

INNOVATIVE LEARNING WEEK

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES

MONDAY

10.00-11.20 Conference with former graduates at varying career stages

Open to all years, but especially relevant to 3rd and 4th Years

The job market has become ever more competitive and the range of skills you are developing during your University studies may represent only a fraction of the skills that potential employers are looking for.

The aim of this session is to allow you the opportunity to meet with former students at Edinburgh who are at different stages in their career development and who have chosen very different career paths. The objective is to allow you to see what the future may have in store for you and to show you how these different people have approached the difficult transition from being students to being active job seekers and successful career professionals.

11.40-13.05 Conference with professional organisations on accreditation schemes

Open to all years, but especially relevant to 3rd and 4th Years

Several professional organisations are present in the world of Ecology and Environmental Sciences. The organisations invited here are the leading organisations in our field and they provide precious but sometimes not well known avenues to developing important professional contacts, giving career opportunities and setting the standards of your future activities in their respective areas.

The aim of this session is to bring you face-to-face with these organisations, allowing you to find out first-hand a) what they require from you in terms of professional knowledge, practical subject-specific skills and transferable skills and b) what they offer in terms of membership and professional accreditation.

14:00-16.50 Conference with potential employers in ecological and environmental sciences

Open to all years, but especially relevant to 3rd and 4th Years

Our graduates find jobs in a vast array of public and private bodies. This afternoon session offers an opportunity to hear about what each of these organisations does and about job opportunities therein. There will be plenty time for your questions, either at the end of each talk or more informally at the tea break.

TUESDAY

10.00-11.15 Dissertations dissected

Open to all years, but especially relevant to 2nd and 3rd Years

The Honours Dissertation is often regarded as the most challenging, but ultimately the most rewarding, part of Ecological Science degrees. As well as the intellectual outcome and scientific skills, the dissertation allows you to display and develop your skills in time management, project planning, independent working and communication. Employers and selectors for Masters and PhD programmes will often look closely at the conduct and outcome of Honours dissertations.

The aim of this session is to demystify Honours Dissertations. First the procedures for choosing your dissertation topic and implementing it and assessing it will be covered. Then you will hear about the experiences of current and recent Honours students in conducting their dissertations. The session will conclude by identifying “top tips” for successful Honours dissertations.

11.45-13.00 Brain drain? Further studies for Masters and PhD

Open to all years, but especially relevant to 3rd and 4th Years

About 20% of recent Ecological Science graduates have gone on to further study in Masters and PhD programmes. The aim of this session is to provide information to help you decide whether further study is appropriate for you and, if so, how to begin exploring the options. The session includes hearing from Ecological Science graduates and PhD students about their experiences of further studies and also questions and answers with an expert panel.

14:00-16:45 Outdoor Workshop

Open to all years

Handling simple equipment such as a compass, a GPS, a radio or knowing the basic rules of first-aid while in the field are essential skills for any field practitioner. However, these topics are hardly covered in any University curriculum.

The aim of this session is to demonstrate these simple skills in practice.

WEDNESDAY

09:00-13:00 Approaching the job market- interview practice

Open to all years, but especially relevant to 3rd and 4th Years

Two jobs descriptions in the field of Ecology and Environmental Science will be posted on the ILW web site from 1 February requesting applications (covering letter plus brief CV) by Monday 13 February. Three applicants will be selected for each post to be interviewed (20 minutes) by an experienced panel that will include a 2010 graduate from our Programme. The session will be recorded on video and watched in another room by attendees and experienced staff. Afterwards the video recordings will be viewed with participants to give/receive feedback. Meet our graduate over lunch to hear about their interview experiences.

Job descriptions will be derived from posts currently held by successful past graduates of Ecology and Environmental Science who are advising on interview questions that they experienced in practice.

Learn from watching the sessions or take part as an applicant for a chance to get some real practice and feedback. Tea/coffee will be available for attendees watching the sessions.

View the advert & More Information at <http://tinyurl.com/6sh4fdp>

14:00-16:45 EcoSoc / Permaculture Society event

Open to all years, but especially relevant to 1st and 2nd Years

The aim of this session is to encourage Ecological Science students to get involved in University Societies related to their degree. It should build on the work of the previous afternoon in creating links between year groups and hopefully encourage students to participate in extra-curricular activities.

This is a collaboration between EcoSoc, the Dirty Weekenders and the Permaculture Society. The plan is to meet at the KB House bar, then walk down to the KB allotment to carry out a seed sowing workshop, make some birdfeeders and a coldframe. As this is very much weather-dependent, there will also be the option to stay in KB House, meet society members and take part in various activities.

THURSDAY

10:00-13:00 Identification of Native Trees in Winter (Dr Barbra Harvie) – Session 1

14:00-17:00 Identification of Native Trees in Winter (Dr Barbra Harvie) – Session 2

Open to all years, but especially relevant to 1st and 2nd Years

Learn more about the native and naturalised tree species of Scotland from alder to yew. Most of the tree species that are native to Scotland (plus many naturalised and exotic species) can be found on KB campus. Learn to distinguish between them using features that are visible all year round (no keys required).

Only 15 places are available in each session. The afternoon session will run only if there is demand.

FRIDAY

Making better use of Excel spreadsheets

Open to all years, but especially relevant to 1st and 2nd Years

When asked, most students (and staff) say they are competent in using Excel. The reality is that they are proficient in some operations, but are also unaware of many others and have along the way picked up many bad habits. This session is intended, through participation in practical exercises, to instil better working practices in spreadsheet construction, as well as introducing participants to some of the lesser used functions available.

The exercises will be graduated in complexity starting with formatting, copying and graphing; then progressing to indexing, look-ups and conditional statements; next exploring pivot tables and pivot graphs and finally delving into the world of decision support models with a demonstration of their application in practical resource management.

Participants are welcome to attend all or any of the sessions in any sequence that appeals to them. Worksheets will be available to allow self instruction although guidance from staff will be available throughout the morning.

The final demonstration will be presented by a group of MSc students who have been tasked to provide a management report for a local company and they will be sharing their experiences with participants.