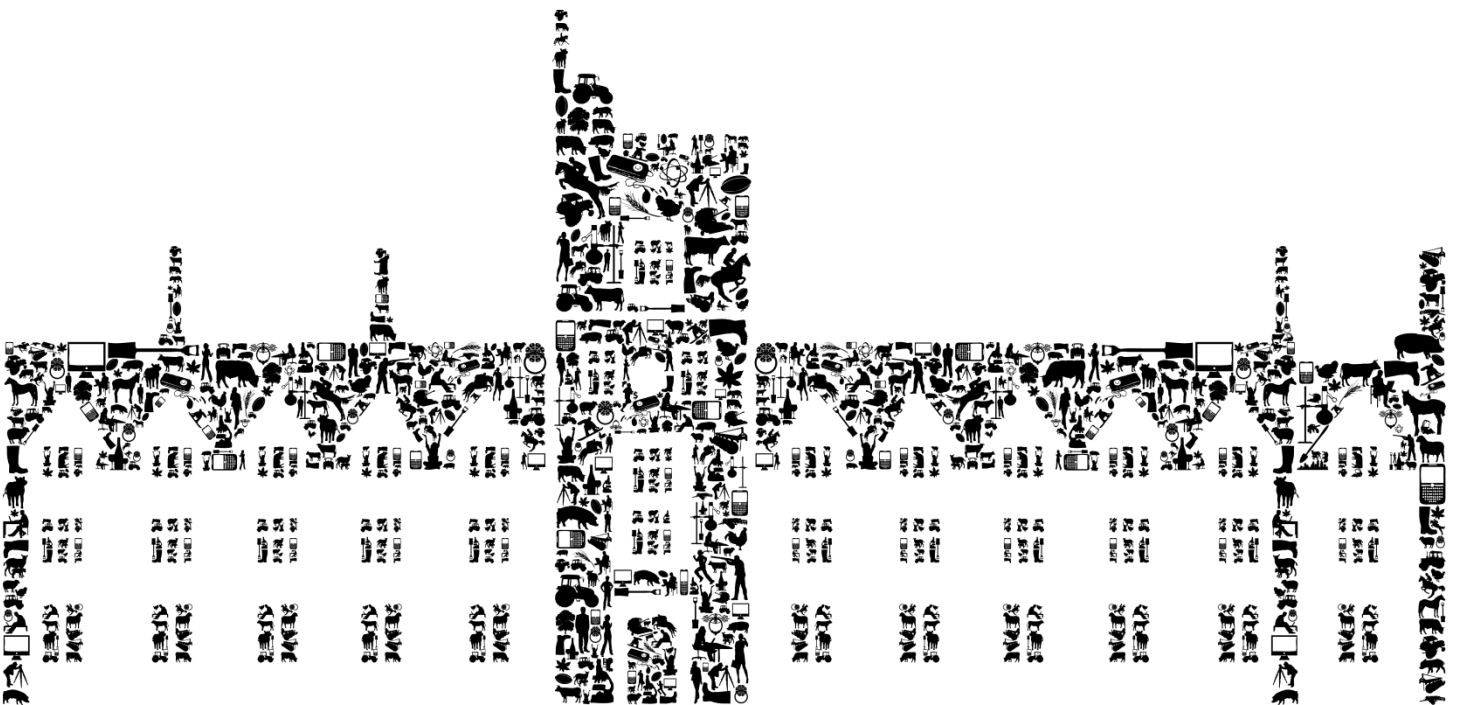


Public Benefit Statement - Learning & Teaching



The Royal Agricultural University is a registered charity under the Charities Act 2006 and is responsible, as a public-funded university, to the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE) its Principal Regulator, which is charged with monitoring its compliance with charity law obligations, as well as to the Charity Commission. The RAU is aware of its responsibilities as a charity to act for the public benefit, and exercises due regard to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance.

The objects of the University are (as also mentioned in the Research section) the advancement of education and learning, including 'teaching, instruction and vocational training in, and research into, agriculture, equine, land management, business and management'. These specific aims are embraced in the University mission statement to serve, and provide for, all occupations, industries and professions relating to the land-based sectors regionally, nationally and internationally. In addition, the Royal Agricultural University through its education and research activities and student engagements strives to benefit society more generally, for the continuing benefit of all communities.

The RAU is a small, specialist higher education institution (HEI) providing taught degree programmes as two-year Foundation Degree courses; three-year honours degrees and one-year plus master's degree programmes to over 1,200 students (2013-14), under provisions of taught degree awarding powers granted to the University by Privy Council (in 1995). In addition, it provides a one year certificate and graduate diploma programme in agriculture and farming business, to meet market needs. Research degrees (PhD and MSc by Research) are currently validated by Coventry University but undertaken at RAU.

The RAU aims to offer programmes of study that are attractive to a diverse range of potential students, have fair and transparent admission policies and also provide financial support to low income students. The University has a comprehensive Student Complaints Procedure, as well as a Student Discipline Procedure, to deal swiftly and effectively with problems which may arise during students' time at the University.

The University mitigates the financial barriers to students accessing education by offering generous bursary schemes and fee waivers that are particularly targeted towards those from low income backgrounds who are assessed as eligible for state support. This is agreed with The Office for Fair Access (OFFA) to allow RAU to also charge £9000 tuition to undergraduate students.

In 2013/14 the RAU received £56k from HEFCE under the National Scholarship Scheme together with £241k in recognition of the additional costs of supporting Widening Participation activities and for ensuring student success (including improving retention). These equate to 1.7% of total income (1.7%; 2012/13). This income stream is designed to support the University in meeting the additional costs of recruiting and retaining students from low participation areas or groups.

The University alerts all prospective and continuing students to the opportunities for financial support provided through HEFCE Access Funds and its own bursary and scholarship schemes for outstanding achievers, sports, students from low participation areas as well as a



range of awards from outside trusts. These are advertised on the RAU website and through promotional literature used in recruitment.

The total value of bursaries and fee waivers awarded this year amounts to £663k (2012/13: £576k). In addition the University distributed £12k Access funds to 13 students; (2012/13: £8k; 8 students); provided skills training bursaries and employability project awards worth £60k (2012/13: £60k). It offers discounts up to 20% of tuition fees for RAU graduates who return to carry out postgraduate study. 22 of these were awarded in 2013/14 (2012/13: 13) with 20 more budgeted for October 2014 entrants.

To encourage local recruitment and enable students to reduce the cost of higher education by living at home and studying, the University launched its new RAU Cirencester Scholarship for 2013/14. This scholarship provided a fee waiver of up to £3k each p.a. for new undergraduate or postgraduate students who live or study within 10 miles of Cirencester and who can demonstrate academic excellence. 3 of these were awarded in 2012/13 and 3 have been agreed for October 2014 entrants.

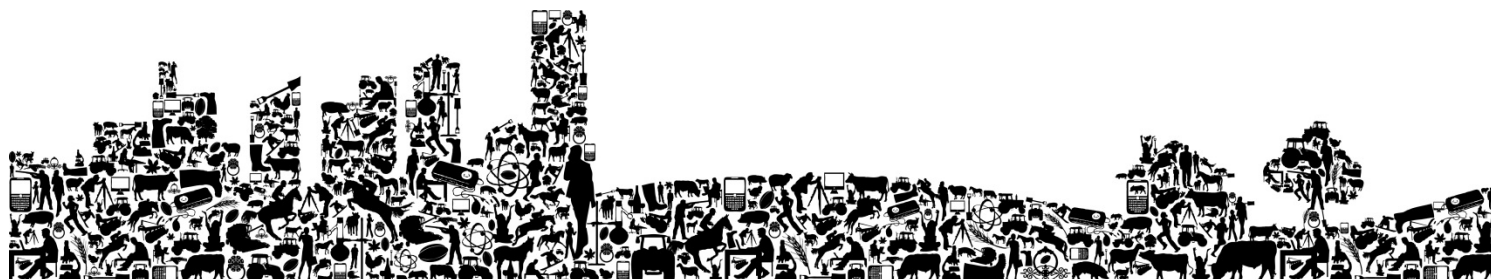
The University introduced a Principal's Postgraduate Overseas Award (PPOA) scholarship to promote further the diverse international community at the University. New taught postgraduate overseas students from India, South America, South Africa, Malaysia and Singapore are eligible. 1 bursary was awarded this year and 20 are in place for the forthcoming academic year.

The university launched a separate charity, The African Fellowship Trust (AFT) in 2005 which since that time has funded 75 fellows from 9 countries. AFT is supporting 7 Africa Fellows this year and a further 2 students have been awarded Africa scholarships of fee waivers.

The RAU had students from 43 countries benefitting from the education offered this year (46 in 2012/13). Overseas/EU and Channel Island students made up 16.5% of the population this year compared to 14% last year. The Corporate Plan target is to grow this to 20% by 2019, of a target of 400 from overseas.

The community nature of the learning environment supports a range of students who might not otherwise benefit from higher education. The RAU recruited approximately 16% (2012/13:13%) undergraduate students from backgrounds designated by HEFCE as "disadvantaged" and 19.6% (2012/13: 14.2%) were in receipt of the Disabled Student Allowance. The University employs a Disability Officer who manages all issues surrounding dyslexia and disability. There are many types of disability; visible or hidden; physical (sight, speech, hearing or mobility impairment) or mental health impairments or long term medical conditions. The most frequently encountered is dyslexia and the University employs a specialist dyslexia tutor.

The RAU has continued developing its progression partnerships with schools and colleges. 290 students studied degrees validated by the RAU at their local FE (Further Education) College and this number is set to rise to 426 in 2014/15. The main thrust of the RAU outreach is to recruit students from non-traditional backgrounds (urban and/or different socio-economic



the 94% average graduate employability rate has kept the RAU amongst the top 10 universities in the UK. The 2013 survey showed 96.3% of undergraduates and 97.5% of postgraduates in employment or further study within six months of leaving with 75% securing professional or managerial roles. The provision of a steady stream of high-calibre graduates benefits not only the industries the University serves, but also employers and the economy.

The University, together with the Frank Parkinson Agricultural Trust, invested £1,200k in a new centre of excellence, the Rural Innovation Centre, on Harnhill Farm, which was formally opened in 2014. It is an important development for the agricultural sector, allowing the University to further its research and learning activities in relation to agriculture, the food chain and global food security. The new Centre enables the sharing of cutting-edge knowledge between those involved in agricultural production and those undertaking applied research, enabling the promotion of education, innovation and knowledge exchange in the “field”.

As a “knowledge hub”, the Harnhill Centre also provides a major new on-farm resource for the wider rural sector and the local community and includes classrooms, offices, a demonstration area, community space, and meeting rooms. It is providing an additional opportunity for the RAU Outreach team to link together science and innovation, career opportunities with an insight into university life and a deeper understanding of agriculture, food production and the land based sector.

The University runs prestigious, high level professional business management and leadership training courses for organisations such as the Worshipful Company of Farmers, the Institute of Agricultural Management, the John Edgar Trust and introductory agricultural training for several major banks and utility companies. The RAU also acts as a venue for regular public lectures that disseminate the latest research outputs and policy decisions relating to agriculture, land use and food supply to a wider audience. In 2013/14 the University provided 4,779 training days for students, farmers, members of the financial and utilities sectors and government organisations; (2012/13: 3,778 days). These knowledge transfer activities assist in raising the awareness of the RAU’s subject areas.

