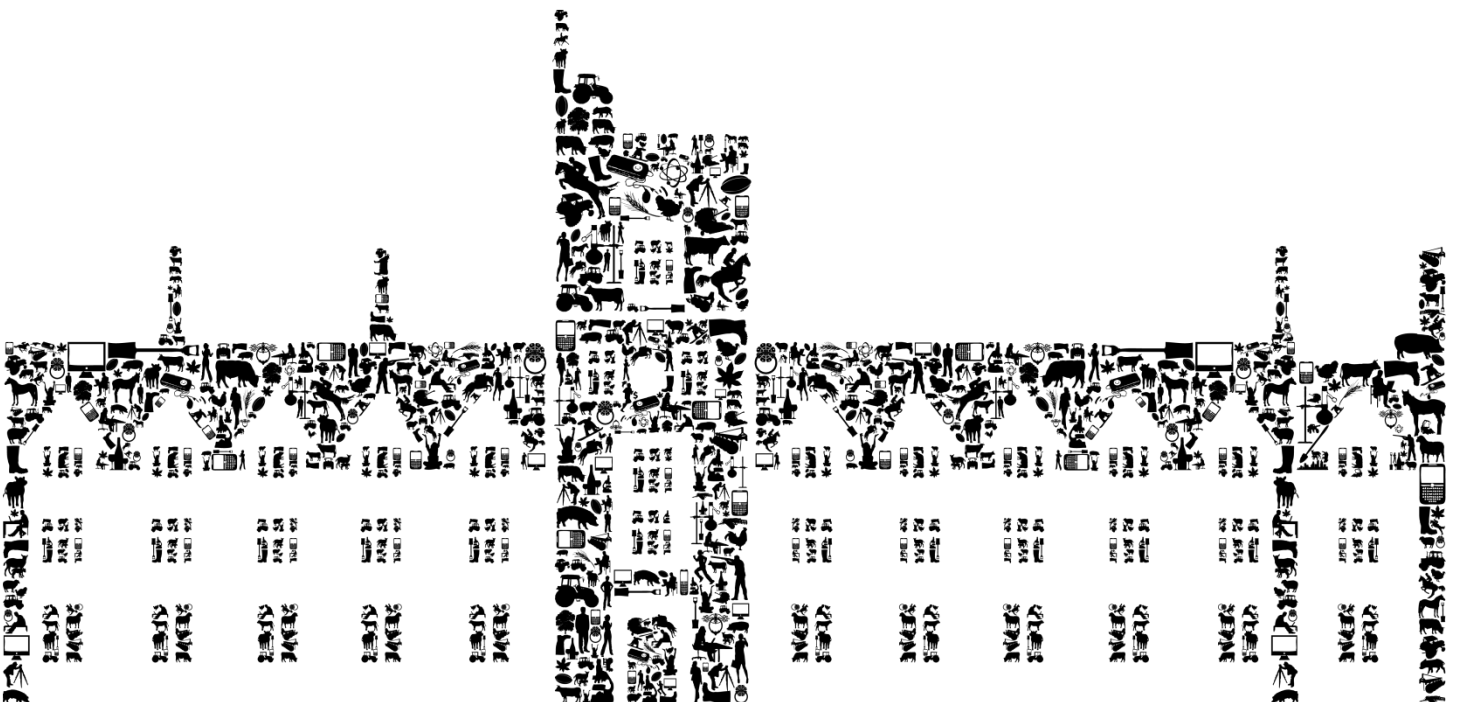


Public Benefit Statement - Research



The Royal Agricultural University is a registered charity under the Charities Act 2006 and is responsible, as a public-funded university, to its Principal Regulator the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE), 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 the advancement of education and knowledge, including 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 strives to benefit society more generally, for the continuing benefit of all.

The RAU is a specialist higher education institution (HEI) providing taught 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).

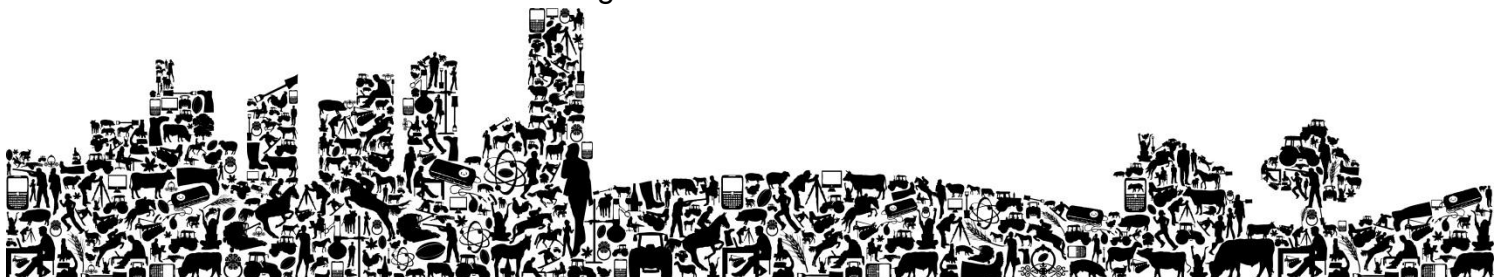
The Royal Agricultural University does not have research degree awarding powers, and research degrees leading to doctor of philosophy (PhD) and Master of Science by Research (MSc) qualifications are currently validated (2013-14) by Coventry University.

The 2014-2019 Corporate Plan states that the RAU will work towards obtaining research degree awarding powers (RDAP). Research activity is interpreted at the university to include extension and technology transfer, farmer engagement, public communications and enterprise development with students and collaborating partners. A report detailing publications and other outputs and staff engagement is produced annually and posted on the University website.

The RAU is actively involved in public benefit research on such key issues as sustainable development, climate change, land-use, food and agriculture policy, food safety, food security, food supply management, countryside management and natural environment management. These activities also provide a basis for research-informed teaching.

Specific public benefits include:

- Knowledge creation
- Training of PhD students
- Publication of research outcomes
- Application of new knowledge for improving food and farming
- Improving equine management
- Improving land-use and countryside management
- Strategic improvements to food security
- Improving crop performance
- Contributions to climate change and lower carbon economies
- Better soil and water management



- Better public understanding of agriculture and food production.

Public access to research outcomes is shared and communicated in several ways including:

- invitation to public lectures free of charge (e.g. an annual Bledisloe Memorial Lecture) and other conferences (eg the Annual International Rural Development seminar) held at the RAU
- through media engagements by University, such as regular contributions to local radio (Gloucester Radio and BBC Radio 4) and popular articles in a wide range of outlets.
- Public Open Days at University and its farm ('Food and Farming' Days) free of charge.
- Lectures and talks delivered at secondary schools as part of the widening participation strategy.
- Access to the RAU Farms for visiting groups to view / study enterprise developments and farming environment studies, for which no charge is made.
- Public access to the University library containing research reports.
- Access through the University website to University conference papers for any follow-up interest and RAU staff contact.
- Providing invited talks and presentations to various groups of the community.
- The University hosts local societies e.g. Cotswold Agricultural Discussion Society, Cirencester Science and Technology Society, as well as related meetings and conferences.
- Particular beneficiaries of the University's work, in addition to its students, include farmers, land agents, policy makers, the food industry and countryside managers who continue to show particular interest in research at the RAU relating to their industry and professions.

The RAU does not limit access to its research findings, and makes every attempt to ensure these are put widely in the public domain (especially through publication, talks and conference contributions). The RAU has always welcomed invitations to talk about its research to interested groups and other societies – and it continues to do so regionally, nationally and internationally. Increasingly its publications will be in “open access” journals.

The Royal Agricultural University is not, as yet, a research intensive university. However, around 30% of the academic staff produce key peer-reviewed publications and conference presentations. More than 50% of the teaching staff are engaged more broadly in applied research, including translation of research and in enterprise development with students.

All academic staff are encouraged to develop and progress research interests to provide the “research-informed teaching” environment expected of a university (QAA and HEFCE).

These activities are focussed on providing benefits to society through better food and land management.

