



Southlands College
Report to the Methodist Church
2023/24



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Vice-Chancellor's Welcome



At the University of Roehampton, our mission, underpinned by over 180 years of history through our four Colleges, drives what we do: we transform lives with career-oriented education, empowering our students with the confidence, knowledge and skills for a rewarding career and fulfilling life. We aim to improve society and our local communities through our research and the knowledge we develop.

Our four colleges are key to delivering this mission. They provide thriving hubs for our students, for ideas to be exchanged and for communities to grow.

The University began the academic year with an award of TEF Silver, and also concluded the year positively, ranked 8th in England for student satisfaction in the latest National Student Survey. Our four unique Colleges are at the heart of this success, providing the community environment that our students value

so much. The mission of Roehampton and our four founding Colleges is widening success through higher education and we are pleased that 2023/24 has seen improvements in engagement and outcomes for our diverse student body.

In 2023/24, The University launched online programmes and new partnerships, and grew our campus portfolio. We have developed exciting new programmes, such as in Sustainable Engineering, Physiotherapy and Cyber Security, to ensure that we respond to the demand for graduates with these specialist skills to address the urgent challenges facing our society. Through diversifying our portfolio, we have taken positive steps to ensure of financial sustainability in what has continued to be a challenging sector.

Research and Knowledge Exchange at the University of Roehampton addresses some of the most pressing issues facing societies, governments, businesses and communities around the world - from the climate crisis, to health, to homelessness. 2023/24 was another successful year for us both in terms of grant capture and our impact outside of the institution.

The University has also continued to play an important role in the local community and in South West London more broadly, furthering our academic mission and strongly aligned with our shared values.

I would like to thank colleagues across our Colleges, and our students and student leaders, for their dedication and commitment to one another and for ensuring Roehampton continues to deliver on its mission of changing the lives of our students and improving communities around us.

J.N. Ezingard

Professor Jean-Noël Ezingard
Vice-Chancellor



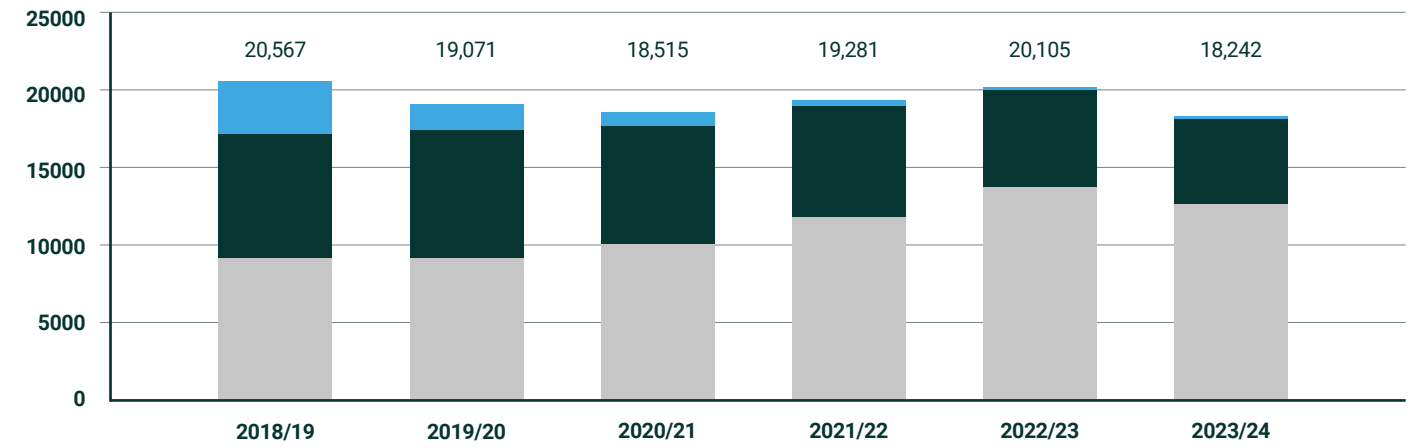
University Report

Key Performance Indicators

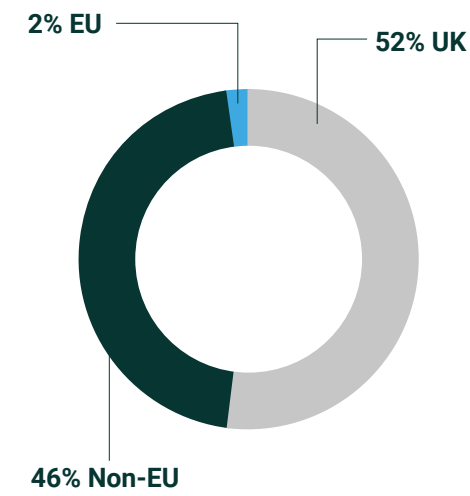


Student enrolments

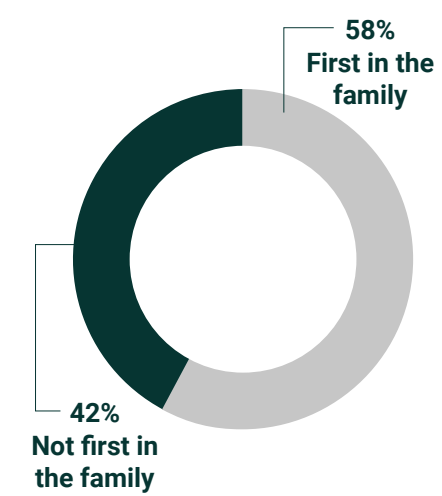
On campus Off campus Online



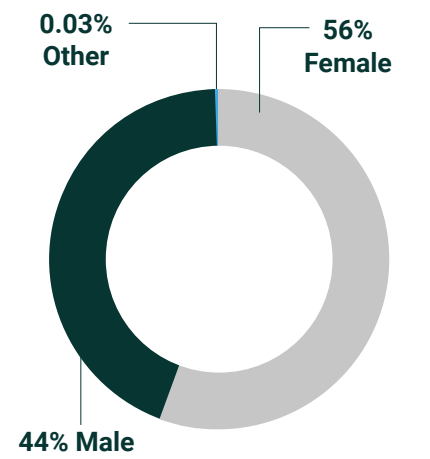
Domicile



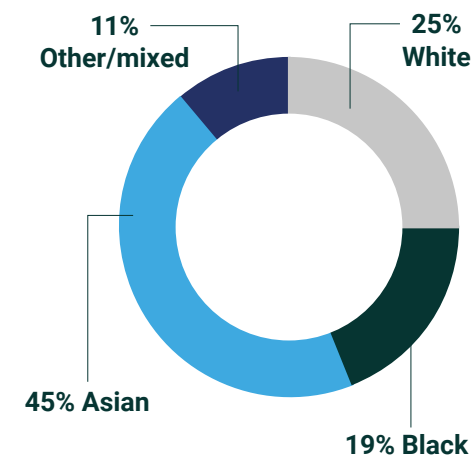
First in family UG, UK



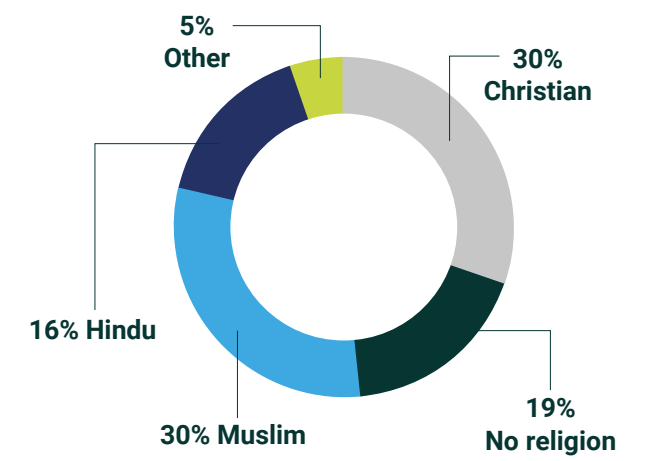
Gender



Ethnicity



Religion



At the University of Roehampton, we change lives by helping our students develop the knowledge, skills and confidence needed for a successful professional career and fulfilling life, irrespective of their background or circumstances. Our institutional priorities focus on widening participation, enriching the student experience and providing excellent, professionally focused education.



In September we were awarded TEF Silver under the UK government's Teaching Excellence Framework review. Roehampton was commended by the review panel for its dedication to fostering excellent academic practices throughout the institution and outstanding commitment to the professional development of its staff. The panel also concluded that Roehampton excels in articulating a comprehensive range of educational objectives that are not only highly relevant to its diverse student body but also aligned with their future ambitions.

Our commitment to excellence and putting students at the heart of everything we do was further reflected in an outstanding performance in the 2023/24 National Student Survey (NSS), an annual exercise that gathers feedback from final-year undergraduate students across the UK on their course and university experience, including teaching quality, learning opportunities, and how the student voice is heard. On the Overall Positivity measure, Roehampton rose 61 places to 12th in the UK, 8th in England, and 3rd in London.

The University's portfolio covers life and health sciences, education, psychology, computing, law, business, accountancy and finance, humanities and social sciences, and creative and performing arts. Roehampton continues to be a top 10 national teacher training provider. Our strategic curriculum development is creating a growing portfolio of professionally focused courses, designed and taught to enable students to be successful in their studies and as graduates.

Over the past year, we have continued to innovate in support of this goal:

- Our new strategic partnership with FutureLearn delivers 100% online degrees through an initial suite of nine postgraduate business programmes launched in May 2024. We have ambitious growth plans for the venture, with future expansion across our subject range planned. The partnership will enable students seeking online education to access Roehampton's quality portfolio of future focused degrees.
- During the year, work got underway on a £10 million refurbishment project to create a state-of-the-art facility that will host our new range of Sustainable Engineering programmes which launched in September 2024. £5.8 million of the funding for this major campus upgrade came from the Office for Students, with the remainder funded by the University directly.
- We have launched new modes of delivery, with our first cohort of extended Masters students successfully completing their 10-week course and progressing onto postgraduate study. The course is designed to help international students develop the necessary skills to pursue a Masters degree in Business or Computing at Roehampton.
- We created the new School of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, bringing together a number of cogent academic disciplines under single leadership and blending vibrant creativity with rich traditions of Roehampton scholarship for 1,800 students.



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- Roehampton entered into a new strategic partnership with Harrow, Richmond, and Uxbridge Colleges (HRUC) aimed at broadening educational opportunities and industry partnerships in London. Roehampton and HRUC will collaborate to create new educational pathways in vital sectors such as sustainable engineering and the built environment, and the University will also become a member of HRUC's West London Institute of Technology.
- We have continued to invest in Study Coaches, working with our students throughout their Roehampton journey and supporting them to successful outcomes. The coaches allow for a level of engagement that goes beyond the traditional academic-student contact time and allows us to identify early on, and offer solutions to, any issues and problems that our students may be experiencing.
- To support our work in improving student outcomes, we have developed several data dashboards to give colleagues insight into how they might support students to be successful in their studies. The dashboards, which focus on student engagement and attendance, programme and module performance, NSS, career readiness and student intersectionality are available for all colleagues to identify areas of improvement for their programmes and modules and to target the support they give to students. The success of this insight-led approach is becoming evident as there has been a 6pp drop in the number of 1st year students leaving unsuccessfully when compared with 2022/23. In addition, there has been a 4pp reduction in the number of non-submissions and nearly a 5pp increase in the number of students who have passed on their first attempt, in comparison to the previous year.

In September we were awarded TEF Silver under the UK government's Teaching Excellence Framework review.



Research and Knowledge Exchange

Research and Knowledge Exchange at Roehampton addresses some of the most pressing issues facing societies, governments, businesses and communities around the world. As well as strengthening our partnerships with local communities and organisations, these initiatives are central to our social mission and the founding ethos of our four colleges.



Collaboration and Partnership

As part of the University's 20th anniversary celebrations, our Chancellor, Baroness Verma, hosted a successful event at the House of Lords. The event celebrated the University's role and impact in delivering London's workforce through partnership. The event was attended by Fleur Anderson MP, public and private sector partners and civic leaders, alongside members of the University staff and student community.

We have been recognized as leaders in our region for our approach to collaboration and partnership. In November, the University was distinguished with three awards at the BIG South London annual innovation summit. The University was awarded the overall 'Collaborators of the Year' category, reflecting the commitment to support inclusive innovation across South London and beyond.

The University continues to provide an exceptional environment for doctoral researchers to flourish. In July, Roehampton hosted the TECHNE Doctoral Training Partnership's summer congress, focused on the theme of the 'Scholar's Voice'.





Grant capture

2023/24 was the University's most successful year for grant capture. Highlights include:

- Professor Anne Robertson (School of Life and Health Sciences) and Dr Robert Grabowski (Cranfield University) were awarded £2.2m by the Leverhulme Trust, under its doctoral scholarship programme. The project, Connected Waters, will study the interactions between humans and freshwater ecosystems.
- Professor Lauren Stewart (School of Psychology), who joined Roehampton from Goldsmiths, University of London, secured NIHR funding of £2.7 million. She will be conducting a psychological study focusing on the effects of traditional music in pregnant women suffering from depression in Congo and South Africa. This project has incredible impact value, bringing knowledge exchange from Africa into the western world, through a potential cost-effective therapy to tackling a global issue.
- A cross-departmental application to the Southwest London NHS Integrated Care Partnership was successfully awarded £243,000 to support the sub-regional workforce development. I-CAN (Initiating and Supporting Care Leavers into Apprenticeships in Nursing) is the University of Roehampton's 12-month pilot initiative to support care experienced young people aged 18-29 to pursue a career in healthcare.



Impact

Dr Melissa Jogie (School of Education) has reframed policy and practice to address homelessness. Dr Jogie and her team took part in the British Academy Summer Showcase, which featured their project with charity partner Sutton Night Watch, which used GPS trackers to capture how people experiencing homelessness spent their time. The showcase challenged and inspired visitors with its groundbreaking way of presenting data through 3D models and scenarios that involved visitors in gaming awful dilemmas. The project gained media coverage from the BBC and Big Issue.

Professor Hoskin's (Faculty of Business and Law) work in the G-EPIC project has been instrumental in developing and piloting a gender empowerment intervention in schools, addressing political self-efficacy among disadvantaged girls. This initiative has engaged teachers, students, and policy advisors across multiple countries in Europe, using innovative methods with an emphasis on inclusive practice. Early findings from teacher testimonials and pre and post intervention questionnaire data among participants show that the intervention is effective in boosting students' political confidence, as well as challenging entrenched stereotypes regarding girls' political self-efficacy within the education system. Using this foundation, the G-EPIC project will also now seek to influence policy and implement the intervention in additional countries when possible.

Within the scope of environmental impact, research conducted at Roehampton reached COP28, with My Extinction, a documentary by Josh Appignanesi (School of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences) screened and the focus of a panel discussion. The film turns the camera on the award-winning filmmaker himself and features the likes of Zadie Smith, Mark Rylance, Juliet Stevenson, Simon Schama, and many other leading voices. Some scenes were filmed at Roehampton, having received funding from Southlands Methodist Trust.

On a local level, research developed by experts in the School of Psychology and Faculty of Business and Law is leading to changes in a local charity. Roehampton's first Knowledge Transfer Partnership in two decades - led by Dr Jonathan Isserow (Psychology), Dr Paul Faulkner (Psychology) and Bari Malik (Business and Law) - in collaboration with Mind (Brent, Wandsworth & Westminster) was launched in 2023-24. This was the first step towards developing a new mental health intervention service which will play a key role in supporting the local community while contributing to the organisation's long-term sustainability.



Supporting Staff

The University aims to provide an inclusive, supportive, and collaborative community for all colleagues, and to continue to diversify its workforce to reflect the communities it serves. Over the 2023-24 academic year, we continued to develop and implement initiatives that support enhancing the staff experience.



The University aims to provide an inclusive, supportive, and collaborative community for all colleagues, and to continue to diversify its workforce to reflect the communities it serves. Over the 2023-24 academic year, we continued to develop and implement initiatives that support enhancing the staff experience.

Following launch in 2022-23, we continued our three flagship leadership development programmes for different groups within our staff community. Our Enhancing Programme Leaders development programme has been profiled by Advance HE as a groundbreaking collaboration. We also supported colleagues through the Advance HE Aurora and Diversifying Leadership development programmes that support women and diversifying leadership in HE.

Our University Leadership Forum, which brings together approximately 70 leaders from across the university, met on six occasions over the academic year. A key event had a specific focus on International Women's Day; former Deputy Chair of

Council, Janet Cooper OBE and Head of HE Practice at Society Search, Victoria Sanders-Clarke, shared their experience and insights on advancing gender equality.

The University's Staff Society has led a busy and diverse timetable of activities open to all staff across the University, from sports and wellbeing (e.g. basketball, running, yoga and Pilates), to book and cinema clubs.

In recognition of the commitment and efforts of our community, the Vice-Chancellor hosted colleague engagement lunches, events for our promoted academic colleagues, and two all-staff community social events at Christmas and Summer. Both events brought together hundreds of colleagues to socialise and connect and recognise the commitment and contributions of everyone from across the Roehampton community. Our summer 2024 party formed part of our 20th anniversary year celebrations, and we were pleased to also welcome former staff and friends of the University.

Outreach and Widening Participation

Roehampton's commitments to fair access and equal opportunities are central to our mission as a university, dating back to the founding of our constituent colleges in the nineteenth century to provide teaching training for women. Our heritage is rooted in social justice and widening educational opportunities and the success of all our students is at the core of Roehampton's strategic vision to be a leading university for mobilising the potential of students from all backgrounds and improving the communities around us. We consider it our mission to **transform lives through professionally focused education, which equips our students with the confidence, knowledge and skills they need for a successful career and fulfilling life.**

Over 80%

of our students have at least one widening participation characteristic.

64%

of our students come from Black, Asian, mixed and other ethnicity backgrounds.

52%

of students come from Indices of Multiple Deprivation quintiles 1 and 2.

40%

of students have been eligible for free school meals.

58%

of entrants are the first in their family to attend higher education.

27%

are over the age of 21 when they start their studies and are mature students.

18%

have a declared disability.



We are proud of the diversity of our student population and our success at encouraging students who might not enter university to come to Roehampton. The University partners with schools, further education providers, and other organisations to undertake activities that raise aspirations among under-represented groups, and help bridge the gap between school, college and university.

In 2023-24, the University continued to host events and activities to engage young people in Higher Education, and did so in partnership with leading civic and industry partners. In 2023-24 1,338 students were supported (a 63% increase on the previous year) and 33 widening participation events took place (an 83% increase).

Highlights include:

Aimhigher partnership: 331 under-represented secondary school students (KS3-5) visited campus to learn about university opportunities and gained information to support their progression into higher education. The University of Roehampton won 'HE Institution of the Year' at the Aimhigher Practitioner Awards 2024.

IntoUniversity partnership: 373 disadvantaged students (KS2-3) were invited to explore university for the first time, sparking early interest and inspiring university aspirations. From feedback received, 91% enjoyed the programme and 69% were more likely to attend university.

Talent Foundry partnership: The Powering Transformation programme continued to welcome KS3 students to campus to learn about higher education and technology careers. 2023-24

saw an increase in the number of students provided with this opportunity, up from 200 students in 2022-23 to 304 students.

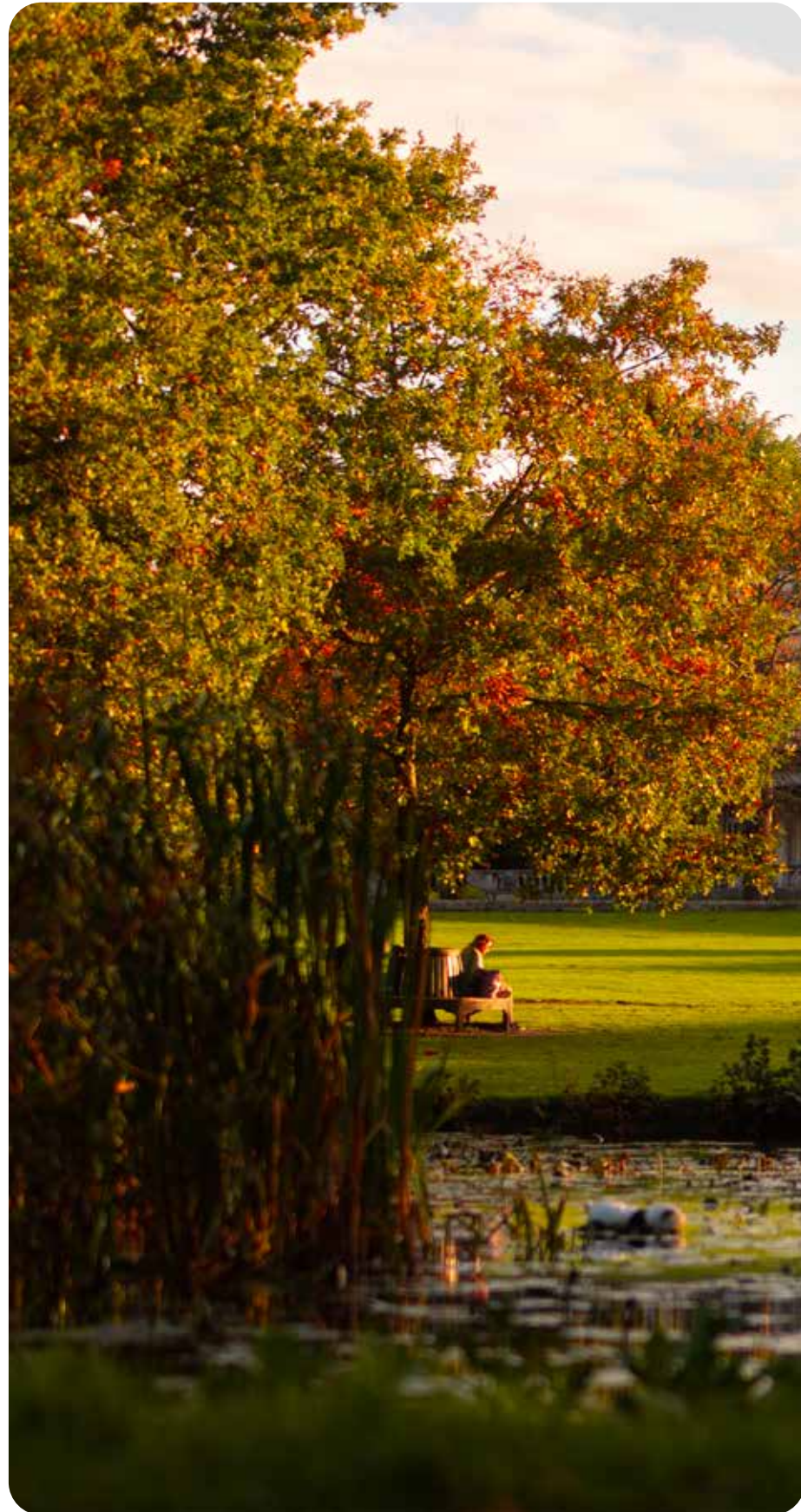
Horizons programme: A two-year collaborative project with Putney High School, which engaged Years 5 and 6 students from local schools in three workshops per year. 100% of teachers who provided feedback agreed or strongly agreed that their students learnt something new, and 100% agreed or strongly agreed that they would recommend the programme.

Teen Tech Festival: An interactive festival that exposed c.200 students from Years 6-12 to opportunities in digital, science, and technology through meeting leading industries and engaging in hands-on workshops.

Wimbledon BookFest Open Day: We continued our work with partner Wimbledon BookFest to deliver an Introduction to University' Open Day in May 2024, attended by almost 500 year 12 students from state schools in Merton and Wandsworth. The event was particularly aimed at disadvantaged students who are prevented from attending open days across the UK for economic and social reasons. 27% of attendees surveyed were more likely to consider applying to university, after attending the event.

Webinars: A year-round webinar series provided prospective students with essential information on university navigation, including preparing for results day and applying for accommodation. The total number of webinars in the 2023-24 series increased from 13 to 17, and attendance increased from 250 to 427.

Environmental Objectives



Decarbonisation

The University is continuing its ongoing commitment to decarbonisation. Building on 13 years and £3.4m of historic spending into energy efficiency, the University has completed another LED lighting refit in two busy areas of the campus: Digby Chapel and Froebel Diner. These new lighting systems employ smart controls and sensors to reduce energy consumption. A further project, upgrading the University's Building Management Systems (BMS) is scheduled for completion by March 2025, which will improve our ability to monitor and reduce energy consumption across our buildings. We continue to purchase our electricity through a renewably sourced green tariff, to support the national transition towards cleaner energy generation.

Food & Catering

Together with our catering partner, Elior, we have implemented carbon footprinting for meal choices in canteens across our campuses, enabling staff and students to make informed

decisions about their food, based on their environmental impact. Elior have also been managing Too Good to Go collections from catering outlets, achieving an estimated 50% meals diverted from food waste. Food waste that is produced at our catering outlets is separated and fed to our on-site biodigester, producing a soil-enhancing product. New bottle refill stations (including reusable bottle dispensers) have been installed in Digby and Whiteland colleges, to help discourage single-use bottles and containers.

Facilities & Procurement

The University has formed a Sustainable Facilities & Procurement Working Group, linking together the procurement of goods and services with the resultant waste produced at the university. Due for publication in early 2025, the Working Group has developed a strategy and supporting action plan to measure and control the environmental impacts of the university's supply chain and waste streams. This is also an important milestone as the University continues work towards an Environmental Management System.



	Emissions & energy consumption annual report disclosures	Unit	2020 - 21	2021 - 22	2022 - 23	2023 - 24
Energy Profile	The Annual quantity of energy consumed	mWh	23,769	25,345	21,730	21,081
Location-based	The annual quantity of emissions, in tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalents	tCO2e	4,542	4,688	4,165	4,027
	Scope 1 & 2 Emissions per FTE Student	kgCO2e /FTE	269	265	228	234
Market-based	The annual quantity of emissions, in tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalents	tCO2e	2,977	3,194	2,482	2,427
	Scope 1 & 2 Emissions per FTE Student	kgCO2e /FTE	177	181	136	141



Southlands College Report

Southlands College Annual Review 2023/24

Our mission at Southlands is to enable each member of our college to flourish – as responsible, ethical leaders within their communities, equipped with the skills to succeed, strengthened by a commitment to justice within society, and relating to others with compassion and curiosity.

A starting point in that mission is to be clear about our values as an institution – values which are shaped by our Methodist heritage and held to in the present, a foundation which is understood and lived afresh with each academic year and with each of the six cohorts of students we now welcome annually through our doors.

Outward articulations of those values are sometimes just as important as their role in guiding the work that we do, and in 2023-24, two physical changes to our college offered precisely that: telling those who enter our college something of what we hold dear.

The Peace Pole which stands at the front of our main entrance – planted there in the winter of 2023 – stands as our commitment to nurture peaceful cohabitation and mutual flourishing in our community. A symbol calling for peace on earth, it is also a call to a radically and meaningfully inclusive community, where all are welcome, where the successes of all are celebrated, where the unique expression of life in every individual is treated as precious and dignified – a reflection of God's image on earth.

Our college quadrangle, for the first time since its creation in 1996, was left this spring and summer to be reclaimed by nature. Hosting the university's first GreenFest celebration, it has become a visible sign of our commitment to doing what we can to help achieve a more sustainable way of being. From flowering thistles to leaping fox cubs, the lawn has shown us the power of nature to bounce back with abundance after decades of controlled management – and encouraged us to take a more humble and considerate attitude to the world we inhabit.

Southlands College has transformed as a learning community over a very short space of time. Our reach as a college stretches far and wide. In addition to the staff and students who live and work at Southlands, we continue to engage our community of dispersed former students and staff; we nurture a research and knowledge exchange programme, especially through the Susanna Wesley Foundation, which engages and impacts locally, nationally, and internationally; and we are building up our archives as a treasure trove for active researchers in the future. We have also become a leading institution within Methodist Education – both across the UK and globally – offering learning, resources, expertise, and guidance to a wide range of educational and faith-based institutions, all of which is impacting learning, research, strategy, and policy.

This year has seen innovative and exciting developments, some of which are set out in this report. They help demonstrate the unique position and potential of Roehampton as a collegiate institution in offering rich and valuable opportunities for our students, our staff, and everyone who collaborates with us at Southlands College.

Our Focus and Our Reach

The work of the colleges at Roehampton continues to evolve as the institution expands and British Higher Education changes. Responding to this, and in an effort to ensure its programme of work is coherent, proactive, and purposeful, Southlands College has focused its activity around specific areas:

- Offering welcome, hospitality and belonging within an inclusive environment
- Engaging our community in critical issues facing society and encouraging individuals to explore their own values and identity

- Developing students as ethical leaders, enhancing their skills, nurturing success and celebrating achievement
- Influencing whole-university identity and activity in ways which advance the college's values and mission.

Work across these areas maps firmly on to the University's Enabling Strategies and feed into its enhanced 2030 Strategic Plan.

Our student-facing work focuses predominantly on university goals around Student Education, enhancing student engagement, continuation, and progression, to the enrichment of our educational communities, to the advancement of institutional inclusivity, and to the development of our buildings as flexible and engaging learning spaces.

Our work with and alongside our academic schools and through the Susanna Wesley Foundation supports the University's goals around Research and Knowledge Exchange (RKE). We encourage and nurture research and learning in line with the college's values and those of our Methodist networks, attracting significant external investment to the University's RKE activities, supporting new generations of researchers through the University's departments, and encouraging research focused on ensuring practical change in church and society.

Several of our projects directly address the University's Sustainability goals, focusing both research and college community activity on exploring environmental and social responsibility, establishing and nurturing partnerships with external bodies who share our values, and promoting both the wellbeing of our staff and the development of structures which support and promote diversity initiatives.

Leaders within the college – staff and students – reflect on their work using these categories, and scrutinise how their efforts can best be directed towards achieving our common goals within the life of the University. This framework for our activity has allowed us to conceptualise the college's contributions more tangibly and to reflect on how we can do more to achieve our goals while sustaining the quality of our work.

Our Ways of Working

As important as what we do is the manner in which we do it. The Southlands Spirit – “do all the good you can, in all the ways you can, to all the people you can” – guides our approach and we continue to be proud of the special feeling which being at Southlands brings to those who study and work here – something both intangible and fundamental.

In all that we do at Southlands, we seek to ensure everyone is made to feel welcome and fully part of the community, and that all people are given equal access to opportunities for training, growth, development, and formation. In our practical activities and in our learning and research we continue to imagine what a person and a community that flourishes might look like, in the fullest sense of that word, and to work in ways which will enable that flourishing to be realised in practice.

During 2023–24 we continued to enhance our approach to student leadership and student co-creation of college programmes of work. Our College Community Leaders (CCLs) programme expanded under our reconfigured staff team,

focusing on enabling students to be leaders and to develop the skills necessary to succeed in the future. This has allowed even greater student involvement in shaping the college's programme of activity, as well as offering a further enhanced framework of development as part of a certified training course, accredited by the School of Continuing Education.

Alongside our CCLs, our residential community leaders and our student President and Deputy President continue to provide a heart to the student community. The President and Deputy are elected from amongst the college population to act as representatives of the student voice and leaders in generating college activity.

In our research and knowledge exchange activity, we prioritise work which is enabling and collaborative – preferring participative methods which are community-focused and approaches to learning which are discursive and iterative. The Susanna Wesley Foundation takes a lead in this, encouraging and supporting a community of scholars and practitioners at Roehampton, in the Methodist Church, and elsewhere, to work together as collaborators in learning and as co-creators of change.

This Report

The following pages give a flavour of the broad reach of the work of Southlands College during 2023–24. Our hope is to illustrate the significance of the college's role within the wider life of the University and as part of the Methodist Education family. With particular reference to the activities which fulfil the University's obligations under the governance arrangements with the Methodist Church, the report brings together summary descriptions of areas of activity with case studies of more focused projects and programmes. These illustrate more fully the purpose, impact, and value of our work.



College Team

The Southlands College team is made up of staff of the university (full and part time), staff funded generously by the Southlands Methodist Trust and recruited to work for the college on permanent and temporary bases, staff employed by the Southlands Methodist Trust to work within the college to deliver the Trust's activities, a stationed Methodist minister, volunteers, student leaders and student elected officers.

The team works with and alongside the academic and professional services departments of the university, both those based at Southlands and those across all our university colleges.

The College team for the 2023–24 academic year included:

- Colin Bailey, Student Wellbeing Officer
- Jackie Brown, Secretary of the Southlands Methodist Trust (SMT funded)
- Shai Danmole, Senior College Warden
- Yvonne Douglas, Accommodation Officer
- Jessica Dalton, Southlands Creative Partner (SMT funded)
- Tazim Fatima, College Engagement and Activities Officer
- Sabiha Iqbal, Muslim Chaplain
- Gilly King, Archives Historian (SMT funded)
- Kate Ludwig, Cleaning Manager
- Nick Mayhew-Smith, Deputy Head of College (SMT funded)
- Sue Miller, Director of the Susanna Wesley Foundation (SMT funded)

- Nicola Morrison, College Chaplain and Methodist Chaplain to the University
- Olivia Ogunbunmi, Senior Colleges Warden
- Olwen Ottoway, Sexual Violence Prevention Officer
- Emma Pavey, Creative Researcher and Resource Communications Manager
- Liz Pickett, Officer Manager (SMT funded)
- Gulliver Ralston, Director of Music
- Nafisa Rashmi, Student Elected Deputy President
- Lewis Redfern, Student Leadership Manager
- Imran Shafiqi, College Warden
- Lia Shimada, Senior Research Officer and Associate Chaplain (SMT funded)
- Michela Spotti, Student Elected President
- Christopher Stephens, Head of Southlands College
- Kushal Thapa, Student Elected President

The team was supported by a group of volunteer student Residential Community Leaders, part-time student College Community Leaders, and a number of project leads, Fellows and Associates.





Community Events and Activities

Southlands College aims to create a vibrant and inclusive educational environment that aligns with the university's enabling strategies and Methodist heritage.

This ethos is reflected in the diverse range of activities organised during the academic year, designed to enhance the learning environments that not only support academic success but also nurture personal growth.

The success of our initiatives is rooted in strong collaboration with student leaders, academic schools, sister colleges, external partners, the chaplaincy team, and departments across the University. We aim to embed learning opportunities into every event, promoting the Southlands Spirit while encouraging students to explore their identities and enhance their prospects, reflecting on and shaping their values wherever possible. The following sections highlight the community, cultural, and

educational events we hosted during 2023–24, showcasing our strategies for fostering engagement, supporting student education, and conceptualising impactful events.

Welcoming students

The university introduced six student intake periods in the 2023–24 academic year for the Faculty of Business and Law. This required the college to deepen our collaboration with the Faculty and placed a greater emphasis on providing a hospitable welcome to students from all backgrounds and helping them transition into university life throughout the academic year. Adapting to these changes to the student

life cycle, the college organised a variety of engaging events, including orientation lunches, film screenings, off-campus excursions, and various social activities.

These initiatives were designed to build a supportive community by encouraging students to network, share their experiences, and connect with both peers and staff. The events provided valuable opportunities for students to familiarise themselves with available support services and integrate into college life. In addition to these activities, resources such as a comprehensive College Guide (available in both print and digital formats), a calendar of events, and an inclusive introductory video further supported these efforts.

These interventions were aimed at creating meaningful, value-added experiences with enhanced learning and community-building potential. Student leaders were instrumental in driving welcome activities, focusing on face-to-face interactions to strengthen connections. A total of 20 in-person welcome events with the support of student leaders and staff, were held during the 2023-24 academic year, with a total attendance of 2,138 attendees.

Students who attended our welcomes commented that staff made them feel like they were not new students, as there were good opportunities to socialise with different members of the community, and that the event made them excited about their studies.

Cultivating Community and Learning

Throughout the 2023–24 academic year, Southlands College has diversified its range of activities to promote the exploration of personal and professional identities, celebrate achievements and develop social capital. This year saw a concerted effort to enhance student wellbeing and create opportunities for cultural exchanges. The college organised 105 events, attended by 6,899 staff and students, marking a 7% increase in overall attendance and a 29% rise in average attendance compared to the previous academic year. The increase in event attendance reflects our efforts to implement students' feedback about events and conceptualise activities that students feel are valuable and beneficial to their development. This involved coaching and supporting student leaders with their planning, delivery and evaluation of 45 student-led events.

A collaborative approach to working with academic colleagues in the Faculty of Business and Law enabled initiatives that support our students in developing their employability skills such as Employability Week, Assessment Support Fair, Part-Time Jobs Fair and LinkedIn Workshops. Our efforts in sustainability were marked by student-led workshops on eco-friendly practices, including nettle crafting and nature walks, which encouraged environmental thinking. Southlands hosted a very successful Greenfest organised by its student leaders that brought sustainability experts to campus to share their knowledge and experience. The introduction of environmentally conscious catering options, such as increased vegetarian and vegan choices, further supported our sustainability goals.

Our commitment to helping students develop and share their own identity was driven through themed events including Holi, American Fall, Burns Night, Nowruz, the International Dessert Festival, Paint & Snack, and International Mother Language Day. Feedback from students indicates that 80% of the students feel like our events make them feel like a part of



an international community and 65% of students informed us that our events give them a sense of belonging and make them more comfortable socialising with their peers. By continuously enhancing our approach to meet diverse cultural, personal, and religious needs, Southlands College continues to foster a rich and supportive learning environment.

The Peace Pole Initiative

In a symbolic gesture that resonates with the spirit of unity and peace, Southlands College welcomed a new addition to its grounds in November 2023: a Peace Pole. The message 'May Peace Prevail on Earth' was authored in 1955 by the renowned Japanese peace activist Masahisa Goi of Japan, for the attainment of inner and outer peace. There are estimated to be over 250,000 Peace Poles across the world. Southlands College is proud to join this global movement, bringing the essence of peace to our diverse campus. The Peace Pole serve as a lasting testament to the principles we hold dear at Southlands—promoting understanding, unity, and the pursuit of peace in our college and beyond.

Southlands College recently had the honour of welcoming a distinguished guest, Maki Saionji, granddaughter of Masahisa Goi. Maki, who passionately carries forward her grandfather's legacy through her work with the Goi Peace Foundation in Tokyo, visited the college to see the recently planted Peace Pole outside the Queen's Building. The occasion was marked by heartfelt conversations and a shared vision for a more peaceful world. It was a moment of reflection and inspiration for the college community, reminding us of the enduring power of peace and the importance of continuing this mission in our lives.

Highlights from our College Events

Student Learning Opportunities:

- To address the needs of our growing international student body and enhance social and educational experiences, the college introduced the 'London Life' initiative. This social language learning programme involved student-led trips to London's cultural landmarks, such as the Tate Modern, London's Christmas lights, and London Wetland Centre.
- Another values-based project, Spreading Kindness, was launched with the planting of a Peace Pole. This initiative was followed by a Christmas Dinner centred around the theme of kindness.
- The college hosted a Part Time Jobs Fair and assisted the careers team in running the event. Our student leaders played a vital role in gathering student feedback, directing students to appropriate services, and boosting their confidence in engaging with employers.
- LinkedIn Masterclasses were offered twice per term to help students enhance their LinkedIn profiles and improve their graduate employability.
- We organized multiple trips to Richmond Park and the London Wetland Centre to educate students about the importance of sustainability and nature. We also invited representatives from the London Wetland Centre to lead a workshop during Greenfest, further strengthening our partnership with the organisation.
- To promote linguistic diversity within the college, the student leaders organized an International Mother Language Day event, which was attended by approximately 200 students and staff members.
- Student-led events like the International Dessert Festival, Video Game Festival, and Paint & Snack, organised by CCLs, brought together students and staff from diverse backgrounds, helping them learn something new.



- The development of a student radio station with a mix of 17 different eclectic weekly shows led by students was introduced through the CCL programme in collaboration with Roehampton Students' Union. The radio station offered a chance for students to develop skills in broadcasting, production and design, as well as helping to boost their confidence.

Community-Building Events:

- We hosted the Annual Celebration Dinner and Awards in March 2024, bringing together 120 students and staff to celebrate community achievements.
- The annual Southlands Boat Party, organized in collaboration with Whitelands College, attracted 160 students from both colleges to celebrate the end of the academic year.
- The weekly Southlands Fun & Games sessions, with a total attendance of 1,136 throughout the academic year, offered students a welcoming environment to learn about college facilities, raise concerns with the college team, build connections, and get involved in university life.
- Six movie nights were held throughout the year, fostering a sense of community and drawing a total of 163 attendees.
- Cultural events such as Burns Night, Diwali, American Fall, Nowruz, and Christmas celebrated global diversity while promoting kindness and community, each attracting an average of 100 participants.
- Staff brunches, lunches, and teas provided valuable opportunities for networking and building connections among staff members from different departments.



Impact of our activities

- 80% of event survey respondents said our activities made them feel part of an international community and 65% said our events made them feel a sense of belonging and more comfortable socialising.
- The college delivered 23 learning and development activities and 60% of event survey respondents indicated that networking and communication skills were improved by attending our events.
- 67% of event survey respondents shared that our events made them feel positive, engaged or valued by Southlands College or the University of Roehampton.
- When asked how college activities make them feel better prepared for life after university, 79% of survey participants highlighted skills that were developed by attending our events. Examples include; networking, leadership, teamwork, problem solving, communication and awareness of the graduate work environment.

Plans for the future

Southlands College is committed to developing our events offering to continue to offer a supportive, inclusive, and enriching educational environment for staff and students. Our plans are focused on deepening collaboration, enhancing student engagement, and reinforcing our commitment to sustainability and community.

- We plan to continue to collaborate with the Faculty of Business and Law and departments across the university to develop and implement programmes that support the development of students outside of the classroom and foster student success. For example, the college team plans to work with the Student Futures team to provide training to student leaders so that they can signpost students to employability support.
- A key focus for the coming year will be to increase the number and variety of activities that enable knowledge exchange and the exploration of values. Enabling students to think about how values relate to their future through both physical events and online resources, such as the Careers, Values and Vocations vlog, has proved impactful in the past, and the college plans to use a range of mediums to engage students in this area.
- We plan to continue hosting events that encourage students to think about the environment and society's impact on it. We will explore new opportunities to enhance environmental and sustainable awareness in our activities, in particular, we plan to expand GreenFest, a celebration of environmental initiatives on campus and in the surrounding area.
- Given the benefits of exploring the cultural, religious and community heritage of the city for students, we plan to develop the London Life initiative further by exploring new ways to supplement academic learning with ethical, engaging and insightful exposure to businesses and significant places within London, that combines cultural exploration with professional development.

Student Leadership

Student leaders continue to be the main vehicle for innovation, development and widening participation at Southlands College.

- College Community Leaders (CCL) – supported by the college team – are responsible for planning and delivering projects and initiatives that help to improve the experience for all students and make them feel embedded within the college community.
- Residential Community Leaders (RCLs) focus on providing a friendly and supportive welcome at the start of term, running regular events for those who live at Southlands College and offering advice and guidance to residents throughout the year.

Building on the introduction of the Student Leadership Certificate in the 2022-23 academic year, college staff worked in partnership with current student leaders to progress the programme further in three key areas: (1) expanding the certificate's cohort to include all student leaders at Southlands College (2) increasing the variety and quality of monthly training sessions (3) providing resources through mediums that suit different types of learners and creating a new virtual learning environment.

Upon completion of the required modules, students receive a certificate of completion from the University's Department of Continued Education. There are plans to expand the course to our sister colleges at the university for the 2024–25 academic year, continuing our model of working at and through Southlands but for and with the whole university community. We hope also to develop an accredited course for all student leaders at the University of Roehampton in 2025–2026.

In addition to the Student Leadership Certificate, the college was asked to share its expertise in managing the Student Leadership Training for all 300 student leaders across the university in September 2023. The college developed the training using an Enquiry Based Learning approach, with a focus on knowledge sharing among participants. 81% of students who attended the training said it helped them learn leadership skills and 87% said it helped them forge connections with their peers.

The focus of our student leadership programmes is to foster peer-to-peer learning and support for all within our community and the college team builds the foundations that enable this through coaching, mentoring and training throughout the year, working in partnership with academic departments, sister colleges and other university departments whenever possible to provide a varied, insightful and fulfilling experience for all students.

Benefits for student leaders

The College Community Leader programme is now in its fifth year, the role has been fundamental in organising activities and projects that provide a benefit to students and staff at the college. Moreover, being given the opportunity to lead initiatives has allowed students to gain confidence and obtain practical experience that can be leveraged to improve their graduate outcomes well as taking part in ongoing training and reflection that helps them consider their values, skills and uniqueness in relation to their future.

In our research, 100% of student leaders at Southlands College have commented that our Student Leadership Certificate and programmes have enabled them to improve skills that will help them in their careers. Key skills highlighted include public speaking, communication, leadership, self-understanding, content creation teamwork and event planning. Student leaders have been vocal about how it impacts their confidence with 75% indicating that the college helped make them more motivated to celebrate achievement and confident in their skills and abilities. 75% of participants also stated that the Student Leadership Certificate provided them with a chance to reflect and consider their values. Our research suggests that it was training, coaching and practical experience that provided a space for personal growth.



Evidence has been gathered of graduate outcomes. A study of 61 Southlands student leaders shows:

- Significantly higher levels of course completion than for the average Roehampton student (92% compared with 81%)
- Among leavers, 97% of student leaders had achieved graduate-level careers after 15 months, compared with a UoR average of 68%

Impact on the college community

In 2023–24, the college delivered or supported 105 events with a total attendance of 6,889. 45 of these events were organised and led by student leaders (CCLs, RCLs and College Presidents), and the CCL team also supported 30 university events. As well as being able to run a highly commendable number of events, using student leaders also increases the quality of events, as they are better placed to tailor events to the needs and wants of our student body. This is evidenced by an increase of 29% in our average attendance for events this academic year.

Student leaders are recruited across a range of academic disciplines and interests, and having a team that has diverse experiences and perspectives helps to create a peer-to-peer learning community amongst our student body through social learning, cultural and language-related events. CCLs have been able to plan events across a range of topics including International Mother Language Day, a Video Game Festival, the International Desert Festival, Burns Night and Diwali that provide students with new experiences. The CCLs have been able to create an environment of sharing knowledge and culture together under one Southlands identity. The impact of the CCLs is evidenced by 80% of students who responded to our college events survey indicating that our events made them feel part of a diverse international community.

The college team have designed the student leadership programmes to be flexible and adaptable to student interests and has introduced further specialist roles for student leaders to focus on, particularly in the fields of music, sustainability and esports. For example, introducing a student leader with

a focus on the environment and sustainability has resulted in a variety of events and initiatives including GreenFest, the nettles workshops, bat walks on campus and the rewilding of Southlands Quad, the Southlands Meadow. These specialist roles have broadened the college's events programme and allowed CCLs to gain experience in areas that are beneficial to their futures.

All our cohorts of student leaders take part in comprehensive training about other university services at the start of the year and the strong networks that have been created within the student population, using communication channels outside the scope of the college's communication toolkit, have been key in enabling us to share vital information about services from university departments such as Careers, Wellbeing and Academic Support. As well as signposting, other departments have used the CCLs to help with events at Southlands College, the Part-Time Jobs Fair, Freshers' Fair and Sport Activator sessions are good examples of how college student leaders have collaborated with them to help them achieve their goals and widen participation.

Plans for the future

The Student Leadership Certificate will be expanded to include student leaders at Whitelands College and Digby Stuart College for the 2024-25 academic year. Students at the three colleges will have a chance to share their skills and knowledge in a variety of monthly training sessions, with frameworks for continued reflection and assessment throughout the year.

The college will have a smaller team of three paid Residential College Community Leaders (part of the College Community Leader team), who will be able to more actively run events and projects that promote positive relationships and ensure mechanisms are in place to mitigate issues before they happen.

The team aims to create further opportunities for students to support students wherever possible and in addition to music, sports and sustainability-focused College Community Leaders, and the college team has plans to develop Careers focused CCLs that can help students with basic careers advice such as how to search for jobs, CV formats and application guidance.

Chaplaincy

Southlands is home to a College Chaplain and Muslim Chaplain who serve the Southlands College community and encourage a supportive environment where individuals can flourish. They also work collaboratively as part of a wider multi-faith team across the University who in turn relate closely with the college team.



In 2023–24 our chaplains continued to seek ways of being a supportive and active presence within the college and wider community, especially as we welcomed a growing number of overseas students into the Faculty of Business and Law.

Chaplaincy: Rooted in a distinctive ethos and enduring values

The University's Enabling Strategies recognise the significance of our enduring values derived from the heritage of its colleges and their providing bodies. They also acknowledge that a distinctive ethos is vital to the ongoing development of the University as we seek to enrich our education communities in ways that are inclusive, transformational and focused on developing our students as individuals. These aims are coherent with our Methodist calling, particularly in the ways we enact our mission to service and the learning and caring of others through education that enables the flourishing of self and others.



At Southlands our chaplains prioritise work that speaks of the values and ethos formed from the college's Methodist heritage alongside work that lives out those values in practice, captured in our adopted Methodist adage 'do all the good you can, to all the people you can'.

Over the past year, this has included:

- **Caring for others and nurturing a sense of mutual value through the provision of pastoral and bereavement support to students and staff.** Through the Chaplaincy Listening Service and their professional pastoral practice, Chaplaincy staff have offered both intentional presence and prioritised time for pastoral care and bereavement support throughout the year. They have also offered specific support to staff in a context of institutional change and redundancies.

"Thank you so very much for meeting me a few weeks ago. I felt very supported and heard." (emailed by a student after receiving pastoral support)

- **Enhancing our sense of community and belonging through thoughtful and reflective responses to our college context.** Examples of this include: continuing to raise awareness of issues affecting students such as the impact of the cost-of-living crisis and neuro-inclusivity; championing our commitment to universal peace through assisting with the installation and dedication of a multilingual Peace Pole, and by modelling peaceful co-existence in our conduct and facilitation of shared moments of Remembrance; prioritising opportunities for gathering and hospitality through sustaining spaces in the College Community Hub and Chapel that are complementary to our renovated College Student Kitchen and refectory; celebrating the life of the college through support, presence and the valuing of time together at both college and student-led social events; and in particular contributing to a programme of events to celebrate key cultural and religious festivals that reflect the student population (e.g.) Advent and Christmas, Diwali, Nowruz, Purim, Ramadan, Eid, Lent and Easter, and Holi;

- **Fostering care for ourselves and our neighbours by modelling and promoting living well in the world and encouraging students to consider their vocations.**

This has been achieved in a number of ways including: the holding of discussion groups (Drinks & Donuts and The Coexist Café) that explore themes such as everyday self-care, social responsibility, community engagement, and sustainable living; supporting the continuing relationship with the London Wetland Centre as a university partner and promoting awareness of environmental justice issues within the college community; a continued commitment to Fairtrade; sustaining the Community Fridge; and developing a student leadership training module on 'values' with the Susanna Wesley Foundation.

Chaplaincy: Supporting Faith and spirituality

Methodism identifies worship as one of its four core priorities. Our college chaplaincy staff work within the wider multi-faith chaplaincy team to ensure that appropriate opportunities for inclusive and accessible worship are offered to our community. In doing this, they contribute distinctively to the University's Enabling Strategies' commitment to nurture a rich diversity of communities that are welcoming and accommodating to all students. Over the past year this has been illustrated in several ways:

- **Offering welcome and hospitality, as well as resources for engaging with faith, through the provision of physical space.** Within Southlands College this is accomplished through the allocation and care of specific places. These are The Well, Southlands College Chapel in the Methodist tradition, and the brothers' and sisters' Prayer Rooms in the Islamic tradition.

Following on from a review of adequate spaces on campus for Jummu'ah (Friday) prayer, a number of renovations were made to Chapman Hall and the adjacent toilet and washing facilities to make Wudu (washing for worship) feasible. Chapman Hall is now the university's focal point for Jummu'ah prayers during term time, where on average a congregation of 110 students and staff gather for worship and community building. This development richly enhances the support we offer through facilities at Southlands.

While rooted in specific traditions, these spaces are cared for in ways that welcome people of all faiths and none, and promote both the tradition of the space and issues of shared concern with our wider community. Within the Well (the

Southlands chapel) this includes specific acts of worship for our Christian community gatherings and alumni, as well as hosting worship for the Practical Theology programmes. On a day-to-day basis, this space also offers liturgical prayer stations and displays responding to global concerns such as Holocaust Memorial Day, Transgender Day of Remembrance, and Autism Acceptance Month.

- **The development of our online presence and resources,** such as: identifying a shared calendar of festivals and observances that actively relates to the University's calendar; using our social media platforms to not only mark faith festivals but also to extend religious literacy; expanding our online faith resources (through Padlet) to maintain sense of community and celebration when religious festivals fall during the University holiday period. This is particularly relevant for Christmas and Easter.
- **Promoting community cohesion and modelling peaceful co-existence through a wide range of multi-faith activities and the sharing of our respective faith traditions.** This work has included marking specific shared events and festivals such as the International Day of Prayer for Peace, Interfaith Week, International Women's Day, and Holocaust Memorial Day. We also have an ethic of supporting traditions outside our own to deepen our awareness, sense of shared hospitality, community and connection. Examples of this are: Purim, marked with a lunch to learn about this Jewish festival, with a talk led by our Jewish Chaplain; an ecumenical Carol Service that sat within a larger advent and Christmas programme and invited contributions from staff and students across the University; and our first Interfaith Iftar in which we explored a little of fasting in different

faith traditions. This was part of a series of Iftar's held in collaboration with the Islamic Society to raise funds for Palestine, as well as build and share cultural connections by bringing a dish; Eid was marked with traditional food, drinks and nasheeds at two separate campus picnics on the Southlands Quad.

Many of these activities were hosted in Southlands in collaboration with our Community Engagement Officers and Student Leaders, as well as societies from the Students' Union.

"A massive thank you to you and all who contributed to last night's Carol Service - it was such a joy. As ever, it represents the best of our Roehampton ecumenical community in action - from the singing and music...to the readings...), and the diversity embodied throughout..."

Chaplaincy: Promoting an active and inclusive community

The University shares the Methodist Church's concern to build inclusive communities and celebrate diversity. The college's Chaplains have contributed to this work in a number of ways, creating inclusive spaces in which friendships can be formed and diversity celebrated. Examples include:

- **The 'Creative Community' programme.** This offers opportunities for people to meet over shared activities that celebrate values such as sustainability and inclusive community. Sessions included mug painting, Christingle making, and a sustainable Christmas floristry workshop. The relaxed process of creating often prompts people to share their stories, traditions and experiences, develop friendships

and helps to deepen their sense of belonging and connection within the university.

- **'Food Fun & Friends'** provides a great opportunity for students to gather and learn to cook something that perhaps they have not attempted (pizza making and curry night) together. The session ends with everyone having a bite to eat and networking with one another.
- With a large number of our Southlands students being new to the area and the UK, it has been a joy this year to see the **'URTrips'** and **'#URban Rambling'**, established within Chaplaincy, now being adopted within our wider college team and Student Leadership programme.
- **Celebrating diversity and raising awareness through collaborating with other University departments, networks, student societies and campaigns.** Across the University this has involved contributing to the celebrations for Black History Month, Islamophobia Awareness Week, International Week, Mental Health Awareness Week, LGBT+ History Month; Pride Month; a Ramadan awareness programme; and activities that promoted this year's International Women's Day theme 'Inspire Inclusion'.



Sustainability

Life at Southlands took on a notably green complexion during 2023–24, helped in large part by the decision to allow half of The Quad to be grown as a wildflower meadow.

A no-mow May regime on the college's central lawn proved a remarkable hit with students and staff, who were surprised to see just what a diverse grassland meadow appeared in just a few weeks. Foxes, ducks, insects and numerous bird species were spotted in the middle of the rich habitat that took centre stage in the college's complex of buildings.

The Quad's revitalised grassland also proved a suitable venue for the university's inaugural GreenFest, which was held on June 14. More than 100 students and staff gathered to take part in a wide range of activities connected to environmental and sustainability initiatives, including a watercolour painting workshop led by staff from the London Wetland Centre, a pond dipping experience led by colleagues in the School of Life and Health Sciences at Whitelands College, and seed bomb making. Other opportunities included tasting tea made from herbs and flowers growing on campus, talking to colleagues from the wellbeing team promoting green therapy and nature connection, and a stitching workshop using nettles to darn patches for clothing.

The London Wetland Centre has continued to make a mark on college life in other ways during the year, with a number of group trips arranged so students and staff could experience its conservation work first hand. More than 30 people came along to some of the weekend visits, thanks to a student-led initiative to promote greater participation in the partnership between the centre and the university. Further collaboration is expected in the year ahead, using the model of student leadership to inspire others to engage. The college was particularly pleased to encourage students to set up a new RSU society, the Wild Collective, to further drive this transformative, peer-to-peer engagement work.



College Archives

The Southlands Methodist Trust employs an Archives Historian to oversee and develop the college's historic archive, with the support of the university through the provision of suitable space and access.

Significant progress has been made on the sorting and cataloguing of the vast quantity of unmarked supplementary material held in the archive. Where appropriate, material has been returned to the relevant archives in the university, multiple copies have been disposed of and damaged items protected. The recently collated newspaper archive will be digitised by the University Library's Reprographics department and held as a joint digital resource with the originals being retained in the Southlands archive. All this work has ensured that the resources of the archive are better known and made more available to students and researchers both within and outside the university. This work is ongoing.

As a result of collaboration between the four college archivists, library services now publish a regular blog, 'Snapshot from the Archives' which explores the history of the colleges within the context of historic events. <https://library.roehampton.ac.uk/archives/blog>

We continue actively to seek out material that is missing from the archive, including oral histories. A recent addition to the Oral History collection is Freda Smith's recollections of her time at college and subsequent long career in teaching. Freda attended Southlands College from 1936 to 1938 and is now 106 – she clearly remembers seeing Fred Perry play at the All England Lawn Tennis Championships when she was a student at Southlands College, Wimbledon!



Alumni Engagement Activities

Important to the development of a meaningful college community is the work done at Southlands to sustain relationships with former college members.

Staff and students at Southlands collaborate closely with trustees and staff of the Southlands Methodist Trust to shape opportunities to enrich our community by engaging with this dispersed community. The SMT provides ongoing support for driving this work by funding the Archives Historian, whose responsibilities include engagement with our alumni communities.

The focus of our communication with the college alumni is through the Southlander – our annual magazine. Supported by the Trust, this magazine includes news from the college and university, reminiscences from alumni and stories drawn from the archive. In the 'In Memoriam' section, friends and family share memories of alumni that have passed away. The Southlander was reintroduced in 2016; this year is the first time we have seen a net increase in requests to join the mailing list, which currently stands at 954 including College Fellows and Trustees. The oldest recipient is 110 - Margery Hodnett, Southlands College 1932–1934.

In September we hosted a reunion for five alumnae who attended Southlands College from 1952–1954; celebrating 70 years since leaving college. They are now all 90 - one had travelled from Canada just for the reunion. A short campus tour focused on the Chapel and the Library. As practising Methodists, they appreciated the simplicity and atmosphere of the Chapel. They were very impressed by the Library and enjoyed chatting to staff and students.

Special visits were made to Vera Schaufeld, a former student and Honorary Doctor of the university and to Freda Smith, Southlands College 1936–1938. Freda's oral history was recorded for the college archive.



Research and Knowledge Exchange

Southlands College, along with its sister colleges at Roehampton, provides the spaces for the academic work of the university to take place, and the physical context for that work.

In addition to providing a site and facilities, Southlands contributes to the advanced academic activities of the university through the resourcing of research and knowledge transfer.

The College, supported primarily by resources of the Southlands Methodist Trust, participates in research and knowledge exchange activities across Roehampton's departments, especially focusing on work which furthers the priorities of the Methodist Church in Britain in relation to justice, education and learning, human and environmental flourishing, and inclusion.

Many of the key themes of the University's RKE Centres align with areas of interest in the mission of the Methodist Church, and throughout 2023–24 we have continued to ensure that RKE activities at Southlands are both informed by, and also inform, the RKE work of the wider research environment at Roehampton.

Project Sponsorship

Each year the Head of Southlands College works with the trustees of the SMT and the staff of the Susanna Wesley Foundation to manage and administer a grants-awarding scheme for RKE projects across Roehampton's departments. These projects support the research profile of the university, meet the charitable purposes of the Trust, and have benefit to the public more broadly. In 2023–24 a number of projects took place across Roehampton's departments, and a further series of grants were awarded for the following academic year.

Project progress in 2023–24

1. Promoting Access to Clean Energy in Rural Communities: A Training Programme for Women in Kenya

This project involved piloting a programme designed to educate women in rural Kenya about the economic benefits and practical applications of clean, off-grid energy solutions. The work involved partnering with Tumaini Women Kenya, a Free Methodist NGO which works to provide education, resources and support, enabling women to become self-

reliant and economically independent. The 30 participants lacked previous access to electricity. The project evaluated the impact of the intervention, finding evidence of enhanced understanding of the role of clean energy and a readiness to adopt solar solutions, alongside uncovering the barriers to adoption. This success has led to the work being taken forward through a new research project and associated set of interventions.

2. Addressing the impact of racial trauma on young refugee people

This project explored how young refugee people understand and experience racism in their everyday lives and the impact this has on their mental health. A research assistant who had lived experience of being a refugee and who worked for a local refugee volunteer group was recruited for the project, and semi-structured interviews were conducted. These shed light on the individual and system level factors that influence differences in the impacts of racism, and the findings have informed a workshop intervention to be held for young refugee people to promote mental health and mitigate the negative effect of racism.

3. Intergenerational Adaptation in the Complementary School Sector: Language, Culture, Identity and Community Needs

This project explored the changes undergone by established complementary school communities over two to three generations of Heritage Language (HL)-learners. These schools have provided long-standing service to their communicates, producing adaptable bilingual and bicultural young people despite facing challenges and, historically, lack of recognition.

The fieldwork was based on three communities in London that have been providing HL education since the 1980s. Interviews and focus groups with current and former learners and school staff, and surveys for the wider school communities, have explored themes around learners' language and cultural practices, identities and priorities,

and future community needs. While individuals within and across groups varied in certain views, there is convergence in linking heritage language maintenance to communications with the extended family or access to the heritage culture. The project also explored the demographic, linguistic, and cultural changes which are leading to a more 'blended' community.

The project has already resulted in increased exposure for these schools through a publication in a practitioner-facing journal which reviewed the work of complementary schools, and through a workshop for interested stakeholders. The project's findings will potentially benefit the general educational systems and support organisations that cater to the growing proportion of pupils with additional languages. It is hoped that they will help in the development of intervention projects for creative educational practices in the face of under-resourcing.

4. Macroeconomic Dynamics and Mental Health

This project has been exploring the effects that general economic circumstances can exert on mental health. Using secondary data, with mental health indicators from the World Health Organisation, the project has investigated the relationships for a limited number of countries as an initial stage. This 'pilot' dataset has shown clear evidence of a negative relationship between the macro-dynamics of a country and its general indicator of mental-health illness. Lower GDP, higher inflation, higher unemployment, and lower business climate are all correlated with higher mental illness indicators. These findings were presented at a workshop in Italy. Further research has led to a presentation at a macroeconomic conference in Germany, with a journal article due to be published. As a consequence of the work, an international consortium has been set up to explore 'Social Determinants of Mental Illness'.

5. Post-harvest losses reduction in the downstream marine fisheries for women fish traders: The Case of Majengo in Mombasa County, Coast Region, Kenya

This research aimed to understand the constraints in the downstream marine fisheries sector and post-harvest challenges faced by women fish traders in Majengo, Kenya. The study established that women fish traders face infrastructural constraints, financial access issues, lack of marketplace infrastructure, and lack of training on good handling practices, processing, and value addition. A majority of women fish traders live in informal establishments where they continue to experience high poverty levels; the project highlighted how to address some of the issues in order to help them accrue maximum benefits from fish handling and processing activities.

6. Mindfulness meditation and creative writing

Both creative writing and mindfulness meditation employ embodied, mental and linguistic techniques of discipline, imagination, and attention, and this project has investigated the potential for meditative practice to transform creative practice. University of Roehampton Creative Writing and English Literature students at undergraduate and post-graduate level have participated in workshops where they have experienced meditative methods with a view to increasing their mental focus, discipline and imagination, and potentially to impact their writing practice. These relationships and impacts have been explored through writing activities, and questionnaires and feedback. The work is still in progress but a website is being populated with videos and material from the project and a mindfulness and creativity guide is due to be published. There is already evidence of a positive impact on those students who have participated, and it is hoped that the findings will inform further work and educational practice, with creative, educational and well-being outcomes.



Image © Robin Prime

Projects approved during the reporting year

2023–24 saw approval for projects from across the University's departments, proposing a variety of research methods and methodologies, and using different media both for the research process and in order to disseminate findings. Some projects engage with global problems, some more local, and there is an international flavour to much of the work. The grant funding is enabling innovative approaches with a view to outputs which will have a significant impact.

1. The 1917 Redux – The Occupation of Palestine

The current cycle of violence in Israel/Palestine has rekindled debates on the role of international law in mitigating conflict and on its capacity to restrain violence and facilitate the return to peace. Although the history of both British rule of Palestine and many of its legal aspects have been thoroughly researched, no study to date has examined the international law dimensions of the British acquisition of control and authority over Palestine in World War 1. The legal pre-history of the British mandate—both the application of the rules governing occupied territories and their termination with the approval of the Palestine Mandate by the League of Nations Council in 1922—would however have lasting effect on the international legal framing of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and its violence. This pilot project aims at developing the (archival) knowledge base required for the preparation of external grant bids to account for this very pre-history.

2. Designing Embodied Education in Dance

This project will bring together dance educators, educational leaders, scholars and artists from Mexico, United States, Ireland, United Kingdom, Netherlands and Germany, for the first in-person meeting of the Designing Embodied Education in Dance Network. Facilitated workshops will culminate in a research exchange event allowing for sharing and reflection with a wide audience offering diverse perspectives. Postgraduate dance students will participate throughout, representing the perspective of the student voice. Dissemination of the key principles and practices will be shared via a dedicated research website serving as a platform for broader discourse on embodied solutions for the reform of dance education at tertiary level.

3. An exploration into the emotional labour process in nursing: developing improvements for service delivery

This project will explore the emotional labour experiences of nurses in light of institutional barriers. Research indicates that challenging working conditions are leading to widespread issues of poor mental health and burnout amongst nursing professionals. With increasing demands to perform high-pressured work and offer routine compassion, there is a need to develop research that can be used to examine lived experiences of key healthcare workers. The aim of this project is to serve as a pilot test for a larger piece of work on the lived experiences of emotions in healthcare.

4. Improving Inclusive Practice in Education for Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

This project builds on a study which identified barriers and facilitators for providing inclusive support for children and young people with 22q11.2 deletion syndrome (22q). It aims to create tailored mental health and wellbeing resources for these children and young people (and pupils with special educational needs more widely) and to pilot these in schools. In prioritising the voices of young people and collaborating closely with their families to determine what is needed, the approach will involve them in actively shaping their mental health support and will foster a sense of agency, safety, and well-being, ultimately benefiting the entire community. The proposed resources/toolkits will equip schools, families, and caregivers with effective strategies to support these young people, fostering more positive educational experiences and meaningful connections.

5. A taste of home: supporting international students with dietary change and homesickness

Transitioning to a university in a new country is a complex process and previous research has reported that international students may have concerns regarding accommodation, transport, financial issues, as well as changes to food and diet, all of which can exacerbate feelings of homesickness. This project will explore the role of food, food memories, histories and traditions in relation to the wellbeing of international students, through focus group discussions, dietary analysis and the curation of food images and recipes. It will consider the challenges of achieving a healthy diet in an unfamiliar environment, assess diet quality, support international students, and strengthen communities. The project will culminate with a food event to share the findings, and the curated food-related images and recipes, and signpost support.

6. Archiving the Estate – Emplotment, Objects and Memory

This project involves workshops designed to encourage community engagement by asking members of the local community to participate in storytelling activities using 'evocative objects'. The planned workshops will take place on the Alton Estate, Roehampton. They will involve Roehampton staff, students and an independent artist working with an intergenerational group of different ethnic backgrounds to record and document objects and stories, to develop digital, visual, and audio material to present as a community-curated exhibition and website, and to design a toolkit for running similar community-led events in the future.

7. Harmonizing Heritage: African Music's Role in Amplifying Black Excellence

"AfroRemix" is a groundbreaking music project dedicated to remixing and revitalizing classic African songs from various regions and eras. With a mission to breathe new life into timeless melodies, rhythms, and lyrics, this project aims to celebrate the rich cultural heritage of Africa while appealing to contemporary audiences worldwide. Beyond entertainment, AfroRemix also serves as a platform for education and cultural exchange, offering insights into the historical context of the original songs, their significance within African music, and the artists who created them. Workshops, lectures, and multimedia content accompany the releases, fostering a deeper appreciation for Africa's musical heritage and its ongoing influence on global music culture.



Image © Robin Prime

8. Unpaid Labour and Mental Health

This project will involve conducting narrative interviews with workers who do unpaid labour in their employment and self-employment in various fields – the creative industries, education, care, gig work and digital platform work. Such workers get a wage, salary or fee, but there are aspects of their work that systematically remain unremunerated. This may bring anger, frustration, disappointment and work-related stress but the link between unpaid labour (in paid employment and self-employment) and mental health has not been explored: the project aims to address this research gap.

9. Exploring how neurodiverse students can be best supported as they transition to university and throughout their degree

Neurodiverse students such as those with autism or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder may experience greater challenges with transitioning to university and throughout their degree compared to neurotypical students. This project will firstly explore the challenges that neurodiverse students face as they start their degree and as they progress through this, and secondly investigate the factors which may predict successful outcomes in these students. Understanding the challenges these students face and factors that predict student success will inform future strategies and interventions to best support neurodiverse students and their wellbeing, along with improving metrics relating to submissions, continuation, completion, attainment, and progression.

10. A Mobile App for Disabled Youth in Offa Community, Kwara State, Nigeria

The project aim is to develop a pilot 'Empowering Abilities' app to support the unique challenges faced by disabled young people in Offa, Nigeria. Research findings about users' needs and preferences, uncovered through structured interviews, focus groups and workshops with 65 disabled young people, will be used to inform the development of the Empowering Abilities app. It will thus go beyond generic offerings, and provide culturally relevant content and interface; address local language, customs, and preferences; ensure inclusivity for diverse disabilities; connect users to relevant support services and opportunities; and foster a supportive community. Content creation will involve educators, disability advocates, and subject matter experts to develop high-quality, engaging educational materials tailored to the specific needs and learning styles of disabled young people.



Large collaborative projects

Collaboration between staff at Southlands College, the Susanna Wesley Foundation, the trustees of Southlands Methodist Trust and academics at Roehampton has led to some longer-term research projects with more significant funding over the last few reporting years.

23/24 saw the start of a new project around welcoming LGBTQ+ people in churches in Ghana. The work is being conducted by the Centre for Religion and Public Life (CRPL-Ghana), and it aims to:

- assess how LGBTQ+ people are currently received in churches in Ghana
- explore how churches should disciple them
- explore the extent to which beliefs are changing about the Bible's
- positions on same-sex relationships.
- equip churches with hermeneutical tools
- help churches be inclusive communities by creating safe spaces for LGBTQ+ persons.

A continuing project in the reporting year was 'Faith Long Lived'. The project, carried out by a research team at the University of Roehampton, has focused on older Christians and their experience of reciting the creeds over the course of several decades. The empirical work was completed early in the last reporting year with a final focus group which included those who had been interviewed earlier in the project. The process of dissemination has involved papers and presentations at various conferences, including one at the University of Tübingen celebrating the 700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea, and with a potential paper next year at a conference on Nicaea at St Mellitus. A major article on 'creeds as practice' is yet to be submitted. Other creative ways of sharing and reflecting on the findings are also being planned.

Susanna Wesley Foundation

The Susanna Wesley Foundation (SWF) is a centre for research, dialogue and innovation based at Southlands College, supported by both the Southlands Methodist Trust and the University of Roehampton.

The Foundation facilitates research and inquiry which is of benefit to churches but also more widely, with the aim of building flourishing, inclusive communities.

Our values and approach... and our annual conference

Collaboration, participation and conversation are at the heart of SWF's activities and contributions, seen in the research methods which the Foundation favours, the nature of the resources it produces, and the events which it runs. Crossing disciplines, bringing together those with different experiences and backgrounds, combining academic and practical understandings, and recognising the affective dimension of learning are hallmarks of the Foundation's approach.

These elements were evident in SWF's 2024 conference, 'Challenging Hope', which brought together contributors and participants from across the globe, and from a wide range of disciplines and walks of life. The day reflected, too, the Foundation's academic context at the University of Roehampton and the Methodist values on which SWF is founded, with involvement by student leaders and staff from Southlands College. The Conference provided a shared experience of challenging hope through conversation, knowledge exchange, academic learning, creativity and hospitality. The feedback from the day demonstrates something of the approach and its impact:

"You curated a powerful and stimulating day with emotional and cerebral provocations. I have much to digest and reflect on.

"I appreciated the diversity of speakers from around the world, which brought a global dimension to the discussions."

"...creativity...fascinating and engaging speakers...welcoming atmosphere and friendly participants...different perspectives, experiences and methodologies...thought-provoking...breadth of topics truly inspiring"

"Beautifully organized with excellent speakers/facilitators and a superb design of conference content in keeping with the theme of "Challenging Hope". Along with everything else, I found myself feeling so much more hopeful, travelling home yesterday, waking up this morning".

Our community and partnerships

The Foundation continues to sponsor students undertaking PhDs and professional doctorates in theology at the University of Roehampton, some of whom are nearing completion. Current students' areas of study are as below:

- Storytelling and culture change in local Methodist Churches
- Using theological action research to explore new contextual churches as potential catalysts for change in theology and practice
- The work of lay employees within British Methodism and its relationship to vocation and calling
- Poverty and inclusion, theology, and the local church
- Communion as embodied theatre in the faith formation of teenagers.
- Embodied Ways to Know God: the spiritual writings of Edith Stein as informing an empathic practice of Disability Theology.



The Susanna
Wesley Foundation

The Foundation has been credited by a leader in the University's theology department as helping 'to shape a quality theology research culture' at Roehampton, not only through SWF's sponsorship of doctoral students but also through its annual conference and other events, its contributions to the department's practical theology seminar series, and its research projects with Roehampton staff. Further, it is seen as playing 'a really big role in helping students to be part of an active and vibrant community of theological research.'

The Foundation's capacity for building community and making connections is evidenced also in its relationships and collaborations with Roehampton academics in other disciplines, and with other bodies and organisations outside the University whose work aligns with SWF's ambition to influence practice, resource churches, and create flourishing communities. This has led to partnerships with the Saltley Trust, Theos, the Free Churches Group, and the Institute of Leadership and Social Ethics (ILSE) in Leuven, as well as support for academic groupings such as the British and Irish Association for Practical Theology (BIAPT) and the Society for the Study of Christian Ethics (SSCE). The Foundation contributes to bursaries for students from under-represented groups to enable them to participate in the BIAPT and SSCE annual conferences.

SWF also works with individuals to support them as they reflect on their practice and explore possible research activity. This has led to some fascinating work with potential for significant impact, including a potential project around neurodivergence and faith. Work with student leaders to look at values was also part of SWF's provision during the year.



Innovation and learning through our website, resources and podcasts

The Foundation uses its website and periodic newsletters to build community, showcase some of its research, provide a platform for its resources, and offer insights and reflections on SWF themes. The Foundation's podcasts are particularly important in this respect, a number in 23/24 continuing our theme of 'crafting hope', but also a trio around death and dying. The podcasts open important areas for discussion and offer a true exchange of ideas and perspectives between conversation partners who demonstrate a capacity for listening and learning from one another, sometimes highlighting in the conversation how they will incorporate their new learning into their practice. We also use questions and quotations from the conversations to prompt reflection by our listeners.

A new SWF programme: 'Crafting Hope Together'

The motif of 'crafting hope' not only informed the focus of our conference, podcasts, and book reviews on our website, but also 'Crafting Hope Together', a new SWF programme in 23-24 which provided a space for those involved in leading church ministry to gather in a small, supportive, ecumenical group of peers to share stories, ideas, resources, and support. Hospitality, opportunities for creativity, and embodied activities were features of the approach, the aim being to enable participants to tune into their thinking and their feelings in different ways so helping them to develop new perspectives on their ministry and the issues they face. Authenticity, discernment, and relational dynamics were the key themes, with some use of the SWF resource 'Flourishing Ministers, Flourishing Communities'. An enabling, non-directive, invitational style, and a space in which to share with other participants who could identify with their concerns, was appreciated. A participant described the first of three in-person sessions as 'one of the best days of learning I have been on.'

Learning about learning

Throughout the life of the Foundation, 'learning' has been a recurring theme, and 23/24 was no different. The year saw the publication of several articles, under the banner of 'Learning Faith', in November's edition of Anvil, (a journal of theology and mission). These arose out of our large-scale theological action research project around learning in the Methodist Church. The articles highlight the impact of the project on some of those involved in reflecting on the research data, providing examples of how they have changed their approach to the facilitation of learning as a consequence, and the articles offer questions and challenges to those supporting faith development.

Our interest in learning led to support for a project in partnership with Saltley Trust 'Learning from the edges.' The Edgy Learning Project is a theological action research project which has sought to reflect with seven groups – organisations or churches who find themselves on the margins perhaps of the institutional church, socioeconomically, or through other factors such as race, disability, sexuality etc. The project is still in progress but working with each of the seven groups with an action research methodology has already resulted in changed practice and renewed understanding for those involved.



Image © Robin Prime

The end of the last reporting year saw the start of the project 'Developing Reflective Learning on Diaconal Identities and Work with Refugees and Asylum Seekers.' The project is still ongoing but there is already much learning about both the potential of the learning process used in the project, and about the substantive topic of Christian engagement with refugees and asylum seekers.

Learning about 'impact'

A key driver for the work of the Foundation is to enable the exchange of insights and understandings to 'make a difference' and to impact collective and individual practice, for the benefit of communities. Our focus is particularly around churches and those who work in them (and with them), but over the last year we have started to explore both the processes involved in making a difference and methods of assessing impact in various different contexts. We anticipate that learning about impact will not only sharpen how we work and where we direct our resources but will also ensure that more of our work, and that of our academic and institutional partners, has public benefit.

Working with an academic in the University of Roehampton who has recently published a book about a disabled black street performer in Regency London, "Billy Waters is dancing", is providing examples of how to disseminate insights, create learning resources, and amplify the reach of research and academic work. The book has provided the basis for innovative educational resources aimed at supporting teaching around marginalized peoples, migration, disability, and cultures of poverty and performance. The objective is to decolonise the curriculum, engage and inspire students, and create interdisciplinary resources for the classroom, aims which resonate with some of the Foundation's interests. The particular focus of the Foundation's involvement in this project, however, is around how to evaluate the extent to which the various resources and activities which have been developed out of the original research on Billy Waters' life and times have

influenced perceptions, attitudes and behaviours, and changed practice. In this way, too, we are contributing to the University of Roehampton's Research and Knowledge Exchange agenda.

Work with a university's chaplaincy team has had a similar focus, exploring how to determine impact in a higher education setting. The project uncovered different perspectives on assessing impact and explored how to do so with integrity, given the nature of chaplaincy and its spiritual impetus. The research has led to the publication of two papers in the Journal of Pastoral Care and Counselling, and a reflective practice and evaluation resource, which is being tested in various contexts. A presentation at the World Methodist Council in Gothenburg in August also drew on the chaplaincy research project.

Diversity and Inclusion

The Foundation's work with the Methodist Church around diversity and inclusion has featured in many previous reviews. This work continued in 23/24, with further consideration of an earlier SWF report evaluating awareness and perceptions of the Methodist Church's strategy to bring about a fully inclusive Church – the strategy known as 'Justice, Dignity and Solidarity'(JDS). A day's meeting with the Church's JDS Committee allowed a considered approach to the report with the findings being seen as a tool for constructive challenge and improvement. The subsequent submission from the JDS Committee to the April meeting of the Methodist Council identified action arising out of this meeting: 'following the publication of the [evaluation] report and the response from the JDS Committee, a small working group has been convened to produce worship material for circuit and local churches underpinning the principles of the JDS strategy and the Justice Seeking Church.'

The Foundation was also asked by the Connexional Team to design and conduct a study of Fellowship groups and language congregations that worship across the Methodist Church in Britain. At its heart the project aimed to:

- develop an understanding of the Methodist Church in Britain's ethnic, cultural, and linguistic diversity
- deepen our collective engagement with the gifts and challenges wrought by migration
- illuminate the lived experience of worship and ministry across the Connexion.

The report was submitted at the end of the reporting year, but it is anticipated that there will be further conversations with the Church and possible future research.

The Susanna Wesley Foundation is always alert to work around the creation of inclusive and flourishing communities, and is proactive in supporting and promoting associated activity – hence its publication of the resource 'Diversity, Otherness and Privilege' in 2020 (available online as well in hard copy). Since its initial publication, 1350 booklets have been sent out by the Foundation, and we continue to receive requests from groups and churches of all denominations.

Plans for The Future

The Susanna Wesley Foundation will continue to take an approach which encourages dialogue and collaboration, and which draws on different disciplines, on lay as well as ordained perspectives, and on practitioner as well as academic insights. The desire to influence practice, and to share understandings for the benefit of churches and communities, will provide impetus for further work around impact over the coming year, supporting the University's research and knowledge exchange agenda and helping to extend the reach of the Foundation's different activities and involvements.

SWF will continue to support the University's work in practical theology, to sponsor doctoral students, and to contribute to the research and evaluation of various aspects of the Methodist Church's policies and practices, including the implementation of the Church's strategy for equality, diversity and inclusion, and new work around online communion. Various projects reported here will continue in 2024-25, with a focus on the analysis and dissemination of research findings, and the theme of 'hope' will continue to feature. A review of projects undertaken over the last decade will contribute to an event in Spring 2025 when we will bring together those from disparate disciplines and interests to demonstrate the range of our work and to effect some new connections and collaborations.



Enhancing Methodist Education

A decade of focused work has brought Southlands College centre-stage within the national and global organisations and networks which lead Methodist Education at all levels.

The college has come to take a leadership role in shaping a broad programme of activity with real meaning and impact across a network of over 1,000 institutions, in over 80 countries, serving close to 2 million students.

Moving into this position has benefitted Southlands College, the University of Roehampton more broadly, and also served the mission of the Southlands Methodist Trust, which offers support for staff to participate in network activities and to attend conferences, as well as to enable Southlands to host major gatherings at Roehampton.

By collaborating with partner institutions, we create opportunities for attracting students, nurturing student exchange and study abroad programmes, discern opportunities for research and knowledge exchange partnerships, generate interest in the academic life of our institution, and drive forward the Methodist Church's goals for education as a means for transforming lives – and the world – for the better.

2023–24 saw new and important developments and enhancements in the college's work with and across our UK and global networks – developments which were made possible by the hard work of our staff teams and the active support of SMT trustees.

Methodist Schools in Britain

Southlands worked throughout the year to support the agenda of the Methodist Church in Britain to nurture and develop its mission in Methodist Schools, which focuses on the education strategy, Transforming Lives.

Southlands College and the University of Roehampton continued to support strands of this strategy, working with the Methodist Schools Committee (on which the Head of College sits) to explore and enhance the ways by which the Church can nurture teacher education as a Christian vocation. To support this

vision, the SMT released funds for scholarships that support Roehampton students training to be teachers, and to work in educational roles. The Southlands Teaching Scholarships and Southlands Anniversary Scholarships (Education) represent a major investment in supporting those especially from less privileged backgrounds to pursue teaching vocations.

Alongside this, work was done to formulate a research and knowledge exchange programme which might answer the Transforming Lives strategy's call for learning more about (and enhancing) the impact of Methodist values and approaches to the quality of education in schools. Collaborative activity with the Methodist Schools Committee and the Methodist Independent Schools Trust led to proposals for a programme of work to enhance a research-led teaching sector, and work to implement action in this area will be pursued in the year ahead.

The Head of College continues to act as a trustee of Methodist Schools (MAST) – the Religious Authority with regard to all Methodist state schools, which has responsibility for overseeing quality in schools and matters of governance, admissions, and relationships with statutory bodies. During this year, the SMT has continued also to provide a significant grant to Methodist Schools. This enables MAST to sustain a leadership staff team which manages the practical implementation of the trustee body's responsibilities and decisions. Their work has included significant development of the Church's academisation programme in response to changing government policies.

Methodist Higher and Further Education in Britain

Southlands continues to build up positive connections with and between the various Methodist institutions of Further and Higher Education in Britain and Ireland.

Having founded the BIREN network – which brings together the Heads/ lead staff of all such institutions (including important historic archives and museums) in 2020, Southlands brought together this group, offering leadership (the SMT Chair as Chairperson), facilitation (through financial support and administrative provision), and hospitality (hosting the group) at its gathering. In 2023 the Head of College has worked collaboratively with members of the Connexional Team to support the BIREN group to meet at Oxford Brookes' Centre for Methodism and Church History (one of the member institutions). The SMT will provide continued support of staff and resources for these gatherings.

The college's Archives Historian – a position funded by the SMT and working with the Head of College – has ensured a far greater reach across Methodist educational networks for its historic archive, developing a closer working relationship with other institutions' archivists and ensuring both collaboration and acquisition arrangements which serve the common goal of promoting Methodist archives throughout Britain for educational use.



Europe and Worldwide

Southlands continued to take a prominent role amongst global networks of Methodist Education during 2023–24.

The Head of College was active in engaging with both the Methodist-related Theological Schools in Europe (MTSE) and the International Association of Methodist-related Schools, Colleges and Universities (IAMSCU). He represented the college at an MTSE gathering in January 2024, where new research and mutual interests were discussed across institutions, and where decisions about a future, larger meeting in Prague were made for 2025 – which will be a student and staff gathering.

Having participated on the leadership team for the planning of the IAMSCU global meeting in 2023, the Head of College led a review process for the IAMSCU Board of Directors with the goal of enhancing future events. This emphasised the significance of the gathering a Roehampton for building a common identity across Methodist institutions, for enhancing collaboration, and for supporting the work of each.

Various members of the Southlands team contributed to the planning and delivery of sessions at two important meetings in Sweden, in the summer of 2024. The IAMSCU two-day conference 'Community, Conciliation, and Connectionalism: Methodist Education in Scandinavia and Around the World' took place in Gothenburg prior to the World Methodist Conference gathering, On the Move, and the Head of College and Director of the Susanna Wesley Foundation led sessions, either as Chair, or in the presentation of research being done at Roehampton. The Head of College has subsequently been coopted onto the Education Committee of the World Methodist Council, which will lead work for global Methodism as that body looks to the planning of the next World Methodist Conference.

During the year, the Head of College as Vice President of IAMSCU was also appointed as chairperson of the strategic committee on institutional collaborations, the work of which began in Sweden. Plans were made to enhance the collaborative ventures across the network, ranging from the possibility of new publication projects and research partnerships through to the possibility of a new chaplaincy-focused network.

Student Awards

A decade of focused work has brought Southlands College centre-stage within the national and global organisations and networks which lead Methodist Education at all levels.

The SMT continues to sponsor these awards, placing a particular emphasis on ensuring the range of prizes celebrate the history and ethos of the college, ensuring recognition for both individual achievement and creative endeavours that promote the Methodist identity of Southlands College. In the 2023–24 academic year it was decided to increase the number of prizes given to students by creating both undergraduate and postgraduate winners for two of the categories: the Excellent Achievement Overall award, and the Wider Contribution and Engagement award.

These awards include a number of named prizes:

- The Susanna Wesley Award is given to a female member of staff who promotes a values-focused approach in their work to achieve outstanding performance in educational leadership at Southlands.
- The Charles Wesley Award is given to a student or member of staff who has contributed in an exceptional way to the development of community music at the college.
- The John Wesley Award is given to a student who has made a particularly notable contribution to the student chapel community.

As part of the commitment to support students to achieve their dreams, Southlands Methodist Trust 150th Anniversary Scholarship and Bursary funding was awarded to students. Funding at key moments allows students to progress and succeed in their studies. The panel, chaired by a Trustee, met to consider applications in July 2023, awarding £11,150 directly to students.

In addition, the Wesley's Chapel Emergency Fund awarded £2,000 to students facing urgent financial crises.










For more information about the life and work of Southlands College, visit:

www.roehampton.ac.uk/colleges/southlands-college

www.southlandsmethodisttrust.org.uk

www.susannawesleyfoundation.org

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