



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH  
School of History, Classics  
and Archaeology

**Being a  
student at  
Edinburgh**

**Archaeology**

# Welcome

from an **Archaeology** student

**My name is Rain and I am studying MA (Hons) History and Archaeology.**



When applying to university, I must have gone through every leaflet and website available to me. I wanted to attend a top-ranking university with a degree that allowed me to tailor the courses to my interests, enabled me to go on a year abroad, and supplied me with many opportunities outside my courses. Not only did I find my ideal course at Edinburgh, but the University also provided me with fieldwork experiences, the option to attend additional lectures organised by the many academic societies present in the department, and a friendly environment in which staff and students can integrate.

I also wanted to make sure that I would be spending the next 4 years of my life in a city that was right for me and that I could enjoy. The city is vibrant, international, immersed in history and culture, with nature right around the corner.

Hopefully this leaflet will give you a little more insight into what it's like to be a student here at Edinburgh. Don't forget the School also has a team of Student Ambassadors who are on hand to answer questions you have about being a student at Edinburgh.

You can contact them by email at [hca-student-ambassadors@ed.ac.uk](mailto:hca-student-ambassadors@ed.ac.uk)



## Becoming an Archaeology student at Edinburgh

### Pre-arrival information

The University will be in touch before you begin to let you know all the things you'll need to do before you arrive and those things you need to do when you get here. It's an exciting time! The University will have people available to answer any questions you may have.

### Welcome Week

Welcome Week is the week prior to the first teaching week. You will get your first taste of the University environment and matriculate as a student.

Shortly before you arrive the School of History, Classics and Archaeology will be in touch to tell you about the key School Welcome Meeting, where you will hear from lecturers and current students, and other useful events.

### What support is available when I get here?

All undergraduate students have a 'personal tutor' while at Edinburgh: you will be assigned a personal tutor by the beginning of Welcome Week. Your personal tutor will be a member of the teaching staff who provides academic guidance and support.

The School also has a dedicated Undergraduate Student Support office which is your first point of contact within the School for advice and support. Peer support is also available where you can speak to fellow students.

A feeling of wellbeing and good health during your academic life is very important for your studies and safety. You will have access to a wide range of services provided by the University, throughout Edinburgh and through self-help. These include the health centre, sport and exercise facilities, the Disability Service, Counselling Service and the Chaplaincy.

### Choosing your courses

In your first year you will meet with your personal tutor in Welcome Week to choose your courses. Visit their office early to sign up for a meeting. For your second, third and fourth year courses you will submit your preferences in advance of the start of the year.



# How will I be taught and assessed?

## Archaeology lectures

Archaeology lectures are delivered, mainly in first and second year, by our team of world leading lecturers and professors as well as external archaeologists such as museum conservators and archaeology professionals. Archaeology lectures usually have about 100 students. Lecturers discuss a topic using slides and students are encouraged to take notes.

Lecture slides are available in advance and some lectures are recorded giving you an opportunity to review lectures at a later date for revision.

Lecturers are contactable by email and our archaeology staff will have dedicated office hours should you want to visit them to clarify or expand on a topic discussed in a lecture.

## Archaeology tutorials

Many courses have tutorials in addition to lectures. Tutorials are led by lecturers/professors and PhD students and are much smaller than lectures with 10-20 students per tutorial. Tutorials often support the topics addressed during the lecture by giving you an opportunity to explore them in greater detail and in a more interactive way, typically with discussion with the tutor around a specific text, archaeological artefact, or image (e.g. excavation plan of a site); key concepts and ideas are discussed between students and with the tutor; it is also a chance for students to ask questions about specific aspects of the lecture.

## Archaeology practicals

Similarly, practicals are tutorials but with the teaching focused more on practical skills. This usually happens in teaching classes (e.g. studying and recording artefacts such as prehistoric stone tools or pottery), in labs (e.g. 3D modelling, computer graphics, human osteology), but some practicals are done in the open air to learn how to use survey equipment (e.g. GPS).

## Archaeology seminars

Seminars take place in third and fourth year and are similar to tutorials in many ways but instead of focusing on a lecture, students discuss publications (typically an article in a peer-reviewed journal focusing on a theory or a major discovery).

## Archaeology fieldwork

During the summer vacation between your first and second year you will be required to undertake three weeks of approved archaeological fieldwork in the UK or abroad led by our staff or by other archaeologists. Students are encouraged to take the Archaeological Fieldwork course option in fourth year which requires a total of 10 weeks additional field experience. Some funds are available to assist with travel and subsistence.

## Your course materials

All students enrolled on a course will be given access to LEARN, the primary Virtual Learning Environment at the University of Edinburgh. LEARN is where you will gain access to all of your courses, course materials, assignments, grades, feedback, and much more.

## Coursework and exams

Most courses are assessed through a combination of coursework (essays, reports, small work on data or imaging; which are submitting during the teaching period) and exams (after each teaching period, in December and April/May).

In a typical course, students have to submit two pieces of coursework at two different dates in the semester. Staff aim to return feedback on the first coursework before the second is required. Feedback on coursework will be available on LEARN.

Exams are normally 2 hours and students are given a choice of questions to answer. Essays and questions involve some discussion: students have to demonstrate they can outline the main evidence relevant to a topic or a problem, and assess the different ways to interpret them.

## Presentations

Some courses require students to give presentations. Presentations allow you to build on your oral/presentation skills and may or may not be assessed.

## Sample timetable

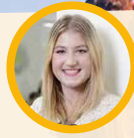
The following is a sample Year 1 timetable for semester 1 of a student studying MA (Hons) Archaeology in 2018/19. The student has chosen Medieval Worlds and The Roman World 1A as outside courses. Please note that your timetable may be different.

	9:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00
Mon		Medieval Worlds Lecture				The Roman World 1A Lecture	Archaeology 1A Lecture			
Tue			Office hour with Personal Tutor	Archaeology 1A Tutorial	ArchPALS session	The Roman World 1A Lecture	Archaeology 1A Lecture			ArchSoc Seminar Series
Wed		Medieval Worlds Lecture		The Roman World 1A Tutorial						
Thur				Medieval Worlds Tutorial		The Roman World 1A Lecture				Archaeology seminar series
Fri										

# Want the inside scoop?

Read what real students have to say

**Emily Johnston** is a recent MA (Hons) Archaeology graduate.



## Why did you choose to study your programme at the University of Edinburgh?

I always knew that I wanted to study archaeology, and the University of Edinburgh was my first choice because it offers many different modules so that I could get a wide knowledge and understanding of archaeology. Edinburgh is also a great place to be situated for archaeology, with the National Museum of Scotland and numerous other museums a short walk from central campus as well as many commercial archaeology firms being located here too.

## What aspects of student life did you enjoy the most and why?

I enjoyed the freedom of getting to pick and choose what I did with my timetable. University requires a lot of independent work and time planning, but also has so many extra-curricular activities that make the week more fun. I enjoyed being able to attend lecture series, volunteering and taking part in societies, where I got to meet like-minded people and relax.

## What did you find most challenging about your programme?

I often found the most challenging thing was staying on top of the weekly readings or assignments. However, having the option to choose modules that I found the most interesting has helped this a lot, and I loved my degree programme because of the choices on offer. I looked forward to going to class and wanted to do the associated readings, which makes time management and deadlines a lot easier.

## How did your programme equip you for your future career?

I plan to continue within the field of archaeology, and throughout my degree I have been able to gain practical experience within different areas of archaeology - such as fieldwork on departmental excavations and collection based experience within the department's teaching collection. These have helped me discover what areas I want to pursue in the future, and helped to strengthen my CV so that I am confident applying for the jobs I want.

**Savannah Tudlong** is an MA (Hons) Archaeology and Social Anthropology student from Germany.



## What was it that drew you to live and study in Edinburgh?

I chose the University of Edinburgh because it is one of the top universities in the world, and because its archaeology and anthropology programmes really spoke to my interests.

## Why did you choose to study your programme at the University of Edinburgh?

The archaeology programme at Edinburgh allows for incredible diversity in specializations and study - in my case, I can combine ethnographic studies of contemporary societies, via anthropology, with archaeological theory and its inclusive perspectives on human history in one degree programme, but there are also a lot of other options that encourage you to explore your interests.

## What aspects of student life do you enjoy the most and why?

Student societies are a great way to meet fellow students, staff, and enthusiasts, because of the friendly atmosphere and quality lectures.

## What do you find most challenging about your programme?

I think essay writing is one of the more challenging aspects of my programme, because of the amount of independent research required to do well; however, I also find it's one of the more rewarding aspects of the degree programme, because it [coursework] gives you the opportunity to delve into the theoretical, controversial, and often surprising aspects of a subject that you might otherwise never have considered.

## Contact us

For further information about studying Archaeology at Edinburgh, email: [HCA-prospective-UG@ed.ac.uk](mailto:HCA-prospective-UG@ed.ac.uk)

For further information about admissions, email: [CAHSS.UGAdmissions@ed.ac.uk](mailto:CAHSS.UGAdmissions@ed.ac.uk)

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This document is available in alternative formats upon request such as large print, please email [HCA-prospective-UG@ed.ac.uk](mailto:HCA-prospective-UG@ed.ac.uk)



We have made every effort to ensure the accuracy of the information in this leaflet before going to print. However please check online for the most up-to-date information: [www.ed.ac.uk/hca/archaeology](http://www.ed.ac.uk/hca/archaeology)

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