



RICHMOND
THE AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL
UNIVERSITY
IN LONDON

University Housing Booklet



Housing Options
Frequent Questions & Answers
Rules & Procedures

Housing options

Why select University housing?

About 50 % of students attending Richmond live in housing provided and managed by the University. Most of the residential facilities are near the academic facilities and there are a variety of housing options available. If you choose University housing, you will be committing to living in a residential setting operated by the University which can include a full meal or board plan. Richmond guarantees University housing for all students who request it and meet all of the registration and financial deadlines. It cannot guarantee accommodation in residential buildings to late applicants. However, the University will do its best to ensure that all students are housed by providing them with off-campus resources.

University housing offers you a safe, secure and convenient living option. We believe as a student planning to study in London at an International University it is important that you have the opportunity to maximize your academic and educational opportunities. Living in a communal, residential setting can enhance your experience.

What about making my own housing arrangements?

It is your choice to be 'own-living' and make your own housing arrangements in London. Every semester about half of the students attending Richmond will select this option. Many of these students have family or friends in London or have some other type of connection with the city that makes finding accommodation on their own possible.

If you know that you want to live on your own, or with family and friends in a flat or house, you need to come prepared. You may need to arrange short-term accommodation in a hotel or hostel while you search for housing. Be prepared to spend a lot of time looking for what you want. Rental agents can be expensive and most will expect you to lease properties for a minimum of 6 months. Many will not rent directly to students so they will be looking for financial guarantees from your family or another agency.

If you opt to be 'own-living' the University cannot guarantee that University housing will be available if your search on arrival is unsuccessful. **In addition, if you register for University housing and then wish to move out after you arrive in London no refund of room and board will be possible for that academic year.**

As a reminder, if you sign up for University housing, you are committed for the academic year (Fall and Spring semesters) if you join the University in the fall. If you join the University for the spring semester or summer session, you are only committed for one term. Think through your decision carefully. You need to decide whether University housing would be a good option for your first year.



Will the university help me find a flat or house?

The Student Affairs Office at each campus can provide names and addresses of agents and companies that provide accommodation. We may also have names of individuals who have private accommodation to offer. We can offer support and advice but, it will be up to YOU to make contacts and find your own housing if you choose the 'own-living' option.



What do I do if I want University housing?

The first thing to do is read through all of these materials carefully. If you have any questions or concerns that are not answered in the information you may contact Richmond direct via phone, letter, fax, or E-mail. (See the end of the booklet for details.)



I know Richmond has two campuses. How do I know where I will be studying?

The two campuses at Richmond are split by academic level. Freshman and Sophomores, 1st and 2nd year students, live and study at the Richmond Hill site which is located on the south west edge of London in a very suburban area. Juniors and Seniors, 3rd and 4th year students, as well as graduate students live and study at the Kensington site which is located in the center of London near Hyde Park in a very urban area. The two campuses are very different in character and atmosphere.



What is the Richmond Hill/Lower Division campus like?

The Richmond Hill /Lower Division site is very multicultural with over 100 nationalities living in University housing. Generally, students in their 1st and 2nd year live and attend classes at this campus although a handful of upper division students live here too because of the Hill-based computing major. Room assignments are made to create as much exposure to diversity as possible so students of the same culture, nationality or background are rarely assigned as roommates. Housing is available in a variety of buildings in and around the main academic building and in the area between the campus site and downtown Richmond about 20 minutes away. The main campus site has one large building which is very old and beautiful. It is surrounded by an attractive garden with several small buildings on the perimeter of the grounds. There's a library, smaller classroom buildings and other facilities surrounding. Richmond town center is very accessible and offers all the amenities of a diverse and well-developed community. Richmond is also noted for its superb location on the River Thames. It is also adjacent to Richmond Park, one of the largest public parks in London. Central London is approximately 40 minutes away by public transport.



What is the Kensington/Upper Division campus like?

University housing at the Kensington/Upper Division site is very different in character from the lower division. As has been previously mentioned, the upper division is located in the very heart of London which means that there is tremendous pressure on housing in general. Space is at a premium. A large proportion of our degree students move out of University housing by their junior year which means that Study Abroad students from the United States as well as the graduate level

students make up the majority of students in housing. However, within the Study Abroad population there is huge diversity in the universities and states represented.



What residence hall options are available at the Kensington/Upper Division?

Two residence halls are available every semester for undergraduate students - Atlantic House and Ambassador House. The Graduate Wing in Atlantic House is designated for MA Art History students.

ATLANTIC HOUSE - Atlantic House is the main residence in Kensington and provides accommodation in single, double and triple rooms for 116 students. The Graduate Wing offers single rooms only. Many rooms have sinks and shared shower facilities on each floor. It is a purpose built residence hall with a traditional residence hall atmosphere. The library, computer laboratory and dining room are also in this building. The students Common room, a non-smoking area, located in Atlantic house which makes this the center for student activity at Kensington campus. There is 24-hour security and all individuals entering the building must show identification. This residence has incoming phone service with an extension on every floor and wireless internet.

AMBASSADOR HOUSE - Ambassador House is about a five-minute walk from Atlantic House and can accommodate 72 students. The hall is comprised of single, double, triple and quadruple rooms. It is an older building and not purpose built; therefore the rooms are all different shapes and sizes. All bathroom facilities are shared. There are public phones available **but no incoming phone service**. There is a Common Room in the building and traditionally Ambassador House develops a very close knit living community. Security patrols the building at night and is available as needed during the day.

SATELLITE HOUSING - Certain semesters additional residence halls are leased. Satellite residences are owned by external agencies with their own management although Richmond Residence Life staff is in place in the buildings. Security is sometimes in place although not guaranteed. These residences may change from year to year. Satellite residences are generally within a ten to fifteen minute walk from Atlantic House. Single, double, triple and quadruple rooms are available and some are similar to studio apartments. As with Ambassador House, satellite buildings are rarely purpose built so you should expect rooms of different shapes and sizes. Some rooms have en suite showers and toilets and others may have small kitchenettes. There is, on occasion, an incoming telephone facility. No guarantee can be made, however, that the same facilities will be available each semester. These residences typically offer a very independent living option with an emphasis on personal responsibility.

Each residence hall at the Kensington campus has a Common Room which is the center of social life in the building. Regular video evenings are often run by students in the evenings. In line with university policy concerning public areas, the common room in Atlantic House common room has been designated as a strictly non-smoking facility. The residence halls are in close proximity to supermarkets, drug stores, laundrettes, dry cleaners, restaurants and stations for the tube and train. The University is situated in a well lit and attractive, urban, residential area. Students must be conscious of noise late at night and mindful that quiet, courteous behavior is expected of all residents.

Building requests are noted and we will do our best to accommodate, but cannot be guaranteed.



How is University housing supervised?

All University housing facilities are supervised by a member of the Residence Life staff. Resident Directors are usually graduates or upper division students of Richmond and have experience in international education. They are able to provide guidance, support and advice to students and ensure all residence halls operate in an efficient and effective manner. Resident Directors (RD) are supported by a staff of Resident Advisors (RA). All staff within Residence Life report to the Residence Life Coordinator at each respective campus.



How are room assignments made?

Room assignments are allocated according to the date of your housing deposit. If you deposit early, you are more likely to get the housing request of your choice. Housing assignments are made in a very personal way taking into account the information you include on your form, the housing options available and other requests received.



Common questions about room assignments and housing...



I would like to live in a particular residence and/or room

It helps if you can give us as much information as possible about your request. Write the details on your form and if you wish, attach an additional letter explaining the reason for your choice. Keep in mind that a residence recommended to you by a friend may not be available in the semester you attend or it may be filled by students already attending Richmond. Some rooms are very popular and may have been selected by other students or assigned to someone who deposited before you. Ask for what you want, but be prepared for an alternative if your request is not available.



Will I find out where I will be living before I arrive?

If your housing request and your deposit is received by the deadline, the Residence Life Coordinator will confirm your room assignments prior to arrival. E-mail the Residence Life Coordinator at the campus where you'll be based for more information.



What if I am unhappy with my assignment?

During the first week of the semester, we ask students to take the time to adjust to their surroundings and get to know the University and the area. Residence Life staff will be available Richmond- Residence Life/New student Housing Information

to talk through any problems and or concerns. We will make every effort to assist any students who feel they would like to explore other University housing options.



Can I smoke in my room?

Both the Hill Campus and the Kensington Campus are strictly non-smoking facilities and UK law prohibits smoking in any covered area . Smoking in your room is considered to be a violation of the university's fire code, which is a serious offense.



What do I do if I have a medical problem or require special support services?

You will receive a Medical Information form to be completed by your medical practitioner/ doctor as part of the application process. Any medical or special needs should be clearly identified on this form. It is important that you let us know on your housing form if you have any problems which may affect your assignment. For example, our buildings do not have lifts, so a student who has difficulty with stairs should let us know so we can try to make an assignment on a lower floor. Some residences are a short walk from the classrooms, students with concerns about mobility should let us know so we can look at the distance they will have to travel.

If you take medication regularly or have an ongoing health situation you should notify the Student Health Adviser / Nurse prior to arrival and make sure that you have made all the necessary arrangements to eliminate problems. If you have a serious on-going medical condition or require regular treatment of any sort it is imperative that you contact Student Affairs BEFORE you arrive. They will assist your practitioner/doctor at home make contact with services in London that can offer you care during your course. For the most serious cases it is too late to make good referrals after you arrive. In the past when a student has not ensured that services have been set up prior to arrival it has resulted in the student having more difficulty in adjusting to the new environment.

The University Counselors can also be contacted in advance for advice and all information we receive is kept in the strictest confidence. We need you to prepare yourself in every way possible for your educational experience and to do this you need to have planned for any health needs or areas of concern before your arrival.



What is the meal service like?

The University catering service will provide graduate students with the opportunity to purchase a smart card for use in the cafeteria during times when it is open. Student may put any amount they wish on their smart card. Food will be debited from the card on a pay-as-you –eat basis.

Meals are provided on both campuses in the dining room at Atlantic House and the Richmond Main Building. Monday to Friday there are 3 meals served - breakfast, lunch and dinner. On Saturday there is a brunch only. On Sunday there is brunch and dinner.

The Richmond and Kensington catering staff meet the tremendous challenge of providing three

meals a day to the diverse palates of students from over 100 countries. In addition to a hot entrée, there is always a vegetarian option, a salad bar, a sandwich bar, a stir-fry area and ice cream. Vegetarian choices are always available. Whenever possible, vegan choices such as soy milk are offered. Students needing halal meat often choose the vegetarian options.



What if I am on a special diet or don't eat certain foods?

The staff is eager to meet the needs of the students and is open to menu suggestions and requests. If you're missing your mother's favorite dish, just contact the catering staff and provide a recipe.

If you have any concerns in this area you may wish to contact us ahead of time and find out further information. You should also make sure that any medical records regarding special needs or limits are sent to Student Affairs ahead of time.



What does the housing contract cover?

The housing contract includes room and board for the semester or the academic year if you are entering in the fall semester. The room and board is non-refundable. A student who withdraws during the semester, or who is removed from University housing for disciplinary reasons will be required to vacate their room and no refund of room and board will be given. All students pay a security deposit prior to arrival and damages to rooms or residential facilities will be charged to this deposit.



What will my room be like?

The residential offerings at Richmond vary enormously in style, design, atmosphere and facilities. This makes it very hard to give you an idea of what to expect. In general, rooms are provided with a bed, wardrobe, storage drawers and study space. There is no standard size or design, so some rooms have more furniture and facilities and others are smaller with fewer furnishings.

Not all rooms have sinks although most do. Some satellite facilities have en suite bathrooms, others have a suite style arrangement and some are traditional residence halls with large shared bathrooms on each floor. Linen is provided on a weekly basis for all students who want it and rooms are cleaned upon request. Telephones and cable TV are currently not available in the rooms. The phone services available vary in each residence. Kitchens are accessible in certain satellite buildings. Some residences have wireless internet connections, others do not. Like everything else that is part of your educational experience, you should plan to come with an open mind and be prepared to be flexible and adaptable.

Questions... Questions... Questions...

What things would be useful for me to know before I arrive?

You will receive pre-arrival information from the Admissions and Student Affairs Offices. The materials will explain the arrival and orientation process and highlight events and activities scheduled for your first semester at Richmond.

There are policies and procedures in effect in all University residential facilities which would be helpful for you to know as you plan for your educational experience. If there are any questions not answered below...ask us!

How can I find out about academic and non-academic policies and procedures?

During orientation you will receive a variety of written materials related to academic and personal conduct. We assume that you will read all the official University materials provided and attend all orientation sessions so that you are familiar with the university's expectations of you. If you do have specific questions or concerns feel free to contact us ahead of time.

What about electrical appliances?

Voltage in the United Kingdom is different from that in many parts of the world. We suggest you bring a limited number of electrical goods. Plan to purchase transformers and small electrical goods here. Please note that large, powerful stereos and stereo televisions are not permitted in the rooms. Many students prefer to rent televisions and videos while they are here. Televisions are available in student Common Rooms and there are regular video evenings. Cooking appliances are not permitted in student rooms. Refrigerators less than 2 foot (60 cm) square are permitted, but the University does not take responsibility for storage during University breaks. Microwaves and electric kettles are permitted, but small cookers and grills are not allowed nor are any other open flame appliances.

Will I be insured?

An Insurance Premium is mandatory for all full time students and is included in your tuition and fees. This premium has two components: MEDICAL and PERSONAL POSSESSIONS. Please make sure you read the details provided about the insurance plan very carefully.

We highly recommend that all students purchase **additional** insurance coverage to ensure that your personal belongings are covered up to their full value and especially for items of high value such as computers, cameras, stereos etc. We recommend that you make inquiries with your family insurer **prior** to departure regarding additional coverage for traveling and during your stay at the University.

Richmond accepts no liability for loss or damage to personal possessions on-campus in student rooms, storage areas or during University sponsored activities. Therefore, students must ensure that their personal possessions are adequately insured.



Do I need to bring bedding?

2 sets of clean linen are provided. Students must change their own beds and are urged to do so weekly. Towels are not provided. All rooms have duvets or blankets and pillows. Students may use their own bedding if they prefer.



Where can I do my washing?

At Kensington there is a free laundry facility in Atlantic House and in Ambassador House. At Richmond Hill there is a small laundry facility in the Main Building and in some satellite buildings as well.



Will my room be cleaned?

Rooms are cleaned upon request at a small cost and trash bins emptied daily if they are placed outside the rooms. Students also have access to vacuum cleaners through Residence Life staff.



Are there clothes hangers in the room?

Most rooms have some hangers left over from previous residents. If not, hangers are available from dry cleaning stores or clothing stores in the area.



What are the bathrooms like?

On average, each corridor in the Main Building has access to one shared bathroom. All bathrooms are equipped with showers and wash basins. Some satellite facilities have en suite bathrooms. British showers are often converted baths where shower attachments have been added and the water pressure is often poor. Some of the rooms have wash basins.



Will it be warm?

Heating is available in all residences although when it is turned on will vary depending on the time of year and the nature of the residence hall. There is no air conditioning in the summer months (although it would rarely be necessary). You may want to check the London

temperatures at the library or in a newspaper to get an idea of what kind of weather to expect and clothes you will need to bring.



What happens if something in my room is damaged?

Every new student entering Richmond pays a one-time CONFIRMATION/SECURITY DEPOSIT. All damage that occurs in your room which you are held responsible for, is charged to this deposit. Prior to your arrival a room inventory will be completed by a member of the Residence Life staff. You have the chance to look this over and will be asked to sign the inventory agreeing to its contents. During the term students must report any damage that occurs in their room. At the end of the semester, rooms are checked again and any damage other than 'wear and tear' will be charged to the student responsible. The Confirmation/Security Deposit also covers damage and loss to University property, the late payment of fees, as well as fines for misconduct.



Can I stay on campus during breaks and vacations?

The times and dates for the opening and closing of University residence halls are available well in advance. Before you make travel plans for scheduled vacations, check your exam schedule and the time and date that the University residence halls open and close. Limited vacation accommodation is usually available for students who have difficulty with flight arrangements or who cannot return home during the vacation. There is a daily charge for vacation accommodation which does not include meals.



What is the phone service like?

There is one main phone number for the University: +44 208 332 8200. University Offices are open between 9.00 a.m. and 5.00 p.m. Monday to Friday London time.

RESIDENTIAL PHONES - Atlantic House at the Kensington campus and the Main Building at the Richmond Hill campus have an incoming telephone in each corridor area. This phone service is available between 8.00 a.m. and Midnight. Callers may be put straight through to the extension required or be connected to the switchboard and leave a message. In emergencies a call can be put through to Security.

In all other housing facilities there is no incoming telephone service, although students all have access to a pay phone to make outgoing calls. Family and friends can leave messages for those students at the main switchboard at either campus using the main university number. Students can also arrange to receive calls at this number if they let the switchboard know the details.

We strongly recommend that you have a calling or credit card arrangement prior to arrival since this is the most efficient way to make calls from any phone within the university. On arrival you should contact family and friends and let them know how to contact you given your residential location.



Will I have access to E-mail?

All Richmond students have access to E-mail. This facility is usually accessible 7-10 days after arrival. So the responsibility is on you to contact family and friends after you have accessed the E-mail system to let them know how to reach you.



Where can my friends and family write to me?

There is a student mailroom at each campus. All mail should be sent to this address. Do not give friends or family any other address for mail.

Kensington Campus: *Your Name*

Mailbox #

Richmond The American International University in London

1 St. Albans Grove

London

W8 5PN

England



What residential rules and regulations would be useful for me to know before I arrive?

All Richmond students and their guests are subject to the University wide Student Conduct Code. Certain specific policies prevail in University residential buildings for on-campus students, own-living students and guests visiting the residence halls.

All students living in University residence halls will receive a Residence Life Housing Manual at the start of the semester. Any student not familiar with its contents should obtain a copy for reference. The Residence Life staff expects all students to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code and the Residential Code and abide by all of its provisions. The following are items for particular attention.

RIGHT TO PRIVACY - The University endeavors to respect a student's right to privacy. However, the University does reserve the right to enter any part of its' property, including student rooms, without notice for the following reasons:

- a) to carry out routine procedures such as room inventories, cleaning and maintenance
- b) if there is reason to believe that a criminal offense or a violation of the Student Conduct Code is taking place
- c) if there are concerns regarding the personal health and safety of a student or the University community.
- d) for routine health and safety checks conducted during spring break and fall break

KEYS - Students are issued with a key/code to their own room and any other keys as required. They are responsible for the security of their keys and for always locking their room. All students should keep their doors locked at all times. Keys should not be exchanged by students or given to another person. Students may not duplicate their own keys - only University Authorized Duplicates will be accepted at the end of term. Students who do not return their keys at the end of the semester will be charged for a new lock - approximately £80.00.

QUIET HOURS - MONDAY to SUNDAY: MIDNIGHT - 8.00 A.M.

Quiet Hours are designed to ensure that all students have access to noise-free hours for sleep and study. During Quiet Hours it is expected that noise will not extend beyond the student room door. Students who wish to socialize or study together need to do so in an appropriate fashion or use the student Common Room. Non-College visitors are not permitted to enter the residence halls or remain in the halls during Quiet Hours unless they have registered as an official overnight guest. 24 hour Quiet Hours are in effect during mid-term and final exam periods.

VISITORS - It is important that new students read this section carefully so you know what to tell friends and family BEFORE they come to visit you at the University.

Visitors must sign in at Reception and be met by their hosts in the main entrance to the University or residence. Visitors are expected to abide by all University rules and regulations. Students will be held responsible for the activities of their visitors and for any damage attributed to them. **ALL VISITORS MUST LEAVE THE RESIDENCES BY QUIET HOURS.**

OVERNIGHT GUESTS - Overnight guests are permitted at the discretion of the Director of Residence Life. Only one guest per room is allowed at any one time. There is a limit to the number of guests in a building at any one time so if you have friends or family planning to visit during your time at Richmond you should make arrangements for this in advance. Guests are allowed for a maximum of 7 nights per semester. Guests have no entitlement to University meals and are not allowed during the first or last week of classes, during exam week or vacation periods. So check these dates carefully!

Students who wish to have a guest stay with them must file an Overnight Guest Request Form available from the Office of Residence Life **AT LEAST 24 HOURS PRIOR TO THE ARRIVAL OF THEIR GUEST.** Failure to file an official request will result in the loss of further overnight guest privileges and may lead to other disciplinary action. Certain areas of the residence may be designated as a single-sex area, and as such, members of the opposite sex are not permitted. All guests must be at least 18 years of age.

ALCOHOL - The legal age for the consumption of alcohol in Great Britain is 18. However, the consumption of alcohol is prohibited in all public areas of the University unless it is in connection with a sponsored activity operating under the University Alcohol Policy.

DRUGS - The University enforces all UK laws related to the use and or possession of illegal substances. Any student found in violation of this policy is subject to dismissal from the University, prosecution and possible deportation.

HEALTH AND SAFETY - Students are not permitted to have the following items in their rooms: pets; appliances utilizing an exposed flame or element; candles; incense; water pipes/bongs; cooking appliances; coiled extension cords; fireworks; weapons; explosives; toxic, flammable or dangerous materials. Such items will be removed and disposed of.



What do I do now?

Having read all the information do you want to request University housing? If the answer is yes then complete the Housing Application form located on the Admitted Student Procedures web page of the university's website <http://www.richmond.ac.uk/content/academic-programs/ma-in-art-history/admitted-student-procedures.aspx> Answer all of the questions and clearly explain any special needs or requests you may have.

When the form is complete, return it immediately to the Admissions Office. They will forward the form to the Residence Life Office. If you are have any concerns or questions contact us either through post, e-mail, fax or phone.



**Questions?
Problems?
Contact Us NOW!**

RICHMOND HILL CAMPUS QUESTIONS

WRITE

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KENSINGTON CAMPUS QUESTIONS

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