



Postgraduate Research degrees
offer guide
2018-2019

Our reputation speaks for itself



15k

A powerful global network of 15,000 alumni



Award-winning enterprise programme providing tailored support at all levels of business start-up



Winner of the Sustainability category at The Guardian University Awards 2016

89%

Learning Community

89% of students feel part of the RAU community

High graduate employability

90%

on average over the past five years

48 student businesses launched
82% success rate, compared with 44% nationally

Office for National Statistics

87%

 Student Satisfaction
High student satisfaction

1845

Delivering outstanding education and meeting real-world needs since 1845



Industry links

Our graduates have careers with prestigious global companies

Experts



Staff who are experts in their fields and visiting speakers who are captains of industry

1st safest

Safest university in England and Wales



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Welcome to the RAU

Congratulations on receiving an offer to conduct your research project here at the Royal Agricultural University. You will be part of a vibrant community of students and staff engaged in near -market projects that make a real difference to rural communities and businesses.

Our newly established Research Academy will give you the opportunity to interact with other post graduate students and staff across a broad subject area and will help you to develop interdisciplinary skills which are essential in today's research and business world.

Our research degree programmes are led by experienced academics actively researching in agriculture, equine, entrepreneurship and land based industries. We hope you find this guide to aspects of life at the RAU useful and stimulating. We have farms, laboratories experimental plots animal enterprises, new businesses and a growth hub supported by a second to none alumni network that will make your time at RAU a truly unique and life enhancing experience.

Professor Meriel Moore-Colyer
Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange





Academic Year dates

Research degrees start on either 1 October or 1 February each year.

The taught research modules for new research students will take place on the following dates:

October starters:

MR401 TBA(usually last weekend of October)

MR402 TBA (usually last weekend of November)

February starters:

MR401 (Usually, last weekend of February)

MR402 (Usually, last weekend of March)

You may apply at any time for a research degree but we only register people either at the beginning of October or February.

To meet those start dates you will need to apply well in advance in order for us to judge the suitability of your research proposal and whether we are prepared to supervise it. This may take a few weeks.

Once we are ready to offer you a place, you will need to obtain a visa which can take 10-12 weeks.



Useful web and e-mail addresses

Postgraduate Applications

<http://www.rau.ac.uk/study/fees-how-to-apply/postgraduate-admissions>

Fees

<https://www.rau.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/fees-and-funding/paying-tuition-fees>

E-mail: studentfinance@rau.ac.uk

Accommodation

<http://www.rau.ac.uk/student-life/living/accommodation>

E-mail: accommodation@rau.ac.uk

Student Union

<http://www.rau.ac.uk/student-life/leisure/student-union>

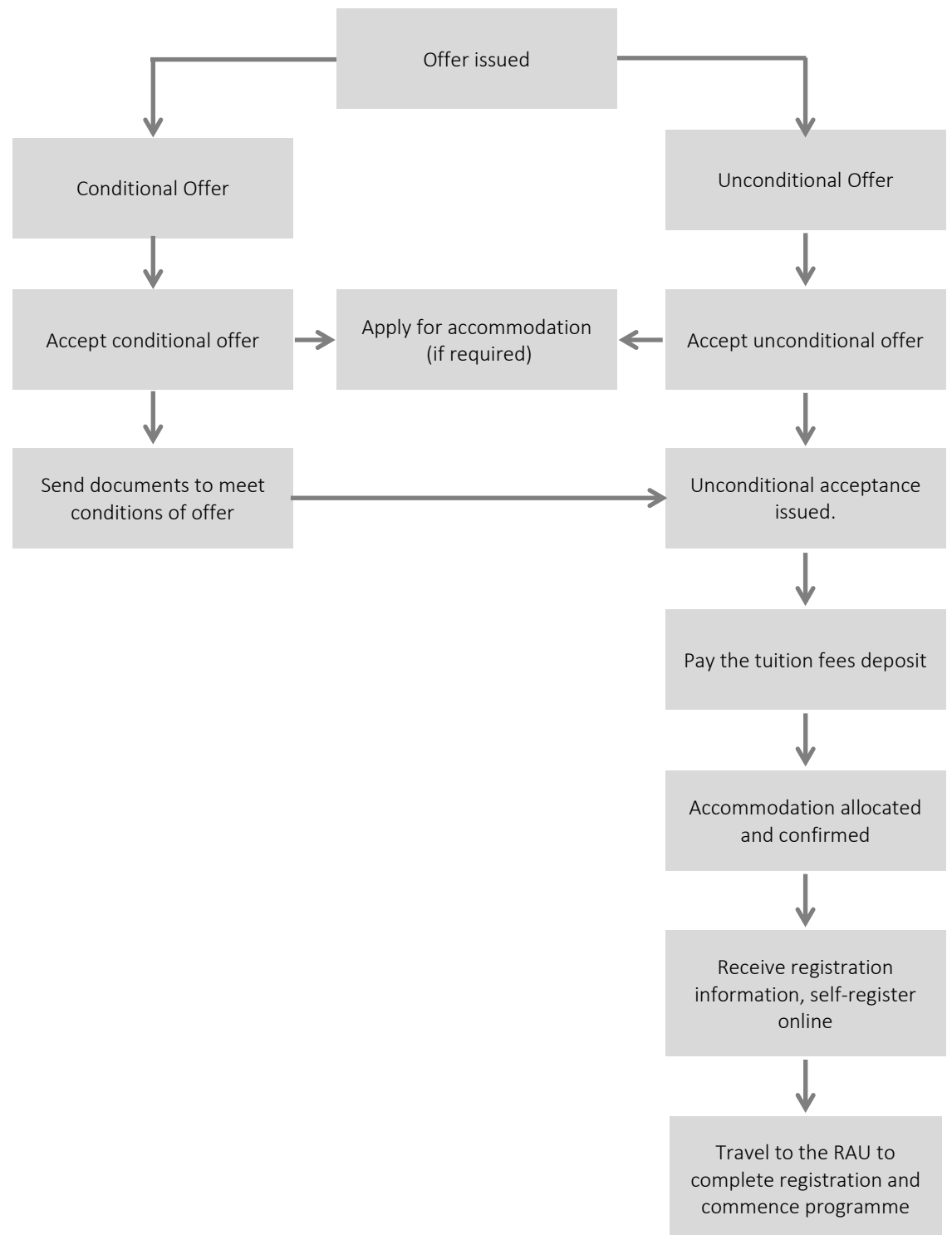
UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA)

<http://www.ukcisa.org.uk/>

RAU Campus map

https://www.rau.ac.uk/sites/files/rau/field/field_document/RAU_Map-A4-December%202016.pdf

The Offer Process





Your personal information

Name*	<input type="text"/>
RAU student number (found on your offer letter)	<input type="text"/>
Programme for which you hold an offer	<input type="text"/>

*(You will need to have this information to hand when you contact RAU's Admissions Office)

Contact us:

If you have questions about your offer please feel free to contact admissions at any time.
Tel: +44 (0) 1285 889912 Email: admissions@rau.ac.uk

Important checklist

Things to do between obtaining an offer and your Registration at the RAU

OCTOBER STARTER	FEBRUARY STARTER		
November onwards	January onwards	Ensure you accept your offer and you pay the required deposit. Deadlines for deposits: 1st August 2018(October starters) Mid- December 2019 (February starters)	<input type="checkbox"/>
April onwards	September onwards	For applicants holding a conditional offer – send in your final results (final transcript & certificate) by e-mail to: admissions@rau.ac.uk (see also “Providing verification of your qualifications”) as soon as you receive them.	<input type="checkbox"/>
May-June(non-EEA students)	October-Mid November	If you are an International Student needing a Tier 4 visa you will be sent an email asking you to complete the BIPF (Background Information Pro Forma) available on MyRAU. This must be completed as soon as possible and no later than the deadline given Obtain your TB certificate if you are coming to the UK for more than 6 months and you are resident in any of the countries listed here	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
June onwards(non-EEA students)	November onwards(non-EEA students)	For applicants who need a UK Tier 4 visa, CAS numbers are issued to unconditional firm offer holders who have submitted their BIPF (Background Information Pro Forma) and confirmed their passport details with Admissions. Our Visa Support Team will manage your visa application and guide you through the process. This is a free service to all fee paying international students.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Before you arrive in the UK(overseas students)		Obtain sufficient UK currency or an international credit/debit card to cover you until you open a UK bank account	<input type="checkbox"/>
September 2018 (up to registration)	December 2018 (up to registration)	Get vaccinated. All students – British, European or overseas – admitted to UK universities are advised to be vaccinated against Meningitis and to ensure all their vaccinations are up-to-date Complete your online self-registration and pay the balance of your fees prior to arriving for your registration. Please note you will not be able to register until all your tuition fees for the year are paid.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
24th September 2018	1st February 2019	Registration Update your UK term time address on the RAU Student portal	<input type="checkbox"/>
Within 7-10 days of your arrival in the UK(Overseas students)		If you applied for your Tier 4 visa from outside the UK – you will need to collect your Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) from either the RAU Registry or an appointed Post Office (whichever you have declared on your visa application). BRPs will be available to collect from RAU Registry. After you collected your BRP, Nationals of certain countries will need to register with the police.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>



Your offer

You will be receiving an offer letter outlining the conditions of your offer.

- If you accept a conditional offer it will remain at this stage until all of the respective conditions have been met.
- Applicants with an unconditional offer will have met all conditions required for the course.

“My RAU”

Once you receive an offer from the RAU you will be able to log into the university’s applicant portal. “My RAU” can be found **here**, your username will be your eight digit student number which is printed at the top of your offer letter. Your password will be your date of birth in the format ddmmyyy. You will be invited to change your password on your first visit.

English Language Requirements

If your Bachelor’s or Master degree is not from a UK HEI or a majority English speaking country HEI (excluding Canada) and you are not a national of a majority English speaking country then you will need to provide evidence of your English proficiency.

International postgraduate research students must provide evidence of English language competence as follows:

- IELTS 6.5 overall (with no less than 6.0 in Writing and no less than 5.5 in any of the other elements) or equivalent.

If there is an English proficiency condition in your offer, it will be stated in your offer conditions on the offer letter you have received from RAU.

Booking an IELTS test

If you are planning to take an IELTS test we recommend you plan to take it early and in time to meet the end of May deadline. Plan and book your test early. More information can be found at **ielts/org**.



Providing verification of your qualifications

The University will request to receive officially verified copies of your qualifications. If you are taking an overseas or European qualification you will need to provide us with certified copies of your results.

How to ensure that copies of your qualifications are correctly certified

Photocopies will need to be verified by your University. Photocopies of your certificates & transcripts must meet the following conditions:

1. The document must be signed and stamped by your institution
2. The signatory must also print their name and job title
3. If the qualifications/results are in a language other than English then a certified official translation¹ of the original document must also be submitted at the same time.
4. References must be provided on 1the official headed paper of your institution and signed. Alternatively, we can accept a reference sent directly from your referee's academic e-mail address.

You should submit any certified official documents as soon as soon as they become available. For applicants requiring a study visa these should not be received later than the 1st August / Mid-December. Documents can be e-mailed to admissions@rau.ac.uk (only pdf files in colour and good definition will be accepted). The originals must be submitted on the day of your registration.

If you are an international student you should send us your documents as soon as possible as we cannot issue a CAS until you receive an unconditional offer.

If the University finds that the examinations/qualifications/results you have declared on your application are inaccurate or you are unable to verify them, the University reserves the right to withdraw the offer or cancel your application.



Visa advice for international students

Overseas (non-EU//EEA nationals) applicants who hold offers of a place at the Royal Agricultural University are advised to allow plenty of time to apply for and obtain their student visa. You can apply for your visa up to three months before the start of your course. To apply you will need a CAS (Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies) number from us so that you can complete your Tier 4 student visa application.



Background Information Pro Forma (BIPF)

Starting in early May/late October, all overseas offer holders who have accepted their offer will receive an e-mail with instructions on how to submit this important form.

- The BIPF form is mandatory for those overseas students who require a CAS number, which is used to apply for a student visa. The BIPF form is available on MyRAU and must be completed and submitted within 1 week of the receipt of the e-mail and no later than 1st August /Mid-November.
- Confirm your passport details to us
- Return a copy of the financial document to be used in support of your visa application

Overseas students who require a student visa will not be issued a CAS number until the form has been completed and returned to us.



Visa Support Team

We have a Visa Support Team, who are immigration/visa specialists with extensive experience. The Visa Support Team provides you with a one-to-one personalised service covering every aspect of the visa application process and is always available to give you whatever advice you need in relation to your UK Study visa.

This specialist service is provided to you free of charge. When you have been given an unconditional offer by the RAU, the Visa Support Team will be in contact to guide you through the visa application process.

Please note the free visa support is only for student visas of students, who are studying with the RAU. The Visa Support Team can provide help with other visas, such as for dependents, but there would be a charge for those services.

The Royal Agricultural University has a Tier 4 Sponsor Status (previously known as HTS) and is on the Home Office's Register of Sponsors. For all visa enquiries please contact **visa.support@rau.ac.uk**.

Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies-CAS

The CAS is a unique reference number issued to the RAU by the Home Office after we supply them with details regarding your programme of study, admissions and personal details. A CAS can be issued to you only once you have met the conditions below:

- Firmly accepted your unconditional offer
- Paid the required deposit for your course (or provided evidence of your financial sponsorship/student loan)
- Completed the BIPF form
- Confirmed your passport details to us
- Returned the financial document to be used in support of your visa application

Once you receive your pre-CAS statement e-mail you should check that the information it contains is correct paying special attention to your name, nationality, passport details and qualifications listed. If you notice an error you should immediately contact **visa.support@rau.ac.uk**



Once the CAS number has been assigned by the Home Office, the Admissions Office will e-mail you to let you know and we will provide your CAS statement and number to the Visa Support Team. The CAS statement lists the evidence we used to assess your application when making a decision to offer you a place. You will need to submit evidence of these qualifications (in the form of original certificate/transcript) along with your visa application

Important:

Please keep the Visa Support Team and Admissions up-to-date with any changes to the information contained in the CAS statement (e.g. passport number) so that we can update the Home Office and avoid your visa application being rejected.

If you're applying online or through the premium service centre, you'll pay the International Health Surcharge (IHS) as part of your application or when you book an appointment.

If you're applying by post, you must **pay the healthcare surcharge online** before you send your application - you'll need to include the IHS reference number on your application form.

The IHS costs from £150 per year for a student. It is calculated on the basis of the length of the visa you will be granted. To calculate how much you will have to pay visit the website **here**. The IHS is mandatory and failure to pay the correct amount could lead to a refusal of your visa. Some people are exempt, but they will still need to obtain an IHS number to include in their Tier 4 application.

To pay for the IHS please follow the steps below:

- Read the **UKVI web pages** for the up-to-date information on the IHS;
- Find out **when you need to pay** the surcharge or if you are exempt from payment;
- Calculate how much your surcharge will be using the **Home Office Calculator**. You should refer to your course dates as stated on your CAS.
- Keep a copy of the email you are sent by the Home Office with your IHS number for reference. You will be required to write the number on your Tier 4 application form.



When to apply for your visa

Our Visa Support Team will help you with your Tier 4 application. Please note that you cannot start a Tier 4 application until a CAS has been assigned by the RAU. If you apply without a CAS your application will be refused.

A CAS number is valid for 6 months and can only be used once. You can apply for a visa from up to 3 months before the sponsorship start date stated on your CAS. We strongly advise you to apply as early as possible in the 3 month window.

If you are already studying in the UK at a different institution you will have to apply for a Tier 4 visa for the RAU before you can register and start your course. You cannot start your programme at the RAU if you hold a Tier 4 visa for a different institution.

You will need to submit your passport as part of your application and attend a biometrics appointment. We strongly advise you not to arrange any other travel until your visa is granted.



Maintenance costs and financial requirements

If you are coming to study in the UK you will need to prove that you have enough money to pay for our course fees and your living costs while you are studying here. The Home Office refers to these as the maintenance (funds) requirements. You will need to prove that you have:

- Tuition fees for the first year of your programme or for the entire course if it is less than a year long
- £1,015 per month for living costs if you are studying outside London or anywhere else in the UK, for the majority of your study (i.e. you will need to show 9 months X £1,015=**£9,135**)

Important: You must show that you have held the required money for a consecutive 28 day period (finishing on the date of the closing balance) ending no more than 31 days before your application.

The Home Office will accept only specific documentation and it is essential that you follow the guidance given by our Visa Support Team and the Home Office policy **guidance** to ensure that you can use and obtain these documents in time to apply for your visa.

Financially sponsored students

Arrange for your sponsoring body to issue a confirmation letter. This must be received the latest by 1st August (Oct. start)/mid-November (Feb. start).

If you are being sponsored, evidence of sponsorship must be issued by an authorized officer of an official sponsoring body and must have a recent date of issue (within 30 days from sending). The letter should be on company/organisation headed paper and should clearly state:

- Your name and University number
- The programme for which you have been offered a place
- The level of fees that will be paid by the organisation/company in sterling pound
- The address the invoice should be sent to
- The contact person and department in the organisation/company
- That the fees (quoted in in sterling pound)will be paid directly to the Royal Agricultural University

Please provide evidence of sponsorship by emailing **Admissions@rau.ac.uk**

Financially sponsored students cntd.

Definition of an Official sponsor

An **official financial sponsor** is defined in the Tier 4 policy guidance as:

- the UK government
- your home government
- the British Council
- any international organisation
- an international company (N.B. the Home Office has not defined 'international company' but it seems to mean a company with a trading presence (an office) in more than one country)
- any university
- an Independent School

If you receive funding from any of the above sources, you will need a letter from them confirming how much money they will contribute towards your course fees and maintenance. If your official financial sponsor is also your Tier 4 sponsor and they have included details of your financial sponsorship in your CAS, you do not need an additional letter. The letter must show:

- your name
- the name and contact details of the official financial sponsor
- the date of the letter
- the length of the sponsorship
- the amount of money the sponsor is giving to you, or a statement that all course fees and living costs will be covered.

If you are a "low risk" student, you should obtain this letter and keep it safe, but you do not need to include it with your initial application. All other applicants must include the letter with their application.

If your official financial sponsor is not covering all of your course fees and maintenance, you must be able to demonstrate that you have the rest of the money required.

Consent of current or previous official financial sponsor, if they are a government or an international scholarship agency

If you have an official financial sponsor for your proposed studies, and the sponsor is a government or an international scholarship agency, their sponsor letter (which you will need for evidence of your money, see below) should specifically state that they consent to your Tier 4 (General) application.

If you have previously received financial sponsorship from a government or international scholarship agency for your studies, and the sponsorship ended less than 12 months ago, you must also obtain and include a letter of consent from this financial sponsor.

Monies paid towards tuition costs

We will update the Home Office CAS database with details of any tuition fee payments you make. This enables them to take such payments into account when calculating your ability to finance your studies in the UK.

Your CAS statement will list any accommodation deposits paid in advance. We advise that you pay a maximum of £1,265 for RAU accommodation before you apply for your Tier 4 visa.

If you make a payment towards your fees we will make updates to the Home Office database approximately within 48 hours after the money has cleared with our bank. Please ensure that you also write to the Visa Support Team to inform us of any payments / additional tuition fee payments you have made. You must wait for an updated CAS statement from us before applying for your visa if you need to show that you have paid additional money to the RAU towards your course.

Important: It can take up to two weeks for monies to clear, so, you will need to plan for this when preparing your visa application.

You should not make payments if you have a visa appointment within the next fortnight as it is likely that we may be unable to issue you with an updated CAS statement before your appointment.



What to pack if you are travelling from outside the UK

Documentation

Carry the below in your hand luggage in case hold luggage is late or lost:

- Passport
- Visa & entry clearance documents
- Your offer letter
- Proof of degree (final transcript, certificate)
- Scholarship/funding information documents
- Travel and health insurance documents
- Cash-Travellers cheques-credit cards
- Contact details and directions for your accommodation

Clothing

The weather in the UK is changeable. Temperatures may go down as low as -3 degrees Celsius during the winter (Dec-March) and as high as 32 degrees during the summer (June-Aug). Rainfall is common but most of the time is light.

If you arrive in September we suggest you bring a sweater and a light (waterproof) jacket or a small umbrella for the journey. A pair of comfortable waterproof shoes is also recommended. Agriculture and Equine students are advised to have a pair of wellington boots.

There is no particular dress code. In general students tend to dress informally (jeans, T-shirt, trainers) whilst on campus. Smart clothes are occasionally worn either for recruitment events with employers or on social events such as the Freshers, the Christmas and the May ball.

Electrical appliances

Electricity in the UK operates on 220-240 volts. You should check your appliance manual to ensure it will work in the UK. You will also require a three pin plug adaptor which is available in most shops.

Mobile phone

Check with your home service provider before you travel to the UK. It may be expensive to make calls in the UK and back home from your current phone. Pay as you go phones can be bought for as little as £5 although individual call and text charges may be comparatively higher. Pre-pay phones do not require a UK bank account or address so they may be easier to buy if you are waiting to open a bank account. Do shop around to get the best deal before you decide!



Registration

To complete your formal enrolment at the RAU you must register with the central administration. This is a 2 part process here at the RAU:

- Part 1 Online Self Registration- completed online on My RAU
- Part 2 Onsite Registration – you will complete this on Monday 24th September(October starter)2018 /1st February 2019(February starter) here on the RAU campus.

We will send you a contact e-mail towards the late August/beginning of September (October starter) or mid- January(February starter) with joining instructions.

To complete your formal enrolment at the RAU you must register in person with the central administration. Registration is a straight forward process which involves you providing proof of your identity and eligibility to study in the UK.

During registration you will be issued with your student card which will confirm your status as a registered RAU student and allow you to use restricted access buildings, such as the Library.

Documents to bring with you to Registration

For EEA nationals

Photographic identification that verifies your EEA nationality, such as your passport or national identity card. Please note that the University is required to take a copy of your documents at registration.

For non- EEA nationals entering the UK with a student visa

Your passport showing evidence of your right to study at the RAU and the period for which you have permission to remain in the UK. Please note that the University is required to take a copy of your documents at registration.



Fees 2018-19

UK/EU students

PhD

£4,100 Full Time per year, minimum 3 years registration

£2,100 Part Time per year, minimum 6 years registration

MSc by Research

£4,100 Full Time per year

£2,055 Part Time per year, minimum 2 years registration

International Students

PhD

£12,000 per year, minimum 3 years registration [part time not available]

MSc by Research

£12,000 per year [part time not available]

Further information on fees (incl. part time study), financial support and how to pay can be found on our **website**.

RAC/RAU Alumni

Discount for Royal Agricultural College/Royal Agricultural University alumni moving to postgraduate studies	20% of Total Course Fee Payable**
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**All RAC/RAU alumni who are accepted for postgraduate study at the RAU are eligible for a 20% reduction in tuition fees.

Only one discount is available per student life. Additionally, Alumni may also be eligible for other funding in the form of scholarships, bursaries and awards.

Cost of living

On Campus accommodation costs

The charges opposite are given as a guide only. Please visit the RAU website for the most-up-to-date information

Room type	Fully catered	Dinner B&B
	39wk	39wk
Large en-suite single	£8,167	£7,157
En-suite single	£7,980	£6,970
Small en-suite single	£7793	£6,783
Standard single	£6,633	£5,586
Large standard single	£6,821	£5,848



Off Campus Living Costs

Off-campus accommodation charges vary depending on the type of room or house rented. Charges for a one-bedroom flat or room in a shared house range from £350 - £450 per month. Utilities such as gas, water and electricity may be an additional cost.

The table below gives an estimate on other living costs in addition to accommodation costs that you may occur while at university. Remember that costs vary depending on your lifestyle and you should also take into account flights or transportation to and from the UK.

If you are an overseas student you may want to use the **International Student Calculator** to help with budgeting before you come to the UK.

	Monthly Cost	Academic Year Cost
Gas / Electricity	£50	£450
Water	£45	£405
Internet	£20	£180
Mobile Phone	£25	£225
Laundry / Household Items	£35	£315
Leisure (meals out, cinema, bars, etc)	£135	£1215
Photocopying / Printing	£18	£162
Food	£200	£1800
Course Books / Materials	£75	£675
Insurance	£5	£45
TV Licence	£16	£144
Total	£674	£5616



Accommodation Information

At the RAU we have 320 student bedrooms that we offer to First Year Undergraduates, but we also offer a limited number of rooms to postgraduate students. We have a mixture of Catered and Self-Catered accommodation with the Dinner Bed and Breakfast option as standard, however, you have the opportunity to upgrade to a fully catered package. We also offer “quiet bedrooms” for students who prefer the more tranquil environment. The bedrooms are a mixture of standard rooms with shared bathroom facilities, en-suite rooms and twins. Please note that availability of accommodation on campus for January/February starters would be very limited. Students should contact the accommodation office directly.

Student Accommodation off campus

The Royal Agricultural University (RAU) in collaboration with Gloucestershire Police and Cotswold District Council created **Urban Fox**.

What is Urban Fox?

Urban Fox is here to help future and present students integrate into the local community.

Urban Fox provides several services for our students, these are:

To help make sure you are safe, socially aware and responsible.

Allow you to seek out appropriate accommodation off campus.

Provide access to useful information and practical tips about living in private rented accommodation and the community.

For more information about living off campus please visit **Urban Fox**.

Accommodation Guide

If you'd like to read more about the Halls of Residence available for both Undergraduate and Postgraduate students, please download our Accommodation Guide.

FAQs

If you have a question, please visit our **frequently asked questions section**. If you still can't find what you're looking for, please contact the Accommodation Office:

E-mail accommodation@rau.ac.uk or telephone 01285 889896.

Visiting the University

The best way to find out what the student experience is like at the Royal Agricultural University is to visit, explore, ask questions and meet current students and staff. Postgraduate Open Days are advertised on our website, or you are welcome to contact the Director of Research or your allocated supervisor to arrange a visit.





Cirencester and further afield

The university campus is set on 25 acres of magnificent grounds amid the beautiful Cotswold countryside.

Off campus there is plenty to explore. The busy Roman town of Cirencester, referred to as the capital of the Cotswolds, is just a mile away. Cirencester has many shops, bars and restaurants to choose from. Remember to take your student card to take advantage of discounts available to students at a range of stores.

The Cotswold Water Park is 15 minutes' drive away and offers 150 lakes set over 40 square miles offering activities such as kayaking, canoeing, sailing, rowing, wakeboarding and windsurfing.

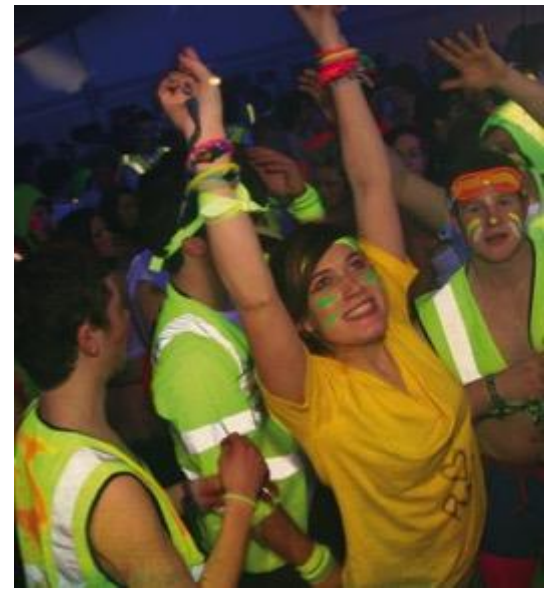
Bath, Bristol, Oxford and Cheltenham are all within an hour of the University and promise an exciting day out. Alternatively, London is just 90 minutes by direct train, the perfect distance for a day trip.



The Student Union

The Student Union (SU) team are always busy developing fantastic activities, clubs, societies and some of the country's finest event weeks and balls. You'll be able to meet the SU team at the applicant day and find out what they can offer you.

You can also view the list of societies and clubs at the RAU [here](#).



FAQs

When do I need to send your proof of my qualifications?

If you are taking qualifications that are required for you to complete your conditions, it is your responsibility to ensure that your results reach us. You should send them to

admissions@rau.ac.uk as soon as you receive them; and by late May/early June (Sept. start) or by mid-November (Feb start) at the very latest. Do not send originals of degree certificates/transcripts. Coloured scanned copies will suffice. You will be asked to present the original documents when you come to register in person.

Overseas applicants who require a study visa will need to send in their results by the end of May / mid-November the latest to allow sufficient time to apply for their visa application.

I have changed my postal and/or email address. What should I do?

Please notify the Admissions Office of your new address in writing as soon as possible.

I no longer want to start my postgraduate course, who do I tell?

It's important to contact the admissions team as soon as possible if you intend to withdraw or defer your application.

Who do I need to contact if I would like to talk to someone about special support arrangements?

The university Disability Officer Dr John Conway provides a range of services for students who have special needs, disabilities or medical conditions. If you would like to talk to John you can contact him at **john.conway@rau.ac.uk** or phone +44(0)1285 652531 Ext. 2234