



UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

*School of GeoSciences*

Student Support Handbook

2013 - 2014

WELCOME INFORMATION

Dear Student,

Welcome to Edinburgh University and the School of GeoSciences!

This handbook aims to give you information that you may find helpful in your first few weeks here and beyond, so please read it carefully.

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!

Faten Adam & Emma Latto  
Student Support Co-Ordinators

## **Arrival at Edinburgh:**

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 by completing the matriculation form and making arrangements for the paying of your tuition fees.

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

For more information, please visit Registry's website:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/registry/matric>

### ***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 included in your Fresher's Pack.

### ***What about any non-academic issues I may have?***

As a first point of contact for any non-academic issues you may have, you should contact your Student Support Co-Ordinator.

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

Faten Adam/Cathy Campbell

Room 2.09

Geography Building

Drummond Street

Telephone: 0131 650 2523

E-mail [Faten.Adam@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Faten.Adam@ed.ac.uk) / [Cathy.Campbell@ec.ac.uk](mailto:Cathy.Campbell@ec.ac.uk)

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

Emma Latto

Room 328

Grant Institute

King's Buildings

Telephone: 0131 650 4917

E-mail [Emma.Latto@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Emma.Latto@ed.ac.uk)

## **Issues, like what?**

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

Having problems with matriculation and/or accommodation

Needing a letter confirming my status at the University for accommodation or banking purposes

Having a health/learning condition that needs support

Having any pastoral concerns about University, such as fitting in, etc.

Any concerns over coursework deadlines

Note: your Student Support Co-ordinator might not always be able to solve the issue, but she will be able to refer you to the appropriate University service that can.

## **Settling in Edinburgh**

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

Attending lectures and any related practical classes, tutorials or lab classes

Understanding and submitting coursework, engaging with classmates, etc.

Attending GeosPALS\* 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:***

Be proactive! We can't resolve an issue or provide support if we don't know there is a problem.

Seek advice from your Student Support Co-Ordinator; she has knowledge of all the University support services

If you are having trouble with your coursework and keeping to deadlines we can arrange help and/or extensions for you. Be sure to attend GeosPALS\* 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, take a look over EUSA's many student-run student societies to see if anything fits with your interests;

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

If you have financial worries, please visit The Advice Place for help. Do not ignore the situation as this can make matters worse and give you added stress;

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

\*Information on GeosPALS on page 5

## **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 fresher's week and throughout the year.

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

## **GeosPALS**

As part of the Enhancing Student Support Project, in 2013/14, all schools have introduced a peer support scheme. In GeoSciences the scheme we are adopting is Peer-Assisted Learning Scheme (PALS). The scheme will run for 1<sup>st</sup> year undergraduates during semester 1 of the academic year.

GeosPALS is divided up into 3 subsections, mirroring the 3 degree strands of the School: GeogPALS, EarthPALS, EcoPALS.

You will be allocated a group which will be run by 2 facilitators (3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year students who have received the necessary training given by EUSA). The groups will meet fortnightly, starting in week 3, to discuss various topics such as study skills, essay writing, exams, etc.

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

Information about GeosPALS can be found at:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/geosciences/teaching-organisation/ug-students/peer-support>

## Institute of Academic Development Workshops

A quick-glance schedule of study development workshops running September to December 2013.

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>

Workshops are held on Wednesday afternoons (90 minutes) and Tuesday early evenings (50 minutes). **You must book to attend; booking opens two weeks in advance of each workshop.**

Workshop schedule Sep - Dec 2013			
Sems 1, Week:	Date	Time	Workshop title
2	24th September	17:10	Focus on: finding time
2	25th September	13:30	Succeeding at University
2	25th September	15:30	Making notes in lectures
3	1st October	17:10	Focus on: making notes
3	2nd October	13:30	Time management
3	2nd October	15:30	Getting started with essay writing
4	9th October	15:30	Time management
5	15th October	17:10	Focus on: using a book
5	16th October	13:30	Getting started with essay writing
5	16th October	15:30	How to read and write critically
6	22nd October	17:10	Focus on: reading a paper
6	23rd October	13:30	Working at honours level
6	23rd October	15:30	How to read and write critically
7	29th October	17:10	Focus on: finding time
8	30th October	13:30	Report writing
9	6th November	13:30	Giving presentations
9	6th November	15:30	Giving presentations
10	13th November	13:30	Getting ahead with revision
10	13th November	15:30	Getting ahead with revision
11	20th November	13:30	Getting ahead with revision
12	26th November	17:10	Focus on: exams
12	27th November	15:30	Coping in exams and exam technique
13	4th December	13:30	Coping in exams and exam technique

