



UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

School of GeoSciences

Student Support Handbook

2017 - 2018

WELCOME INFORMATION

Welcome to Edinburgh University and the School of GeoSciences!

This handbook aims to give you information that you may find helpful on settling in at University; making the most of your time here and your studies; and who to ask if you have questions or need advice. We hope it is useful in your first few weeks here and beyond, so please read it carefully and keep for future reference.

Please note that, in addition to this handbook, you will be given a handbook more specific to your programme of study that also contains essential information.

We hope that this is the start of a great journey here at Edinburgh!

Student Support Co-ordinators

Cathy Campbell/Katy McPhail
Geography Degree Programmes

Emma Latto
Earth Science and Ecological & Environmental Sciences Degree Programmes

Arrival at Edinburgh:

1. The first step when arriving at Edinburgh is to matriculate.

What is Matriculation?

Matriculation is the formal process of registration as a student at the University of Edinburgh.

The first step is to register online via MyEd (University Student Web Portal) and making arrangements for the payment of your tuition fees. New students must also apply for a student card; the University card is your student ID that you are required to carry when on campus. New students will be sent an email containing information on how to apply for a student card.

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/staff-students/students/new-students/registering/overview>

2. The second step is to meet with your Personal Tutor to confirm your attendance and your course choices for the coming year.

Who is my Personal Tutor?

Each student will be assigned a Personal Tutor, who is also an academic member of staff. Your Personal Tutor will offer academic support throughout your time at University. Information on who your Personal Tutor is and how to arrange that initial meeting with them will be added to your student record before you arrive in Welcome Week. You can access your student record via the MyEd portal.

What about any non-academic issues I may have?

Your first point of contact for any non-academic issues you may have is your Student Support Co-ordinator.

For Geography degree programmes, your Student Support Co-ordinator is:

Cathy Campbell (Mon-Wed)/Katy McPhail (Wed-Fri)

Room 2.09, Main Office

Geography Building, Drummond Street

Telephone: 0131 650 2523/0131 651 4351

E-mail: ssc-geography@geos.ed.ac.uk

For Earth Sciences or Ecological & Environmental Sciences degree programmes, your Student Support Co-ordinator is:

Emma Latto

Room 337, Grant Institute

King's Buildings

Telephone: 0131 650 5932

E-mail: Emma.Latto@ed.ac.uk

Issues, like what?

Issues you should contact your Student Support Co-ordinator about may include:

Problems or queries with matriculation and/or accommodation

Health issues (mental/physical) that need support

Learning conditions that need extra support

Pastoral concerns about University e.g. fitting in, making friends, etc

Concerns about coursework deadlines

Note: your Student Support Co-ordinator will try to offer a solution or plan of action where possible, but might not always be able to solve the issue straight away. If another University Support Service is recommended your Student Support Co-ordinator will be able to refer you to the appropriate service.

Student Administration

The Student Administration Department is the University's central contact point for providing a range of important documents you may need such as;

Bank Introduction Letter

Council Tax Exemption Certificate

Certificate of Matriculation

Transcripts

For further information on the services they provide and contact details please use link below:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/student-administration/about/about-us>

Settling in Edinburgh

We hope things will go well for you as you begin your University life, and you will enjoy:

- Attending lectures and any related practical classes, tutorials or lab classes.
- Understanding and submitting coursework, engaging with classmates, etc.
- Attending GeoPALS* sessions regularly and getting involved with activities.
- Settling into your accommodation and making new friends.
- Trying out the social side of attending University.

What if things go wrong and you experience difficulties:

Seek advice and guidance from your Student Support Co-ordinator!! Emma, Cathy and Katy have knowledge of all the University Support Services and can offer support for many kinds of issues that you may experience.

If you are having trouble with your coursework and keeping to deadlines we can discuss your situation and arrange help and/or extensions for you if appropriate. Be sure to attend GeoPALS* sessions, these may be helpful.

If you feel your skills in essay writing and time management could do with improvement, then go along to some of the workshops that are run by The Institute of Academic Development;

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/institute-academic-development/undergraduate/courses/study-skills>

If you are suffering illness or having personal difficulties, there are options that are available to help you through the difficult times, discuss with your Student Support Co-ordinator.

If you feel lonely, there are many clubs and societies run by EUSA. Take a look over to see if anything fits with your interests;

<http://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/getinvolved/societies/>

If you have financial worries (big or small), please visit The Advice Place. They can offer independent advice for students, information in link below. Don't ignore the situation as this can make matters worse and increase stress.

<http://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/adviceplace/>

**Information on GeoPALS on page 6&7*

General Advice

Be proactive!! At the School of GeoSciences we are committed to giving you a great experience. We try to be flexible and to help students whenever we can. However, we can't help with an issue or provide support if we don't know there is a problem. The more proactive you are in working with your peers, course organisers, student disability service or whomever, the more likely it is that we can take action and a potential problem needn't become an actual problem.

Enjoy your time at University and get involved as much as you can with activities in Welcome Week and throughout the year.

Useful Links

Find out about all aspects of student support while you are at University; including Health and wellbeing; Living in Edinburgh; Academic Support; Money Fees and Finances; Careers and opportunities at:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/staff-students/students>

You are recommended to use the PATH tool to help you with your course choice selection. PATH can be accessed via the T@Ed Portal (via MyEd) (requires EASE login).

<https://path.is.ed.ac.uk/>

You can also use timetabling to model your course choice options. Course Timetable Browser can also be accessed via the T@Ed Portal (via MyEd) (requires EASE login).

You can view live, online programme and course timetables through the University's 'My Timetable' service, which is also accessed via the 'Services' tab on MyEd. My Timetable is a simple and intuitive service, with a full user guide available:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/student-administration/timetabling/students>

Please do feel free to contact us if you have any concerns or questions.

GeoPALS

Peer Assisted Learning by students for students

Do you want to...

-Meet other first years
on your degree programme?

-Ask current honours students
your questions in an informal
environment?

-Make more of our facilities - e.g.
advice on using the library, computing
labs ect?

-Write better essays and improve your study skills?



Make the most of your time at university



GeoPALS is the answer!
We have regular lunch time sessions
for each of the degree streams
(EcoPALS, GeogPALS and EarthPALS)
led by honours students.

Sessions are especially
tailored to the experiences of
you, our new students.

find out more at: <http://geopals.weebly.com/>

GeoPALS

GeoPALS is a Peer-Assisted Learning Scheme led by students **for** students aimed at enhancing your student experience. The scheme is primarily aimed at 1st year undergraduates and the sessions run during semester time.

GeoPALS is divided up into 3 groups, mirroring the 3 degree strands of the School:

GeogPALS: Geography

GeoPALS: Earth Science

GeoPALS: Ecological and Environmental Sciences

We have regular lunch time sessions led by 3rd and 4th year students and which are especially tailored to the experience of you, our new students. The sessions include various topics such as note-taking, essay writing, revision, exams, etc.

We strongly advise you to attend the sessions as they provide a valuable learning experience and give you the opportunity to discuss any concerns you may have with your peers.

Information on your group sessions and where they will be meeting can be found at:

<http://geopals.weebly.com/>

“GeoPALS is fantastic, it is really helpful and friendly and great being able to discuss matters with those who have so recently experienced it. Definitely recommended!”

Melissa Tuckwell
1st Year, 2013/14

“The best environment to ask questions you might think are stupid to ask a lecturer”

Viola Heinrich
1st Year, 2013/14



Have a question? GeoPALS is the answer <http://www.geopals.weebly.com>

Teaching Organisation Social Media

In addition to our web pages, the Teaching Organisation connects with students and beyond the University via social media. You can visit our Facebook, Twitter or Instagram pages to keep up to date with what is happening in the TO, or read about student and staff experiences on our Teaching Organisation blog.

Facebook

Visit the Teaching Organisation Facebook page for student blogs and updates on events by searching for 'Geosciences TO' in Facebook.

Twitter

Our Twitter page keeps you informed about all things Teaching Organisation. Follow us at @UoEGeos_TO for daily tweets and updates.

Instagram

Highlights of events and student experiences are documented on our instagram page.

<http://instagram.com/geosedininsta>

Blogs

Visit our wordpress page to read GeoSciences staff and student blogs about experiences and events in the School and the University.

<http://edingeoscistudents.wordpress.com/>

Institute of Academic Development Workshops

The Institute of Academic Development run workshops for undergraduates to help you succeed with your studies. Once available, workshop descriptions, venue and details of how to book will be viewable on our fuller study skills workshops webpage:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/institute-academic-development/undergraduate/courses>

Sems 1, Week:	Date	Time	Workshop title
0	04 September 2017	14:00-15:00	How to succeed at university (Online)
0	05 September 2017	14:00-15:00	Stepping up to honours (Online)
0	07 September 2017	14:00-15:00	Stepping up to honours (Online)
0	08 September 2017	14:00-15:00	How to succeed at university (Online)
Welcome week	13 September 2017	13:30 – 15:00	How to succeed at university
Welcome week	13 September 2017	15:30-17:00	Stepping Up to Honours
1	19 September 2017	17.15-18.30	How to succeed at university
1	20 September 2017	13.30-15.00	Making notes in lectures
1	20 September 2017	15.30-17.00	Time management
1	20 September 2017	17.15-18.30	Stepping up to Honours
2	26 September 2017	17.15-18.30	Making notes in lectures
2	27 September 2017	13.30-15.00	Getting started with essay writing
2	27 September 2017	15.30-17.00	Making notes from reading
3	03 October 2017	17.15-18.30	Making notes from reading
3	04 October 2017	13.30-15.00	How to read and write critically
3	04 October 2017	15.30-17.00	Referencing - and how to do it
4	10 October 2017	17.15-18.30	Getting started with essay writing
4	11 October 2017	13.30-15.00	Time management
4	11 October 2017	15.30-17.00	Dealing with volume
5	17 October 2017	17.15-18.30	How to read and write critically
6	25 October 2017	13.30-15.00	Getting to grips with essay writing
10	21 November 2017	17.15-18.30	Essays in exams
10	22 November 2017	13.30-15.00	Effective revision
11	28 November 2017	17.15-18.00	Effective revision