End of term travel

The Scottish and UK Governments recently announced that students planning to leave their term-time address to join another household over the Christmas break should be offered a voluntary COVID-19 test before they travel, even if they are not showing symptoms.

We have been working with the Scottish Government and the NHS to establish how we can offer this option to the small number of students who will be travelling this Christmas to spend the festive period with their family.

If you are a student returning home from Orkney, you should contact principal Eddie Abbott-Halpin if you require a test and we will make contact with the NHS locally to arrange this. Please bear in mind that you need to do so well in advance of the planned journey home to allow for results, further testing if required, and any period of isolation should your test be positive.

We urge all our students to regularly look at your College email accounts for any further updates.

Please also see the FAQs for college and university students returning home at the end of term webpage published on the Student Information Scotland website.

Our priority is to provide a safe learning environment for all our students and keeping our communities safe and we thank you for your co-operation.

Support

We remain very aware of the toll the current situation may be taking on your mental health and wellbeing. We have dedicated support staff on campus who can offer support and guidance on a wide range of topics including finances, disability support, learning support, together with mental health and wellbeing support and personal issues. Help and advice is available from our team, along with access to trained counsellors.

Students also have access to Togetherall, a digital mental health support service which is available online, 24/7, and is completely anonymous so you can express yourself freely and openly.

Further information is also available on the Student Information Scotland website.

Student Funding—Course Fees

A gentle reminder to those students who have not yet applied for full time or part time tuition fee financial support from SAAS to submit their applications as soon as possible.

www.saas.gov.uk

Should any students have concerns regarding course tuition fees please contact our student funding adviser on the following:

Tel: +44 (0)1856 569 202
nancy.chalmers@uhi.ac.uk
Mon-Thu (9am-5pm)

Please note it is the responsibility of the student to provide appropriate authorised documentary evidence as to how their course fees are being paid. Where a student is not to be supported by a third part (ie SAAS, employer, ITA etc.) and in the event that the third party does not accept liability for the payment, liability for the course fee will revert to the student.

What’s On

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<th>Event</th>
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<td>Virtual Quiz Night</td>
<td>Fridays</td>
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<td>“Bereft of all human help?”: Scottish widows of the Thirty Years’ War content - Dr Kathrin Zick-</td>
<td>02/12/2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>People and plants in Scotland: a contemporary view by Dr Veerle Van den Eynden</td>
<td>02/12/2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Living on the (knife) edge” (Prof Donna Heddle) - part of The Edge</td>
<td>10/12/2020</td>
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<td>Viking Boat Burials with Colleen Batey</td>
<td>11/12/2020</td>
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<td>The Changing Outer Hebrides</td>
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This week our NC administration students are hosting a virtual Book Week event over on Facebook. See the poster on the next page for more info and take part in their competitions for a chance to win some great prizes.
Children’s Book Week Event

What’s Your Story?

November 27th – December 18th, 2020

Writing & Baking Competitions
Inspire others with your treasured book or
Create a bake from your favourite story.

Awareness days
Find book suggestions and get informed about different awareness days this month.

Vouchers & Prizes to be won

Top 10 Book suggestions for Christmas
Check our Facebook group.

Visit us on Facebook at:

Business Studies Department, Orkney College UHI
Magnusson Prize Winner

Congratulations go to our Institute for Northern Studies student, Peter Church, who has been awarded this year’s Magnus Magnusson Essay Prize for his essay exploring Scandinavian place-names in Ireland.

Awarding body, Scottish Society for Northern Studies described that this year was characterised by the breadth and strength of the submissions received, which meant the judges faced a real challenge in selecting the best entry. However, the jury eventually named Peter Church the winner for his essay titled ‘Why are there very few Scandinavian place-names in Ireland?’. Peter’s essay will be published in an upcoming volume of *Northern Studies*, and he will be awarded the prize amount of £200.

Peter recently completed his MA in Viking Studies with UHI, for which he also received the *Institute of Northern Studies Prize for the Best Dissertation*. He is currently undertaking a PhD at the University of Exeter, examining the concept of evil in Gothic literature.

Justifying their final pick, the judging panel said of Peter’s essay that it was a ‘well-documented discussion of the reasons for the relative lack of Scandinavian place-names in Ireland’. The judges also commended two other entries by Gabrielle Barnby and Scott McCreadie. Peter Church is the twelfth winner of this prize, which is named in memory of Magnus Magnusson KBE, scholar and journalist of the northern world.

Viva Success

We are delighted to announce that Jasmijn Sybenga, a student at the University of the Highlands and Islands Archaeology Institute, has passed her PhD viva, with no corrections.

Jasmijn’s thesis, *Seeing the Wood for the Trees; a palaeoecological approach into the research of past natural woodland in the Scottish Highlands*, focused on three areas of peatland in Caithness and Sutherland.

There, she identified the types of woodland previously present against today’s woodland survey of Scotland, the causes of their demise and evidence of past woodland disturbances, such as those caused by people and climate.

The results were modelled against predicted climate change to identify what native woodland and tree types offer the best chance for establishment through re-afforestation of these areas – information that will have implications for future conservation strategies in the Highlands and potentially across Scotland.

Jasmijn started her PhD in February 2016 after finishing both undergraduate and graduate degrees at Leiden University in the Netherlands.
Wellbeing

Smoking Cessation
Ready to quit smoking? Quit Your Way Orkney is NHS Orkney’s free, confidential, non-judgemental stop smoking service that is open to all.

QYWO advisors provide a 12 week programme of behavioural change support, advice and information on stop smoking medications.

For more information contact 01856 888 084 or 0800 0356 344 or ORK.quityourway@nhs.scot

Free CBT
Wisegroup is currently offering free online CBT group sessions over the next few days, open to anyone over the age of 18.

CBT is a helpful tool which allows you to identify negative thoughts and learn how these affect your behaviour. It’s a highly practical form of therapy and can help you manage

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Loss, grief & bereavement
- Anger
- Domestic abuse

You can find the timetable here.

Self-help guide: Coronavirus (COVID-19)
Find out more about your symptoms, when you can use self-care, and what to do if your condition worsens and you need medical help using NHSInform’s Guide.

United to Prevent Suicide
United to Prevent Suicide is a new unifying identity for suicide prevention in Scotland, marking a refreshed approach to preventing suicide. We are on a mission to make this the most supportive country in the world.

We all still find it difficult to talk about suicide, but in changing that we can help to build a more supportive community and tackle stigma. We can improve our understanding of suicidal behaviour, and gain confidence to connect someone to the right support.

You can sign up and join the conversation here.

You can find a helpful guide to talking, listening and reducing stigma surrounding suicide here.

Togetherall
Did you know that students and staff at Orkney College UHI have 24/7 access to Togetherall, an anonymous online community where you can interact with a supportive community who understand what you’re going through. Anytime, anywhere. They also offer courses to help you better cope with and understand mental health, as well as resources to deepen your insight.

Take Care & Stay Safe
Orkney College UHI is closely following the Scottish Government's guidance. Keeping you and our staff safe and well is our top priority. It is important that you are aware of our measures to help us keep you safe.

Remember FACTS for a safer Scotland

- Face coverings
- Avoid crowded places
- Clean your hands regularly
- Two metre distance
- Self isolate and book a test if you have symptoms

Face coverings are required in communal areas and any other areas where you cannot maintain social distancing.

Use the hand sanitiser stations on campus, cleaning hands regularly.

You are required to wipe surfaces and equipment before leaving, please use the materials provided.

Bring water with you.

1m social distancing will apply throughout the campus, follow directional signs and stay 1m away from other people, avoiding crowded areas.

Please work with us to Stay Safe, Protect Others and Save Lives by following these measures at all times when on campus. Follow guidance and directions from staff and please alert a member of staff immediately if you have/develop any COVID-19 symptoms.