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# MSc Marine Systems & Policies

Dr. Lea-Anne Henry, Programme Director & Dr. Kristina Beck, Cohort Lead,  
13 November 2024

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# Who are we?

- We're here to help:
  - Programme Director
    - Lea-Anne Henry
  - Cohort Lead
    - Kristina Beck
  - Programme Administrator
    - Sarah Jones
  - Student Support
    - [geoset.pg@ed.ac.uk](mailto:geoset.pg@ed.ac.uk)



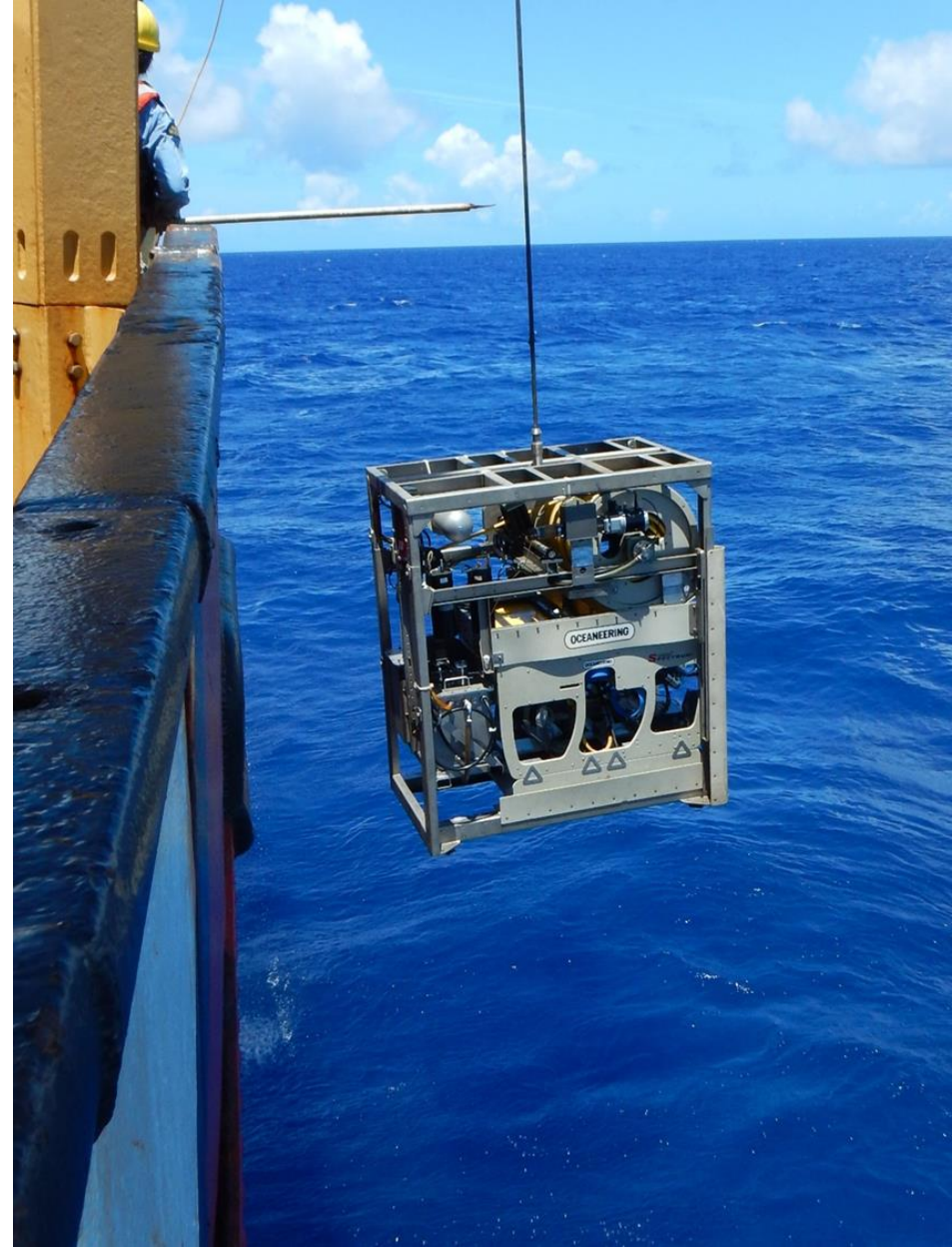
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# Why study marine science with policy?

- Fast-moving front & many ways for you to translate science and other forms of knowledge into policy & impact



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# Why study marine science with policy?

- For example, after decades of scientific research and campaigning, we have:
  - a treaty on human use and the protection, management and benefit-sharing of Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ)



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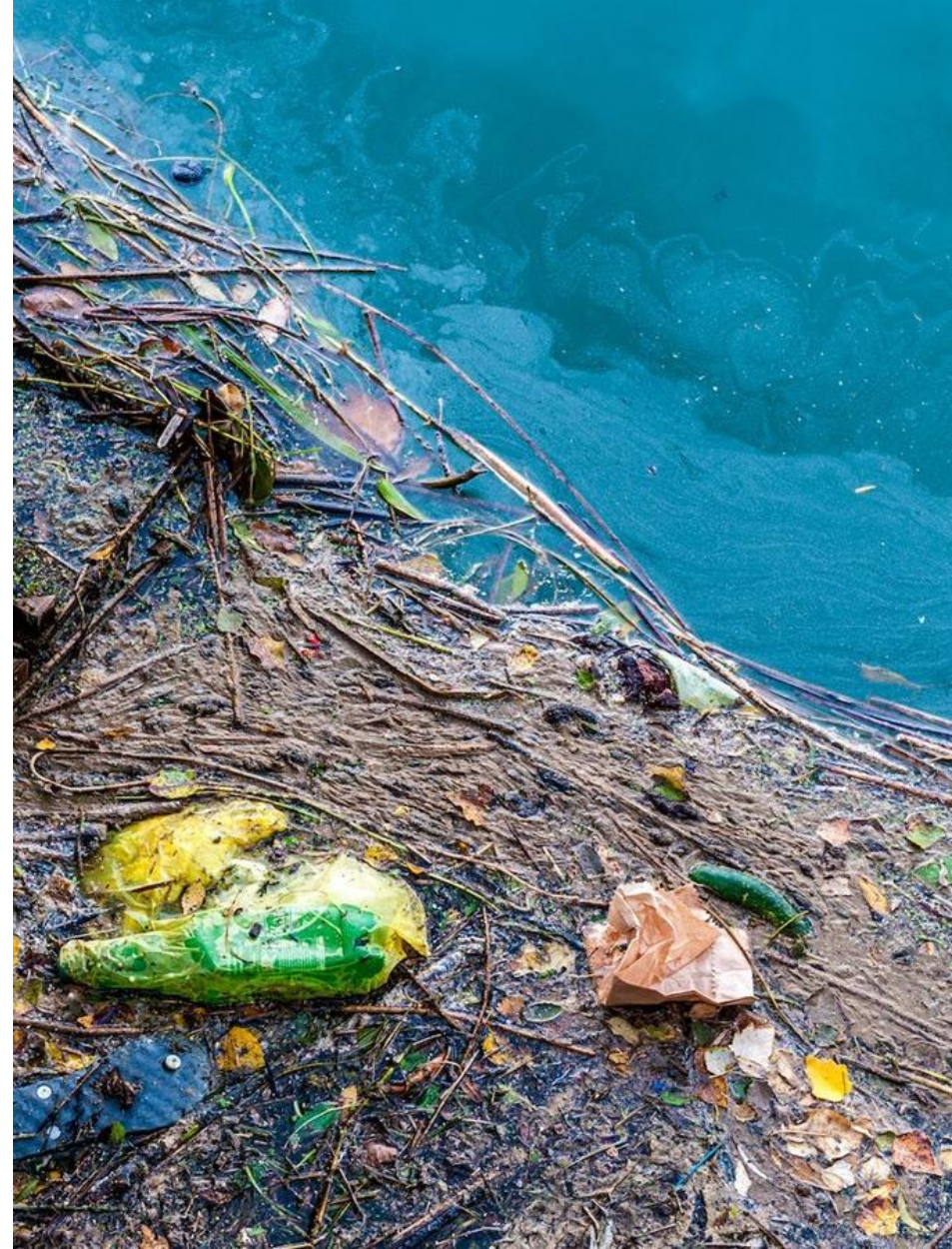
# Why study marine science with policy?

- For example, after decades of scientific research and campaigning, we have:
  - legal bans or restrictions on whales and dolphins in captivity; rights of nature movements



# Why study marine science with policy?

- For example, after decades of scientific research and campaigning, we have:
  - a new Plastics Treaty



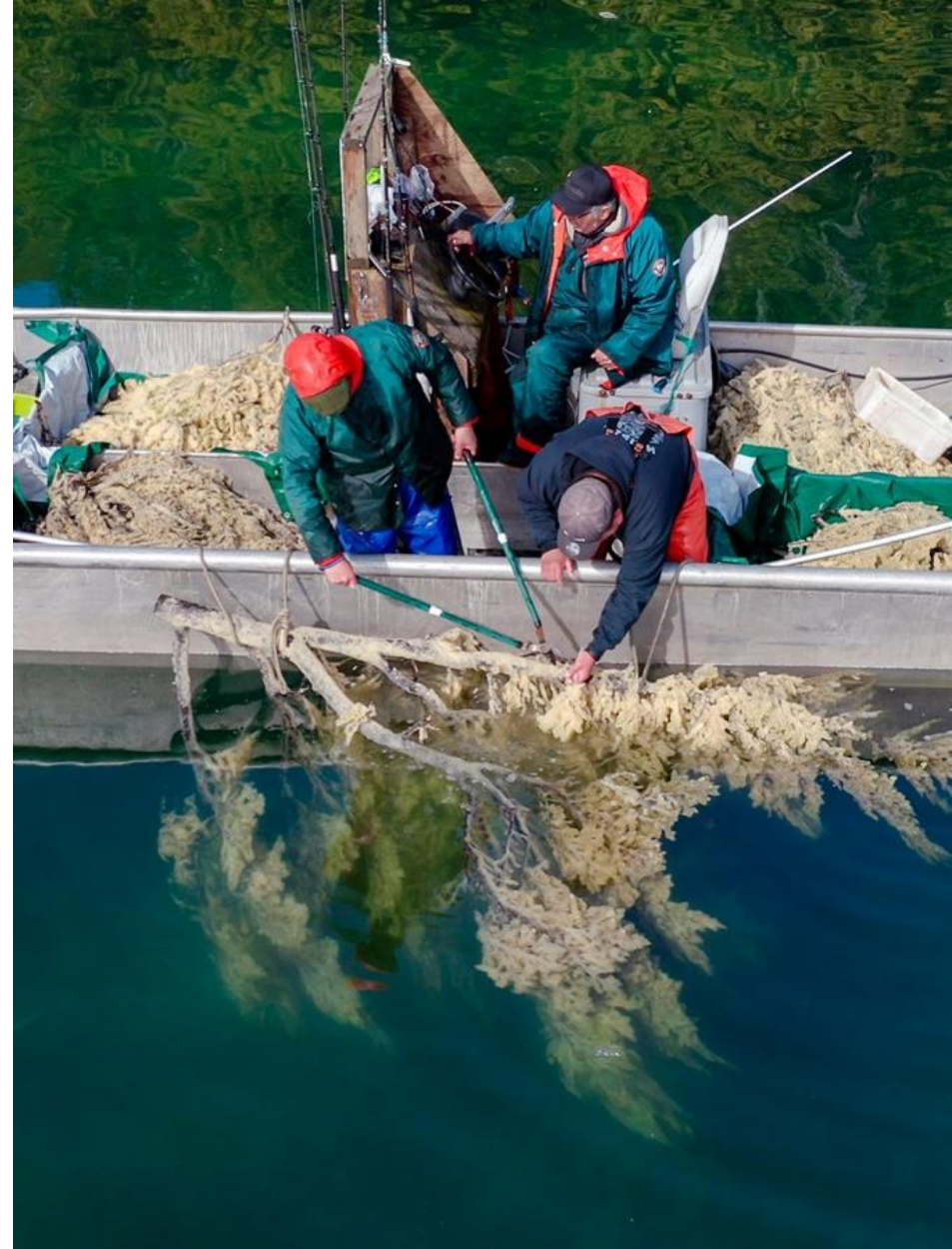
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# Why study marine science with policy?

- Instantly connects you to stakeholders and the human dimension in general
  - For example, the new Global Biodiversity Framework legally recognises the critical role of indigenous peoples and local communities



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# Why study marine science with policy?

- For example, illegal, unreported, unregulated (IUU) fishing is sometimes linked to forced labour and slavery
  - (IUU is in part being tackled by the 2022 WTO's Fisheries Subsidies Agreement after a weight of scientific evidence and advocacy campaigns)





# Our MSc vs MSc in Law

- What policies exist?
  - Skill: link ecosystems and issues to policies (including laws)
- Are policies effective?
  - Skill: collect and analyse scientific evidence, is the science good enough?
- Is policy reform needed & how?
  - Skill: use evidence base to critically evaluate
- How do I engage with policy processes?
  - Skill: learn the best channels to communicate science to decision-makers



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# Programme focus

- We focus on:
  - Marine science, nature conservation & marine planning\*
- Course work
  - policies for ecosystems\*
  - policies for marine planning & development\*
  - international focus but with domestic case studies
- Breakfast briefings, guest experts, reading groups, course assignments, dissertations
  - issue-based policies (e.g., plastics, illegal fishing, geopolitics)
  - sectoral policies (e.g., fisheries)





# How do we teach?

- Research-informed teaching
  - learn from research, learn to do research
- Experiential learning
  - learn by doing and reflecting
- Devices we use:
  - Lectures
  - Flipped classrooms
  - Serious gaming
  - Field trips
  - Guest experts



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# How do we teach?

- Opportunistic skills workshops
  - QGIS
  - NVivo
  - Reef fish ethograms
  - R Coding Club





# Field trips

- Locations include:
  - St. Abbs Marine Station
  - Scottish Seabird Centre in North Berwick
  - Maldives



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# Resources

- You will have various resources available during your studies:
  - Learn platform
  - Programme Handbook
  - Dissertation Handbook
  - Course Handbooks
  - Guest speakers & MSc alumni
  - 1 Marine Conference
  - Breakfast Briefings
  - Maldives Reading Group



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# Programme structure

Find a full list of compulsory and optional courses on [Degree Programme Timetables](#)

## ■ Full-time

- 4 compulsory courses
- 2 optional courses
- Research project/dissertation

## ■ Part-time

- A two-year part-time option is available
- We recommend living within a commutable distance from Edinburgh to undertake part-time study
  - Year 1
    - 4 compulsory courses
  - Year 2
    - Research project/dissertation
    - 2 optional courses



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# Semester 1 - Foundations

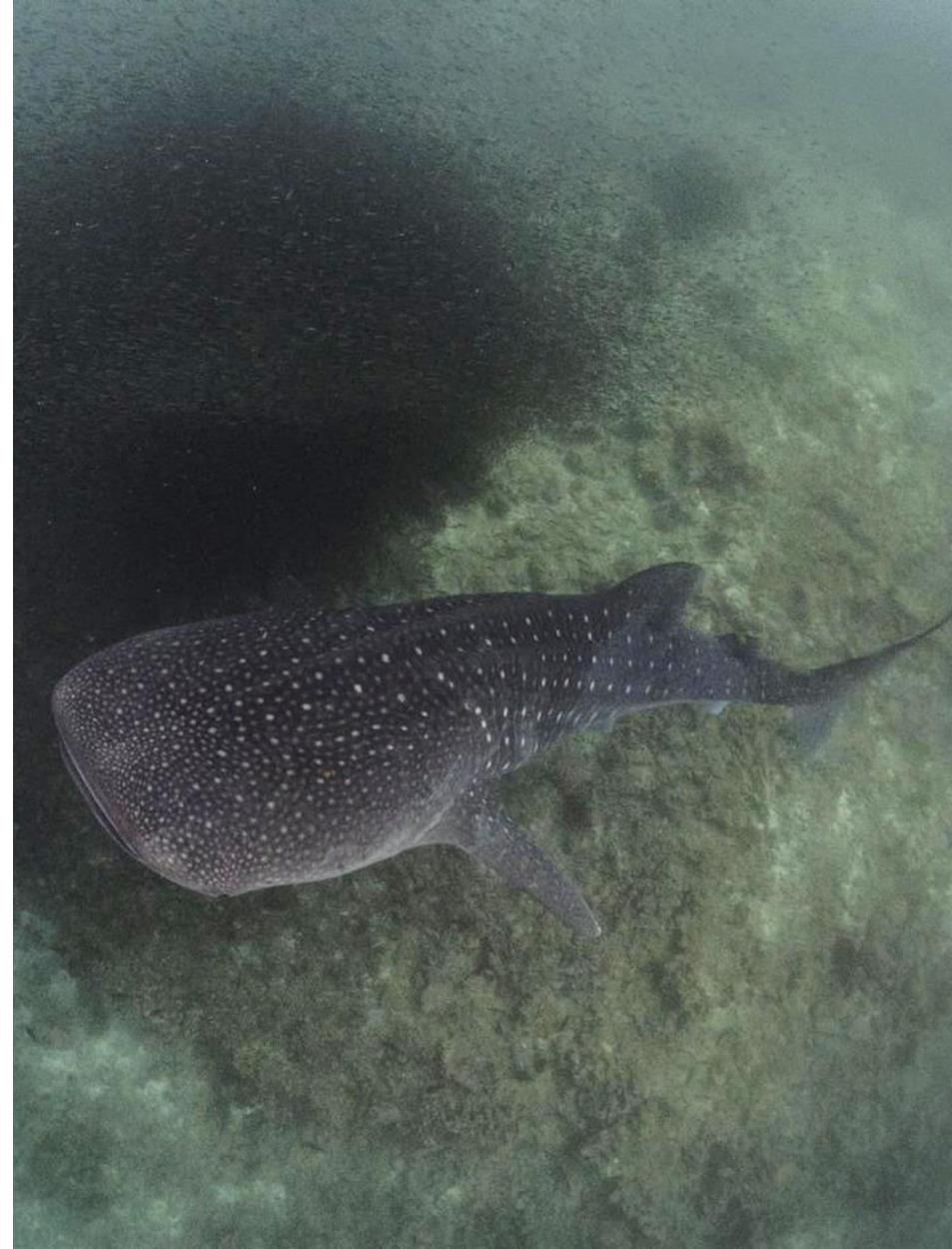
- Weekly Breakfast Briefings
  - Informal student-led discussion group on the science to policy interface
- Marine Ecosystems & Policies
  - Ecosystem science and relevant policies
- Sustainable Marine Development
  - Marine planning and impact assessments
    - + optional course
    - + 1 conference (MASTS)
    - + dissertation ideas
    - + mixer event





# Semester 2 – Science and Policy in Practice

- Maldives Reading Group
  - Mondays
- Corals in a Changing Ocean
  - Ecosystem science, scientific skills development, relevant policies
- Marine Methods in Research & Practice
  - Ecological and social science applied in an overseas context
    - + optional course
    - + hardcore dissertation planning
    - + pool sessions



# Field course – UK and International

- Semester 2
  - techniques development and UK coasts
- Maldives trip – April
  - Maldives field station (Magoodhoo, South Ari Atoll)
- Investigations into pressures on marine ecosystems and communities
- Skills:
  - Surveys (snorkelling/diving)
  - Interviews
  - Group data collection with individual project analysis



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# Dissertation – Semester 3

- “Research Project in Marine Systems & Policies”
  - Independent research project
- Conduct an inquiry-based research project on a marine topic of your choice:
  - Field, lab, desk-based, internship, work placement

Examples of past titles include:

- The rights of Southern Resident killer whales
- Pilot study on the use of drones to study humpback whales in Iceland
- Threats from illegal fishing and capacity for enforcement in Indonesia
- Using baited remote underwater vehicle systems to study the distribution and diversity of sharks in South Africa
- Supervisor
  - internal or external - governments, NGOs, industries, organisations
- <https://www.ed.ac.uk/oceans>



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# Dissertation – Timeline

- Consider a topic (Sem. 1)
- Produce an over-arching research question, design a method/plan to answer that question
- October – November: **MASTS** conference
- November – December: **Dissertation mixer event**
- January: **Topic confirmed**
- March: **Forms submitted**
- May – August: **Write up**





# Networking

- LinkedIn alumni group - UoE MSc Marine Systems and Policies Alumni
- Dissertation mixer
- Marine Alliance for Science & Technology for Scotland (MASTS) Annual Science Meeting
  - Glasgow (Oct or Nov)
- Guest speakers, Honorary Professors & Fellows



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# Your class

- 20 – 30 students maximum
- 1/3 from UK, rest overseas
- 1/2 with scientific backgrounds
- 1/2 from law, international development, communications, journalism, social and political science, philosophy



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# Your future career

- We are proud of our graduates, and many have gone on to jobs in government, NGOs, industry and academia around the world.
  - WWF
  - RSPB
  - Pew Charitable Trusts
  - World Wide Fund for Nature
  - Global Fishing Watch
  - Blue Ventures
  - Blue Marine Foundation
- A lot go on to do PhDs !



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# Scholarships and funding

- Featured funding
  - [ScottishPower Master Scholarships](#)
  - [Chevening Scholarships](#)
- School of GeoSciences scholarships
  - [See potential funding for GeoSciences students](#)
- You are encouraged to research the range of potential scholarships and other funding outside the University for which you may be eligible.
  - [Search for funding](#)





# Asking questions

- When asking a question, select 'Chat', then type your question



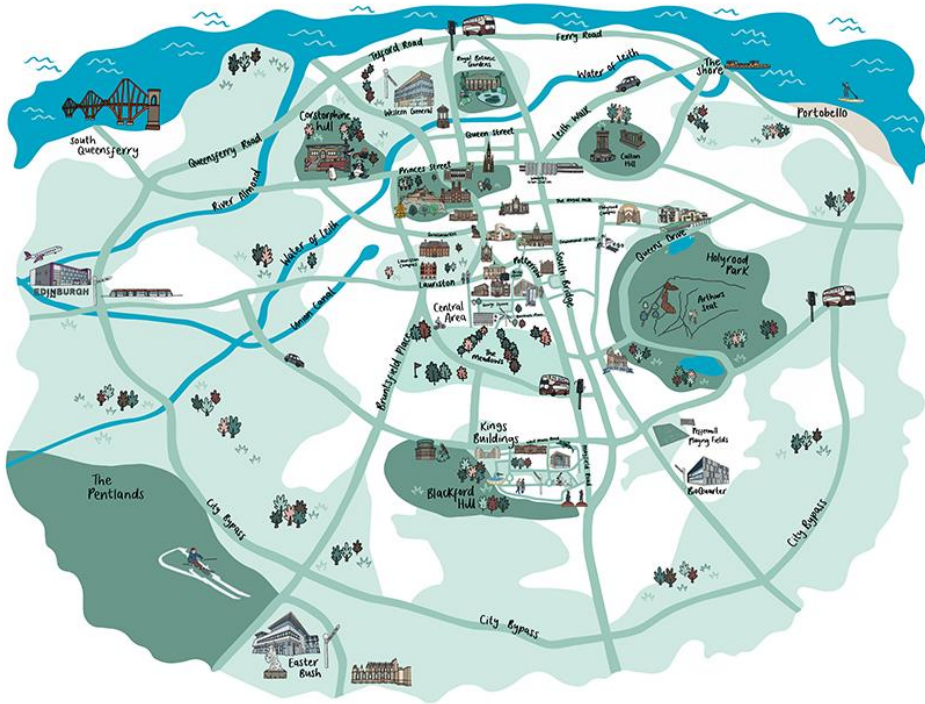
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# Next steps... Questions?

<https://virtualvisits.ed.ac.uk/pg>

<https://edin.ac/student-chat-pg>



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# Contact details for follow-up questions

If you have further questions that have not been answered, please email:  
[l.henry@ed.ac.uk](mailto:l.henry@ed.ac.uk)



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# Thank you – click ‘Leave’ when the session ends

- Return to your ‘e-ticket’ to find and attend other sessions you’ve booked – by clicking on the button in the email we sent you...



## It's Day One!

Hi {{contact.full\_name.first\_name|case:camel}},

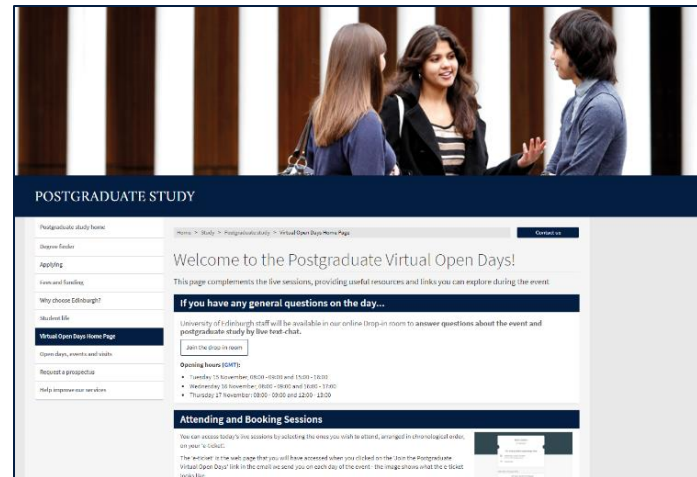
It is Day One of our Postgraduate Virtual Open Days! We are looking forward to welcoming you during the day.

### Joining the event

To access the event, use your 'ticket' link below. The sessions are listed in chronological order and the times shown are in Greenwich Mean Time (GMT). The link to join a session will appear 15 minutes before it starts.

[Virtual Open Days Ticket](#)

- ...and visit the event homepage:
- <https://edin.ac/3CymWA3>



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# Thank you

Lea-Anne Henry & Kristina Beck

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