Heriot-Watt Computer Science: Staff and Student Expectations

What you can expect from staff

Teaching is one of the most important duties for staff. Although we have research and admin duties which need our attention too, we promise students:

- Commitment to helping you learn
- Politeness and respect
- A regular office hour slot for face to face meetings
- Written feedback and a mark for coursework within 20 working days after the hand-in time.
- A reply to general email questions within 5 working days
- A response from your mentor within 2 working days

If you would like to see your exam script to see where you went wrong, go along to the school office and ask for a form to request this. (It’ll take a bit of time to get the paper out of archives). You can also make an appointment with the lecturer to get further advice on how to improve your work.

Sometimes staff members are away on university business (for example at a research project meeting outside the UK), and won’t be able to respond as quickly as normal. If this happens, they will tell you about it (e.g. on an “out of office” message) and will advise you who to contact instead.

If you have a problem

For personal problems, talk to your mentor.

For problems about a course, talk to the lecturer first. If that doesn’t help, you can raise it with your class rep, the year supervisor, the Programme Director: Hans Wolfgang Loidl – CS/ MEng
Jenny Coady – IS
Steve Gill – Computer Systems
What staff can expect from students

Most importantly, we expect you to take charge of your own learning. This is your degree! To get the most of your time at university you need to be independent and proactive. We understand that you have other demands on your time, such as paid employment, but as full time students, your studies should come first.

- Commitment to your learning
- Politeness and respect
- Attendance at classes, unless they are specifically identified as voluntary. During semester it is your responsibility to be available on campus to attend classes and in particular class tests.
- Attention, courtesy and participation during classes
- Preparation and practice for classes as specified by the lecturers, such as reading or coding. For every hour of timetabled class, we expect you to spend 2-3 hours in private study.
- Practice, practice practice! In order to become a good programmer, you need to program regularly. If you are having trouble we will help, but the most useful thing you can do for yourself is devote time to programming.
- Basic organisation skills, such as coming to classes with pen and paper ready to take notes, and using a calendar so you don’t forget deadlines and appointments
- If you can’t make a scheduled meeting with a staff member, please notify them in advance rather than just not turning up
- Check your email and logging into Vision at least every other day
- A reply to email from staff within 5 working days (if it requires a reply!)
- We expect you to pay attention to the feedback we give you, and to attempt to improve your work based on that feedback.
- We encourage you to keep yourself informed about new and interesting developments in computer science above and beyond what you learn in the taught courses. The department is full of experts in a wide range of areas who would love to chat to keen students about their research. Seek them out!
- If you have a problem which is interfering with your studying, please discuss it with your mentor. We are here to help.

Never miss a university email again!

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You can get information about cancelled classes and changes to exam arrangements due to weather problems by following @MACSHW on twitter. You will also get an email to your university address.