The London Alumni Office is restricted in its ability to provide personal data on alumni to local alumni groups. Only alumni working in a local ALC for the purpose of organising events and contacting alumni to promote these events will be eligible to receive the contact information for the alumni in the local area only. After signing the Disclaimer Form and returning it the London Alumni Relations Office, the contact information will be e-mailed to the signatory on the form. This information may not be shared with others. In the case of transferring information to international agencies and groups, the law specifies that those agencies/groups must use the data in keeping with the UK law, not the local law. **All alumni groups that use data the University has sent them must abide by the spirit of the UK Data Protection Act.** It is suggested therefore, that only address, phone and e-mail details are retained locally in databases. All information that local alumni collect about their members, is to be shared with the London ARO.

See the Appendix for the University policy on sharing alumni database with alumni groups and a copy of the Disclaimer Form required before any data can be released to individual alumni in committees.

#### B. UPDATING ALUMNI DATA

The London Alumni Relations Office database is the main repository of alumni data and as such, looks to local groups to assist with updating this information in compliance with the UK Data Protection Act.

The University, through the Alumni Relations Office, is the primary custodian of data on Richmond alumni. The goal of that office is to maintain the most current data as possible for the purposes of reporting University outcomes, publishing regular newsletters, assisting alumni to network professionally and personally with each other.

Local alumni groups are able to help keep the central alumni database up to date by:

- ✓ Encouraging local alumni to update regularly their information in their profile in the web database.
- ✓ To ensure that all requests to add, delete or augment information are written and dated.
- ✓ To ensure that permission to publish contact information is sought.
- ✓ To share all of the above immediately with the London ARO

## **IV. PLANNING ALUMNI EVENTS**

When organising the first events of a local ALC, it is important to keep in mind three items:

- ❖ the ease of setting up the event
- ❖ the need to gather as many alumni at the event as possible
- ❖ the importance of a successful event no matter how many or few attend

### **A. WHAT SORT OF EVENT TO BEGIN WITH**

Experience of local ALCs has shown us that the best first events to organise are those planned in a venue that is stylish and that local alumni would appreciate and be pleased to go to. A simple gathering for drinks in a location that allows an alumni event of any number—large or small—to be there without any reservation or deposit needed.

Organising dinners, cultural events, and other such pre-paid and pre-booked events are only possible once local alumni feel that there is a local Richmond group established, so that the organisers can be reassured that enough alumni will attend to make the efforts worthwhile. This usually takes a couple of years of setting up simple and effective networking events.

### **B. STEPS TO PLANNING A LOCAL REUNION**

1. Decide with local ALC the ideas and plan day, date, time and location.
2. Contact London ARO to discuss the idea and plans
3. Once agreed, contact the venue to make sure the event is OK with them and that any charges are already known.
4. Confirm details with London ARO so that they send out the announcement to local alumni.
5. Once the Disclaimer Forms have been signed, London ARO will send the local alumni contact information so that the committee members are able to call and urge alumni to attend the event
6. ARO sends a Reunion Sign In sheet to have each person attending sign, and these sheets are faxed and mailed to the London ARO after the event (within a week of the event).
7. Take many photos and send the best ones to ARO for publishing in newsletter/Updates and on the web (within a week of the event). Keep in mind that lights behind people obscure their faces.

All good photos of clear resolution can be used on the alumni web site to tell other alumni about a successful reunion event. Identify all the people in each photo.

8. E-mail a brief report about the event to ARO (within a week of the event).

## APPENDIX

### A. UNIVERSITY POLICY ON SHARING ALUMNI DATA WITH ALUMNI GROUPS

The University, through the Alumni Relations Office, is the primary custodian of data on Richmond alumni. The goal of that office is to maintain the most current and up to date data as possible. Local alumni groups are able to help keep the central alumni database up to date by:

- ✓ Encouraging local alumni to update regularly their contact information in the database in the alumni web site.
- ✓ To ensure that all requests to add, delete or augment information are written and dated.

The London Alumni Relations Office is the main repository of alumni data and as such, looks to the local groups to assist with updating this information in compliance with the UK Act.

The London Alumni Office is currently restricted in its ability to provide personal data on alumni to local alumni groups. In the case of transfer to international agencies and local groups, the law specifies that those agencies/groups must use the data in keeping with the UK law, not the local law. **All alumni groups that use data the University has sent them must abide by the spirit of the UK Data Protection Act** It is suggested therefore, that only address, phone and e-mail details are retained locally in databases. As we have agreed, local alumni chapters agree not to use the data for any of the following purposes: charitable fundraising other than for Richmond, distribution to third party agencies, marketing or sales. Each member in a local ALC will be asked to sign a Disclaimer Form adhering to these principles before any data can be sent from the ARO.

The service of Search and Send a Message available on the alumni web site is specifically designed to enable alumni to find and communicate with each other if they do not know an e-mail address. This is in keeping with UK law on Database Protection 1998.

The publication of membership directories, whether by the university or local chapters, must have the explicit consent of each member in order to publish their information. Prior permission to allow details to be published by the Alumni Relations Office does not constitute consent for local publication. Local groups must obtain the consent directly and for the purpose of announced publications.

With the agreement of the London office of Alumni Relations, local alumni chapters represent the London office in their own countries. Such groups represent their membership only, not all Richmond alumni resident in the country.

Wherever possible the Alumni Relations Office will facilitate mailings to all alumni in a given country, especially for events involving the university's staff.

### B. DISCLAIMER FORM FOR ALUMNI USE OF RICHMOND ALUMNI DATA

Under the provisions of the UK Data Protection Act 1998, information about alumni is collected and held in the University Alumni Database System with permission from each alumnus/a. The information is used by the University for the purposes of promoting closer links between Richmond and its former students. Specifically, this data is used for alumni activities, mailings, developing local alumni chapters, promoting services to alumni, university fund raising, the Alumni Directory & profiles of alumni for publications. All information in the alumni database is treated as requested by each alumnus/a.

The London Alumni Relations Office is the main repository of alumni data and as such, looks to local groups to assist with updating this information in compliance with the UK Data Protection Act. Local Alumni Leadership Committee members are authorised to keep only local alumni information for the purposes of planning local events, promoting Richmond activities locally and developing networking and links among local alumni. When updating alumni information the local Committee must ensure that written permission to publish contact information is sought and obtained. Wherever possible the Alumni Relations Office will facilitate mailings to all alumni in a given country, especially for events involving the university's staff.

The London Alumni Office is restricted in its ability to provide personal data on alumni to individual alumni and also to local Alumni Leadership Committees. In the case of transfer of such information to international agencies and groups, the law specifies that those agencies/groups must use the data in keeping with the UK law, not the local law. All alumni groups that use data the University has sent them must abide by the spirit of the UK Data Protection Act. It is suggested therefore, that only address, phone and e-mail details are used and if appropriate retained locally in databases.

Local Alumni Committees and other designated individuals receiving alumni data agree not to use the data for any of the following purposes: charitable fundraising other than for Richmond, distribution to third party agencies, marketing or sales. Each local group and/or individual will be asked to sign an agreement adhering to these principles.

**I agree to use the data provided to me by the Alumni Relations Office according to the UK Data Protection Law and the conditions specifically mentioned above. I will not keep this information for any purpose other than the organisation of Richmond events specifically agreed with Alumni Relations.**

Country where residing and for which requesting data\_\_\_\_\_

Print Name\_\_\_\_\_

Signature\_\_\_\_\_Date\_\_\_\_\_