



THE UNIVERSITY
of EDINBURGH

Introduction to The School of GeoSciences



Visit:
<https://geosciences.ed.ac.uk/>

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extraordinary futures await

The University of Edinburgh

Influencing the world since 1583



34th

in the World

QS Rankings 2026



29th

in the World

Times Higher Education Rankings 2026



4th

in the UK Research Power

Times Higher Education – REF 2021



4th

in the World for sustainability

QS Rankings 2026



Employability

Top 10 UK
Top 50 World

QS Rankings 2022



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Global outlook

We have over 300 partnerships with higher education institutions worldwide to collaborate on research, teaching and innovative projects. We have a further 190 global partners who we work with for student exchanges and mobility opportunities.

Some of our key strategic partners and networks include:

Lund University	University of Calgary
Stockholm University	University of Iceland
UNA Europa	University of Leuven
Universidad de Cantabria	University of Sydney
Universiteit van Amsterdam	Université Grenoble Alpes



18th

Most international

Times Higher Education 2025



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The University and the City

KEY

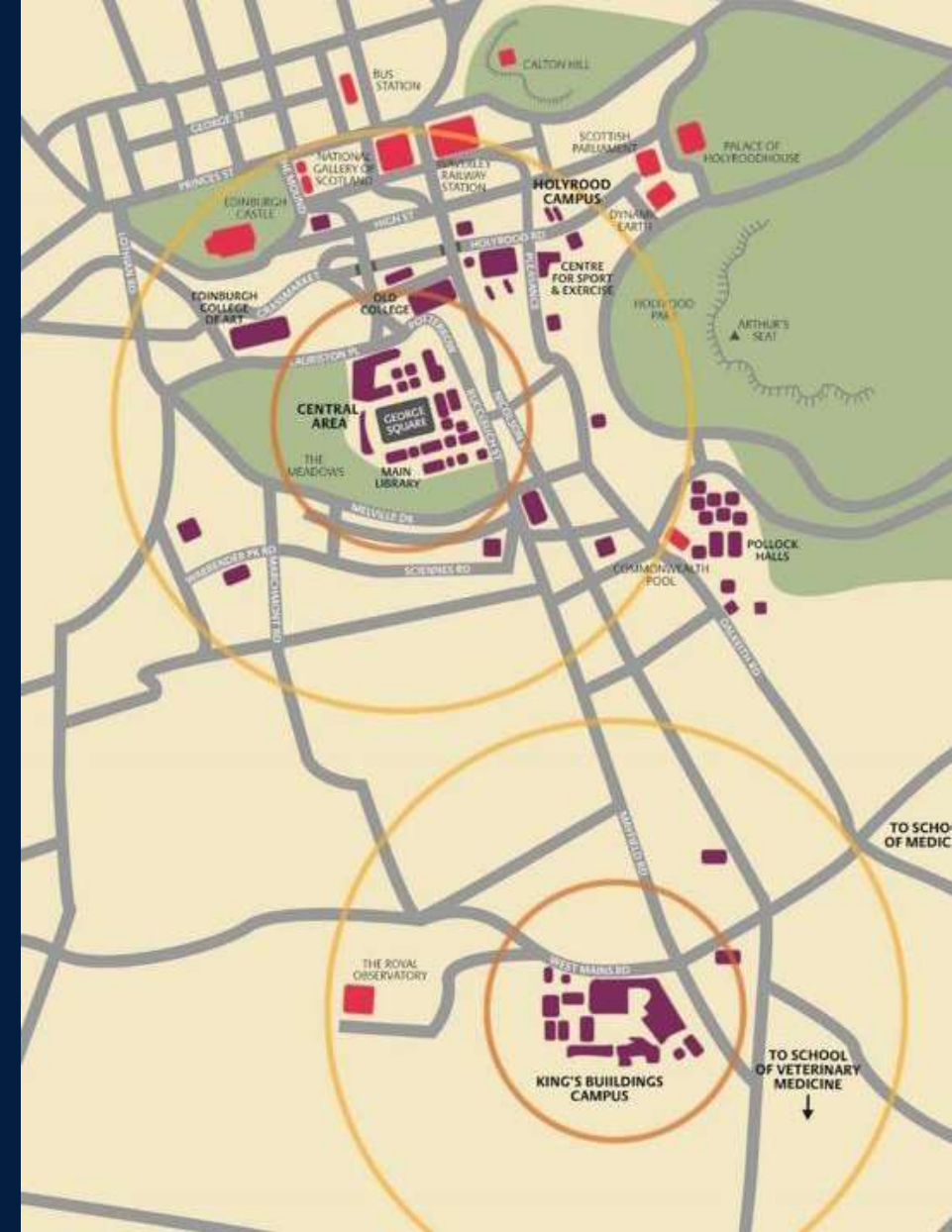
 = University buildings

 = City landmarks

 = Park spaces

 5 minute walk

 15 minute walk



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The School of GeoSciences



The School of GeoSciences

- One of the **largest and diverse groupings** of geographers and geoscientists in the UK
- Research-led teaching tackling **global challenges**:
 - Climate change, sustainability, natural hazards, ecology, society
- Organised across 3 research institutes, 2 centres and 15 research groups



The School of
GeoSciences
<https://edin.ac/4csmgxW>



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Foundational figure

■ **James Hutton (1726 – 1797)**

Geologist, chemist, naturalist, alumnus

- Known as “Father of Modern Geology”
- Developed the concept of deep time and uniformitarianism
- His work underpins how we understand Earth processes today



The School of GeoSciences

- A world-class reputation
- Consistently ranked in the **UK's top 10 universities** in geosciences-related subjects

Subject	UK Ranking
Natural Sciences	4
Earth and Marine Sciences	7
Environmental Sciences	7
Geography	9
Geology	7
Geophysics	7

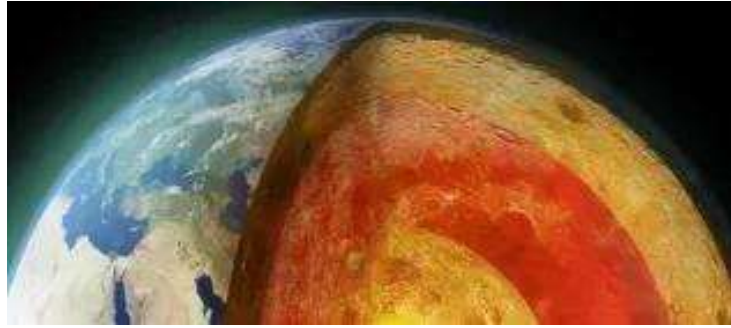
QS World University Rankings 2026 by Subject



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Undergraduate degrees



Earth Sciences and Environment

BSc / MEarthSci Earth Sciences

BSc / MEarthSci Earth Sciences and Physical Geography

BSc Environmental Geoscience

BSc Geophysics



Ecological and Environmental Sciences

BSc Ecological and Environmental Sciences

BSc Ecological and Environmental Sciences with Management



Geography

BSc Geography

MA Geography



Undergraduate Degrees
<https://edin.ac/4tz9KTa>



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Postgraduate taught degrees



Environment and Society

MSc Environment, Culture and Society

MSc Environment and Development

MSc Environmental Sustainability

MSc Marine Systems and Policies

MSc Energy, Society and Sustainability



Collaborative Programmes with Scotland's Rural College



MSc Ecological Economics

MSc Food Security

MSc Environmental Protection and Management



Energy and Climate

MSc Climate Change Management

MSc Climate Change Management (Online Learning) ✦

MSc GeoEnergy

✦ Online programme



Geographical Information Science and Earth Observation

MSc Geographical Information Science and Earth Observation



Postgraduate Taught Degrees
<https://edin.ac/4c8aB69>



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Research masters and PhD programmes



Masters by Research (MScR)

MScR Palaeontology and Geobiology

MScR GeoSciences Individual Project

MScR GeoSciences Individual Project (Taught Pathway)



Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

Atmospheric and Environmental Sciences (PhD)

Geology and Geophysics (PhD)

Human Geography and Environmental Sciences (PhD)



E5 Doctoral Training Partnership

Funded by the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC), E5 equips the next generation of environmental leaders to tackle the planet's most pressing challenges.



Postgraduate Research
<https://edin.ac/4tvmt99>



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What our students think

"Studying at the University of Edinburgh has given me a global outlook on environmental issues. The programme is both academically rigorous and practical. I have gained strong analytical and research skills. As an international student from India, I value learning alongside people from different backgrounds. This experience has prepared me for a future career in sustainability."

Saumya

India

4th year BSc (Hons) Ecological and Environmental Sciences student



Alumni testimonials
<https://edin.ac/3PQbg4N>



89%

of graduates agree that activity is meaningful

2022/23 Graduate Outcomes Survey
School of GeoSciences

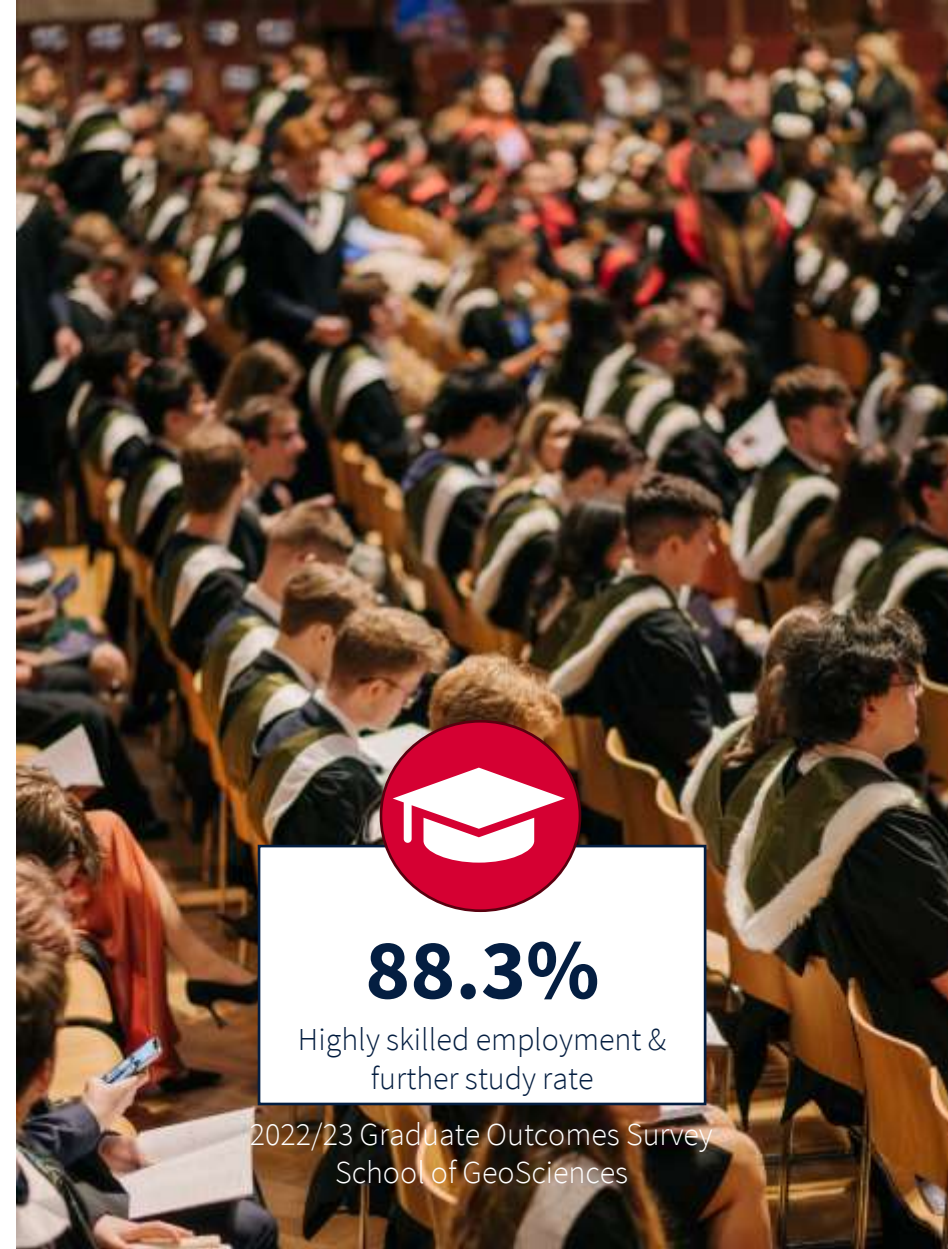


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Employers value our graduates

- One of the top universities **targeted for recruitment**
- Employers from all sectors regard Edinburgh as an excellent training ground for high-flyers
- Graduates are valued for their intellectual ability, high-level attributes developed while studying here
- Sustainability Careers Fair, industry mixers
- Award winning Careers Service to help students fulfil their career ambition



88.3%

Highly skilled employment &
further study rate

2022/23 Graduate Outcomes Survey
School of GeoSciences



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Notable research

- Helped to prove human-caused greenhouse gasses are warming our planet, which underpinned the **Paris Agreement**
- Contributed to a **global UNESCO report warning** of unprecedented glacier loss
- Played a key role in the launch of **Europe's first CO₂ monitoring satellite** - monitoring levels across the world's cities and urban areas
- Developed **AI-powered earthquake forecasting tools**
- Achieved nationwide impact in **alcohol and tobacco policy** by addressing harmful effects on health and underlying socio-economic inequalities
- One of our palaeontologists was Chief Science Advisor for **Jurassic World franchise** & developed AI-driven app for dinosaur footprint analysis



Sustainability

- **#2 in UK, #4 in world**

QS World University Rankings: Sustainability 2026

- Recognises our leadership in creating a more sustainable world through research, teaching, partnerships and operations
- Our degree programmes align with many of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals



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Social responsibility at the University

- Driving action on zero carbon and climate goals in Edinburgh, Scotland, and the UK
- Home to leading centres including the Edinburgh Climate Change Institute (ECCI) and the Centre for Sustainable Forests and Landscapes
- Teaching, research, and innovation **shaped by the UN Sustainable Development Goals**
- First UK university to create a dedicated Department of Social Responsibility and Sustainability



Research challenges

- **Climate and Earth system understanding** (past, present, future)
- **Environmental change and sustainability**
- **Natural hazards and risk reduction**
- **Low-carbon energy and climate mitigation**
- **Sustainable resource use** (land, water, ecosystems)
- **Earth observation, data, and technology**
- **Oceans and ecosystems**
- **Social justice, inequality, health, and place**



Research Institutes

- Three Research Institutes
 - Manages a portfolio of funding and specialist facilities while creating and nurturing a community of research staff and students
 - Provide a forum for the development of ideas and collaboration, as well as an environment for training, development and mentoring of research students and early career researchers
- **Earth and Planetary Sciences**
- **Global Change**
- **Geography and the Lived Environment**



Research Institutes
<https://edin.ac/3OkZW00>



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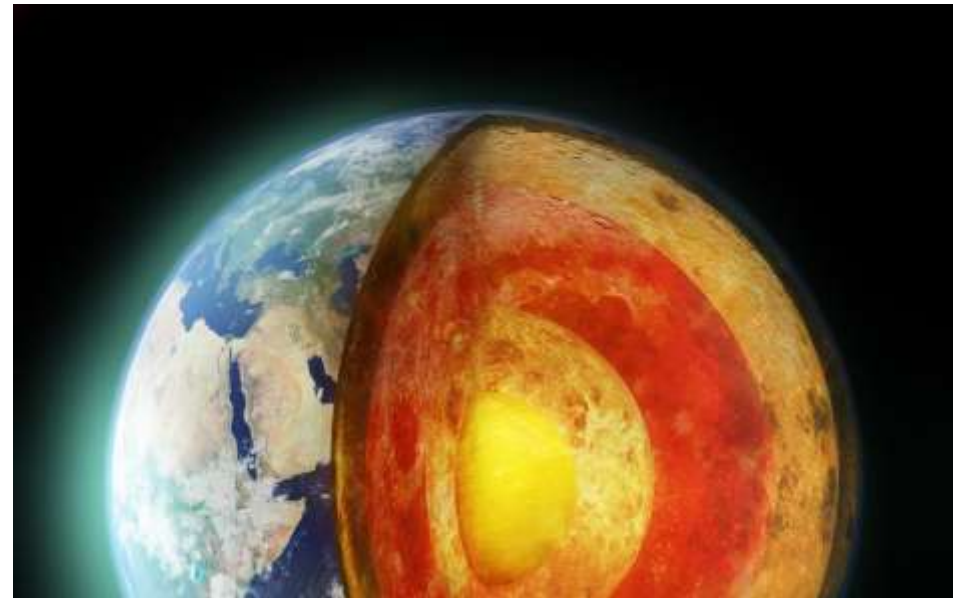
Earth and Planetary Sciences Institute

The Earth and Planetary Science Research Institute is united by a desire to **understand the physical processes, properties and history of the planet** on a fundamental level, which continue to shape the world in which we live.

Conducting world-class research and training for the next generation of Earth scientists to contribute solutions to the most pressing problems facing society. Dealing with topics such as the formation of the Earth billions of years ago to the development of hydrogen storage technologies, which will provide the clean energy sources for the future.

Earth science at the University of Edinburgh has an unmatched pedigree, stretching back to James Hutton founding modern geology in the 18th Century.

We continue to build on that legacy today, providing a stimulating and supportive environment where staff and students are challenged to extend our knowledge of the Earth.



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Global Change Institute

The Global Change Research Institute is a grouping of researchers whose overarching mission is to understand past, present and future changes in the Earth system, and to **inform mitigation strategies for future change**.

The Global Change Institute conducts research in understanding how the atmosphere, biosphere, cryosphere, land surface and oceans have interacted in the past, present, and in developing predictions of their future dynamics.

Engaging in interdisciplinary research focused on mitigating the many challenges posed by the **global climate emergency, environmental hazards, inequalities, conservation and sustainability**.

Research extends throughout the world, over the seven continents, across all the oceans, from the poles to the equator, and from the deep Earth to the upper atmosphere.

Researching and teaching across all GeoSciences disciplines including ecology, environmental science, geography, geology, geophysics and meteorology.



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Research Institute of Geography and the Lived Environment

The Geography and the Lived Environment Institute is comprised of geographers and environmental scientists who study the **social, cultural, political, economic and physical processes** that create and reshape the world.

Cutting-edge research that matters and makes a difference, intellectually and practically. As a collective, the Institute draws on and contributes to the arts, humanities, the social sciences and the environmental sciences.

Always striving for a critical and ethical approach to understanding the world, working with all communities to achieve positive transformations in people's lives.

Work with a range of theoretical approaches and research conducted globally.



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Research Groups

Our school is currently home to **15 research groups** that give space for researchers of similar interests to collaborate and work together.

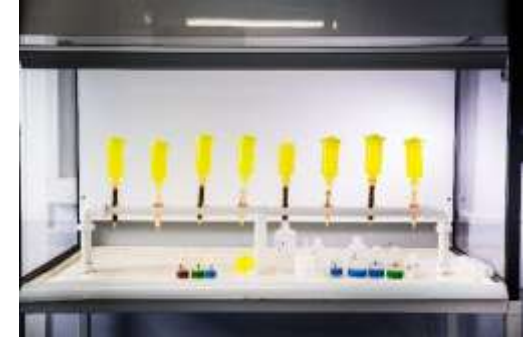
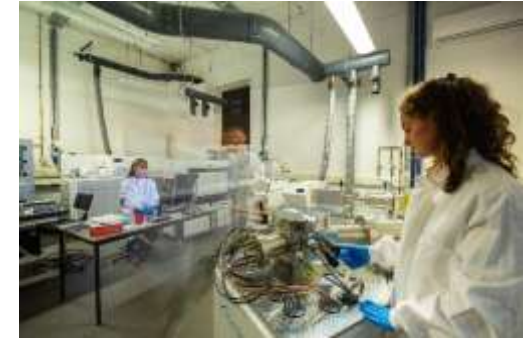
Due to the interdisciplinary nature of our research, academic staff may belong to one or more groups across our three institutes.

Atmospheric Chemistry and Climate of the Anthropocene	Cultural and Historical Geography	Geobiology and Geochemistry
Biosphere	Edinburgh Earth Observatory	Geographies of Social Justice
Crust to Core	Edinburgh Earth Resources	Land Surface Dynamics
Cryosphere	Edinburgh Geohazards	Oceans and Past Climate
	Environmental Change and Societal Transitions	Population, Health, and Place
		Space and Planetary Science



GeoSciences Research Facilities

- **Comprehensive facilities**
Laboratories, workshops and preparatory spaces for analysing rock, soil, water, plants and gases
- **Advanced analytical capabilities**
State-of-the-art world-leading technologies for geochemistry, isotopes, materials analysis and physical properties
- **Field & real-world data collection**
Extensive ground-based, airborne and marine equipment supporting global fieldwork
- **Digital & computational power**
GIS, climate modelling, geophysics and satellite data analysis supported by high-performance computing
- **Global reach**
Research conducted worldwide - from the Arctic and Antarctic to oceans and the atmosphere
- **Collaboration & access**
Facilities available for partnerships, national research infrastructure (NERC), and external users



Research Facilities
<https://edin.ac/47HrV0p>



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School of GeoSciences Research Centres

- Partnerships integral to our research ethos
- Established research links on every continent
- Host national and international knowledge exchange centres:
 - **Edinburgh Climate Change Institute (ECCI)**
 - **Centre for Sustainable Forests and Landscapes**
- Work with local, national and global partners in a range of sectors, including:
 - *education and research, business and commercial activity, communities, NGO's and the third sector, government and policy*



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Edinburgh Climate Change Institute

Our School hosts and manages the Edinburgh Climate Change Institute (ECCI). Established in 2010, it has consistently worked towards a **climate-neutral Scotland and wider world**.

- Scotland's leading knowledge exchange hub on climate change
- Provides decision-makers with the evidence base for future policy and funding priorities on climate change
- Leading 'research into policy channel' for the Scottish Government

Work with local, national and global partners in a range of sectors, including:

- education and research
- business and commercial activity
- communities, NGO's and the third sector
- government and policy



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Centre for Sustainable Forests and Landscapes

Healthy forests and landscapes underpin the well-being of our society physically, financially, and culturally. Aims to **accelerate interdisciplinary research, partnerships, teaching, and innovation in sustainable forests and landscapes** by building on the breadth of academic expertise and expanding capability.

A hub that brings together various sectors working on global issues of environment and development.

- Provides critical interdisciplinary knowledge to deliver sustainable landscape management and policy development
- Address challenge-led issues such as deforestation, responsible logging, conservation, carbon storage and the landscape's role in ensuring secure and sustainable food supplies



Centre for
Sustainable Forests
and Landscapes
<https://csfl.ed.ac.uk/>



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Space and satellites innovation programme

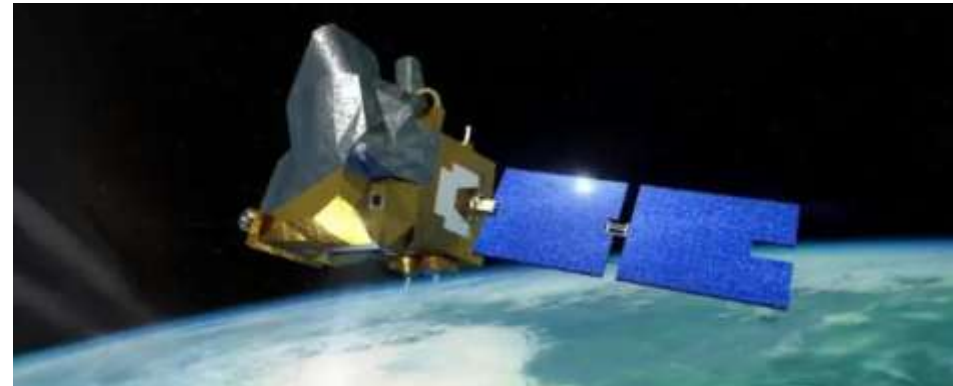
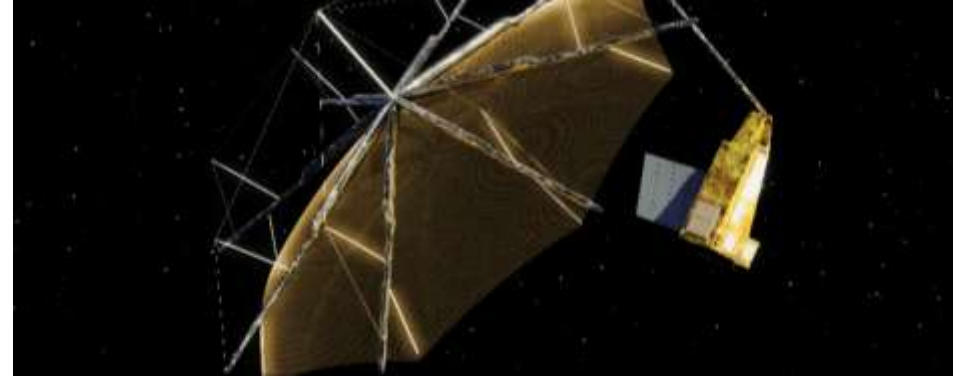
The University of Edinburgh is a Space University, with researchers and staff working in an extraordinary range of space-related activities:

- engineers are exploring the management of fire risk in space, and developing rocket fuel pods
- chemists are developing clean-burn rocket fuels
- geographers and geoscientists are monitoring environmental impacts, extreme weather and tackling climate change
- astronomers are tracking the skies for space debris

We even have teams developing deep-space probes, and others writing literature about space!

SENSE - Centre for Satellite Data in Environmental Science

- Our geoscientists are training the next generation scientists within SENSE - UK's Centre for Doctoral Training in Earth Observation. Our students are even developing their own satellite missions.



Working with business and industry

- We work with a variety of partners and in a number of ways to support business goals
- Our Business Development Team also helps academics form and sustain **industry-academic partnerships for innovation and collaborative research and development funding**



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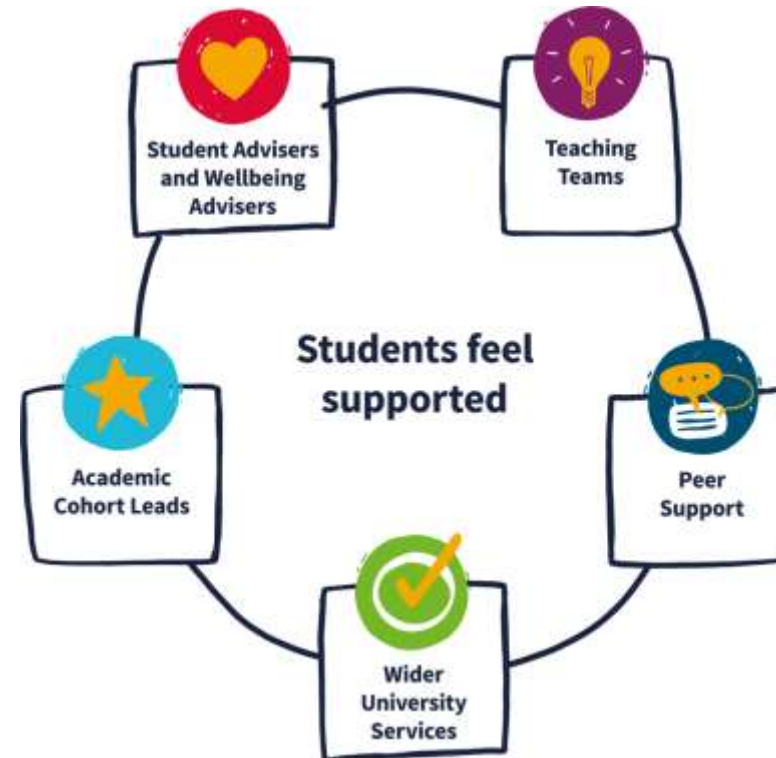
University accommodation

- University Accommodation is guaranteed for all new international students
- Catered & Self-Catered Options
- Centrally located, easy access to teaching facilities and city centre
- Inclusive bills, free Wi-Fi
- Access to Laundry Services
- ResLife team provide range of social, welfare and support services 24/7
- Payment Plan Options
- No Deposits or References Required
- Single rooms; some twin rooms available
- Shared or en-suite bathroom, kitchen, living area



Student support

- Student Advisers
- Cohort leads
- Wellbeing Advisors
- Teaching teams
- Peer support student-led groups
- University student services
 - Advice Place, Disability Service, Counselling Service, Chaplaincy, Student Life team, and many more



Student support
<https://edin.ac/304Zd0c>

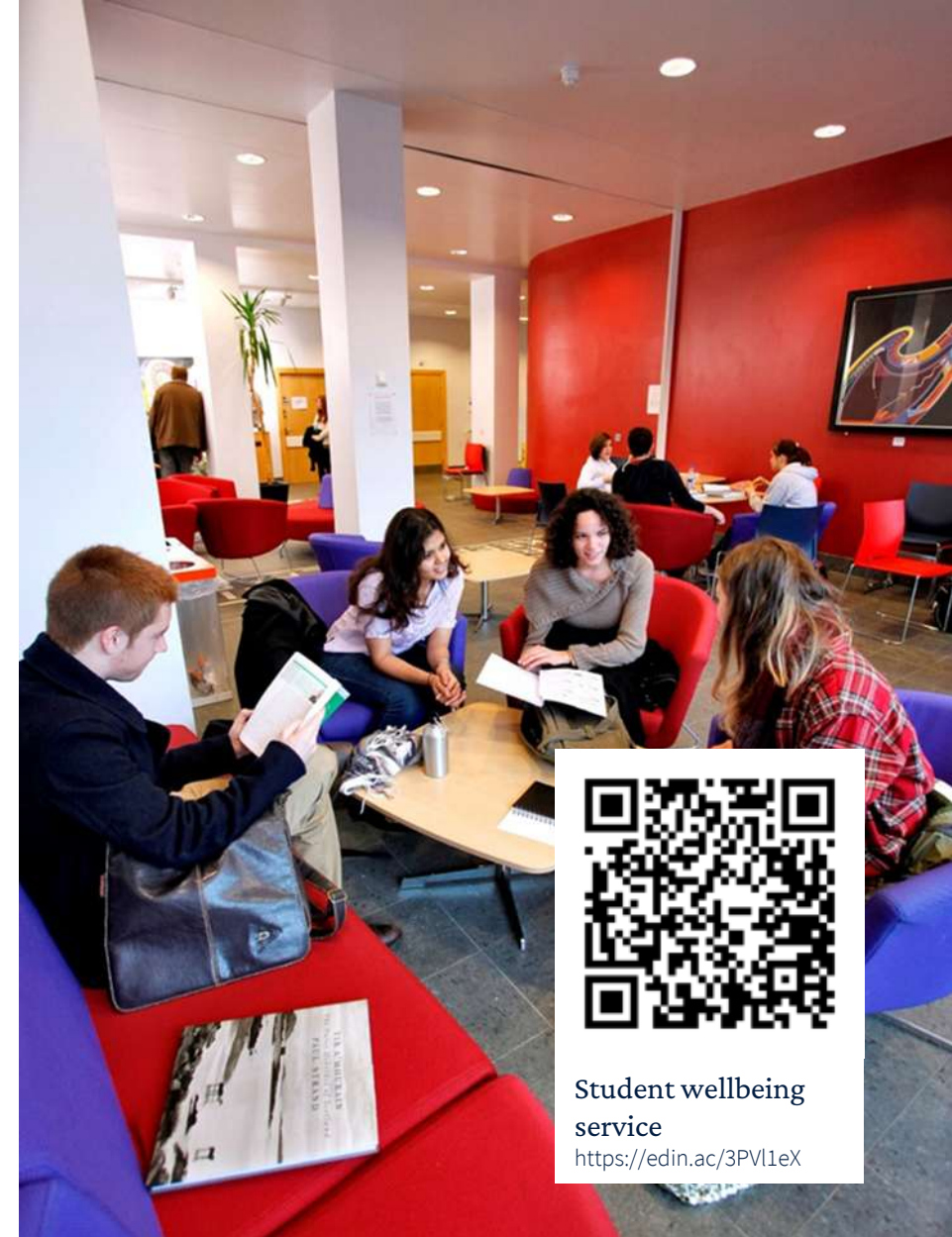


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Student wellbeing

- Residence Life
 - Promotes inclusive community and wellbeing in your accommodation
 - Provides opportunities to meet with others
- The Advice Place
 - Free professional advice and confidential information on everything and anything including money-related issues, housing and landlord issues, academic concerns, complaints and harassment
- Student Counselling
 - Supports the mental health of all students providing clinical services to promote holistic wellbeing and helps students achieve academic and personal goals



Sport & Exercise

- Access to facilities (gyms, pools, climbing walls, and classes) Membership or one-off payments required
- Sports clubs operated by Edinburgh University Sports Union
 - 70 clubs to choose from
 - Coaching programmes
 - All levels: Beginner → Elite



Sport & exercise
<https://edin.ac/3ZZgk9p>



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Student societies

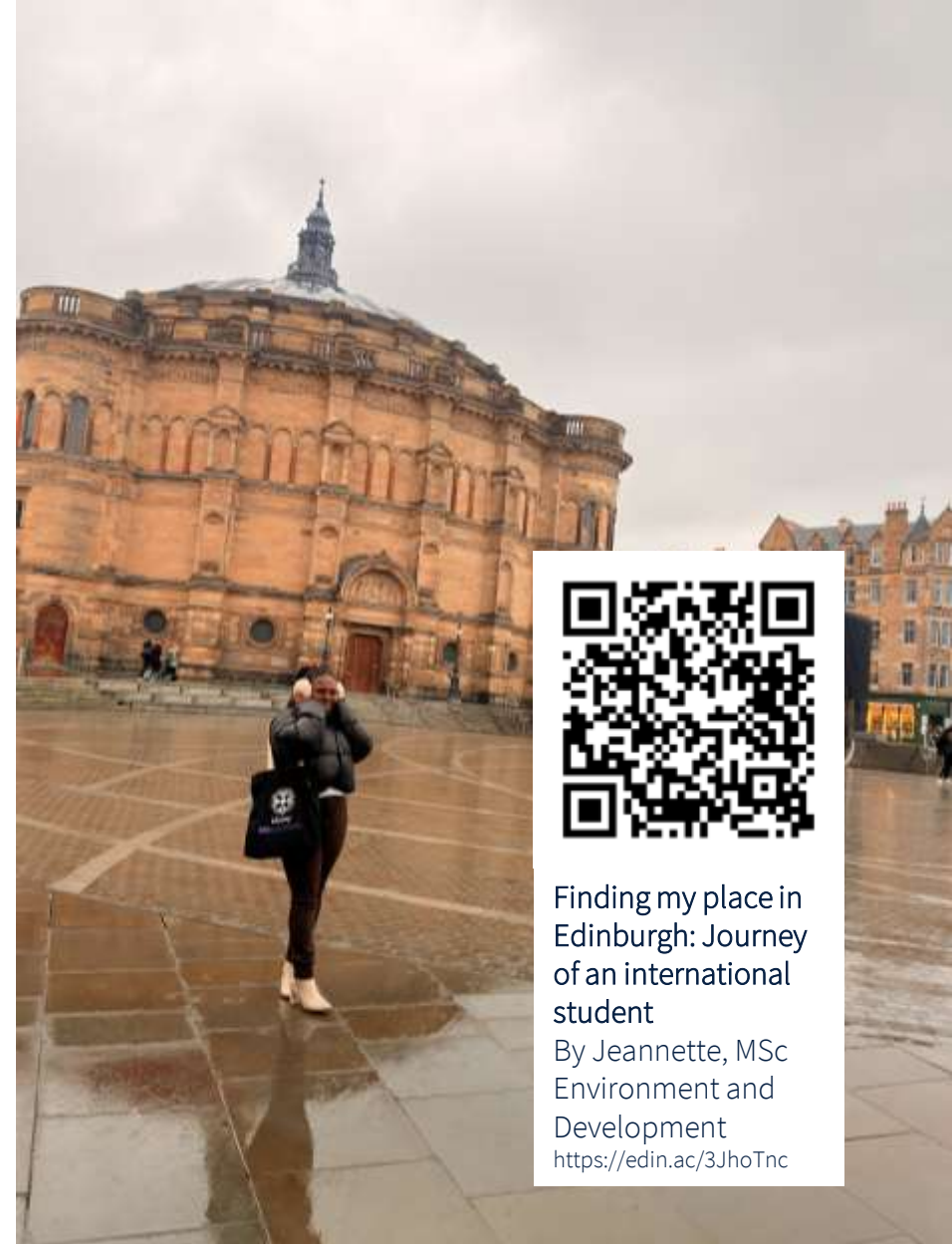
Student societies are an important part of University life.

- Some societies include:
 - Geographical Society
 - Community BEES
 - Geoscience Society
- Others focus on groups, activities or interests



Student experience

- Welcome Week
- Over 300 student societies
- 65 sports clubs, ★★★★★ rated sports facilities
- Student radio station, weekly newspaper and the UK's oldest student-run theatre company
- Two art galleries, three museums
- 4 student union buildings



Finding my place in
Edinburgh: Journey
of an international
student

By Jeannette, MSc
Environment and
Development
<https://edin.ac/3JhoTnc>



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The Edinburgh offer

- A top-ranked University with an established history
- World-leading research-led teaching
- Strong industry links and opportunities to build employability
- Broad range of optional courses
- Huge variety of societies and student-led projects
- Award winning Career Service
- Excellent graduate outcomes
- 6th best student city in Europe, 13th in world (QS Best Student Cities 2025)



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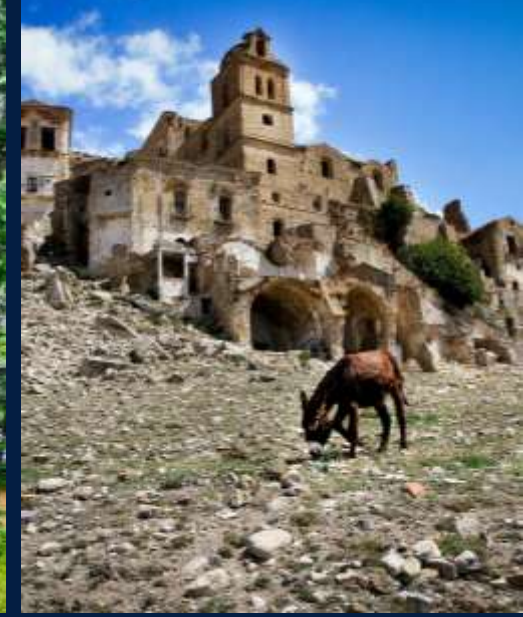
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Thank you



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