



## **Undergraduate Students' Programme Handbook**

**School of Mathematical and Computer Sciences  
BSc Data Sciences**

**Edinburgh Campus**

**2021/2022**

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# PART A: SCHOOL INFORMATION

## A1. How to Use This Handbook

This handbook provides you with:

- An overview of your programme, its structure and its courses.
- Contact information for key staff in your programme, subject and academic School.
- Details of support and resources available to you as a Heriot-Watt student.

Take time to look through the information provided, but also use it for reference if you are unsure of anything, if you want to contact someone, or if you want to find out more about any aspect of your studies. This Handbook is not just for your first week or two at University, nor is it something to be read once and discarded, you will find it useful to refer back to its contents in the coming weeks and months. If you can't find the information you are looking for then you can ask your personal tutor.

All information is correct at the time the Handbook was produced.

## A2. Welcome and Introduction

### Welcome from the Principal and Vice Chancellor of Heriot-Watt University

I am delighted that you have chosen our unique and innovative University and have entrusted us with your education for the next few years. Heriot-Watt has been at the forefront of pioneering education and future thinking since 1821, and this year we celebrate the 200th anniversary of our founding in Scotland. Each year, whether it be in league tables or the testimonies of our brilliant students and our supportive staff, we continue to lead the way in world class education.

We understand that these times remain uncertain but let me reassure you that we are here to support you step confidently through your studies using our forward-thinking approach called Responsive Blended Learning (RBL). RBL combines active, supported online learning with contextually appropriate face-to-face learning opportunities, responding dynamically to the changing external context. This way of learning offers you the best of both worlds as it enables you to proceed with your studies alongside your peers, whatever pandemic-related restrictions are lifted or imposed in specific contexts. Now more than ever, we are thankful for our global OneWatt community of students, colleagues and alumni, who continue to actively take part in our supportive network, which spans five campuses in three countries.

Throughout your studies you will have the opportunity to thrive both personally and academically, and I would encourage you to take advantage of all that our campuses, student societies and global community has to offer you. As a University committed to preparing you for your future, we're delighted to offer opportunities for students to gain a global perspective, whether at a single campus or abroad. As travel restrictions are eased, our Go Global programme will continue to offer inter-campus transfers and exchanges across our campuses in Dubai, Scotland and Malaysia, allowing you to study, socialise or experience new cultures and places. We encourage you to connect with likeminded individuals across the globe and grasp every opportunity with both hands.

Our graduates are sought-after by global professions and industries all over the world. The very nature of a Heriot-Watt education is one that allows you to benefit from our research-informed approach, underpinned by our rich heritage and values. We're dedicated to providing you with the confidence and leadership skills to be a global citizen, and the expertise to one day become a leader in your chosen field or career. Together we will help shape tomorrow to deliver benefits for all of society.

We look forward to supporting you as you grow and become a successful graduate of Heriot-Watt University. On behalf of our global OneWatt community, I'd like to take this opportunity to say: welcome to the family.

*Professor Richard A. Williams OBE  
Principal and Vice-Chancellor*

## Welcome from Programme Director

I am delighted to welcome you as students on behalf of all staff in the School of Mathematical and Computer Sciences at Heriot-Watt University.

The School of Mathematical and Computer Sciences (MACS) consists of three departments: Department of Actuarial Mathematics and Statistics, Department of Mathematics and Department of Computer Science. All of them are leading departments in their respective fields and the BSc in Data Sciences programme is run jointly by all of them. Studying in this programme gives you a unique opportunity to make the best of everything that the three departments have to offer. You will be attending a selection of courses from all three departments and you are welcome to explore additional opportunities such as seminars, talks and optional courses in the School, depending on your individual specific interests.

Once again we are delighted to welcome you as our students, and I very much hope the academic year ahead will be successful, inspiring, and enjoyable for you.

Dr Mateusz Majka  
*Programme Director*

### A3. COVID-19 and Responsive Blended Learning

The COVID-19 pandemic means that we have adapted the way we deliver learning and teaching across our campuses to enable us to continue to offer an inspiring learning experience, whatever pandemic-related restrictions may be in place.

Our approach is called **Responsive Blended Learning (RBL)**.

- **Responsive** to the changing environments our students are living and learning in, to the wellbeing concerns of students and staff, and to the diversity of students' learning needs at this challenging time.
- **Blended** to combine the very best use of online and on-campus teaching, learning and student support. The exact balance of this blend of online and on-campus learning will flex depending on local conditions and individual student context.

Our Responsive Blended Learning approach means that you will be able to learn, interact and collaborate with your classmates, whether you are on campus or beginning your studies this year online. It will enable you to access materials, collaborate and learn alongside your class cohort, and build and strengthen friendships, wherever you begin your studies from. This means our response will flex with the local conditions, and with your particular circumstances. It will also allow us to safely facilitate the return of students and staff on to our campuses, when conditions allow. You can access RBL student resources [here](#).

As campuses reopen, there will be increasing opportunities for on-campus teaching activities. Labs, studios and maker-spaces will, when safe to do so, be opened to allow students to engage in practical activities. Tutorials and other class teaching will also resume on campus, in line with the safety guidance in your campus context. Whenever you can return, we will be here to welcome you and support you to adjust to campus life.

Details of the specific blend of on campus, online and independent study will be set out by your course teams, who will support you through your studies.

You can discuss any issues around your learning or your wellbeing with your personal tutor (see below) and with the University's professional services (see section B6 below).

### A4. Personal Tutors

Every student has a member of academic staff allocated to them as a personal tutor who will be a key source of advice, guidance and support during your time at Heriot-Watt. Your personal tutor is your first point of contact if you need advice on any issue, both academic and non-academic, and can refer you to other support services where

relevant for non-academic matters. Personal tutors provide a clear point of contact for you throughout your degree.

Your personal tutor will also arrange to meet with you during each semester to have a chat about how your studies are going. Your personal tutor will usually invite you to a meeting by sending an invitation to your HW email address. So please remember to check your e-mail regularly and be on the lookout for messages from your personal tutor.

**Note:** While social distancing is in operation, or if you are off campus, you can still arrange to meet your personal tutor remotely and contact them by email.

More details about personal tutoring can be found [here](#).

## A5. Key Information

### A5.1 Significant Dates in the Academic Year

Edinburgh Campus session dates for 2021/2022

Dates	Activity
6 September 2021 –10 September 2021	Welcome Week
13 September 2021 –3 December 2021	Semester 1 teaching
18-22 October 2021	Semester 1 Consolidation Week 6
6 December 2021 –17 December 2021	Semester 1 exams
20 December 2021 –9 January 2022	Semester 1 break
10 January 2022 –1 April 2022	Semester 2 teaching
14-18 February 2022	Semester 2 Consolidation Week 6
5 April 2022–23 April 2022	Semester 2 break
25 April 2022– 20 May 2022	Semester 2 exams
21 June 2022–24 June 2022 (Edinburgh) – to be confirmed	Graduations
4 August 2021–12 August 2022	Resit exams
15 November 2022–16 November 2022 – to be confirmed	Graduations

The University buildings – except for student halls of residences – will be closed on:

- 24 December 2021
- 27 December 2021
- 28 December 2021
- 29 December 2021
- 30 December 2021
- 31 December 2021
- 3 January 2022
- 4 January 2022
- 15 April 2022 (Good Friday)
- 18 April 2022 (Easter Monday)

Please refer to the University's websites <http://www.hw.ac.uk/> and <http://www.hw.ac.uk/edinburgh.htm> which contain detailed information about Heriot-Watt University and the Edinburgh Campus.

### Consolidation Week

The Consolidation Week is an opportunity to pause within the semester. It allows students to reflect on courses, catch-up with outstanding pieces of work and consolidate material that has been covered in the first half of semester to determine aspects of the course that may

need to be revisited, re-enforced, etc. There may also be the opportunities for students to engage in additional induction and wellbeing activities, careers sessions, etc.

The following outlines the main expectations for both staff and students:

- The Consolidation Week is not a vacation/break. It is intended to allow time for reflection and consolidation of learning. Support activities will still take place during this week.
- No new course material will to be covered during Consolidation Week.
- There are no assessment submissions for students during Consolidation Week.
- Other activities to support student learning such as, for example, workshops may be scheduled during Consolidation Week.
- During Consolidation Week you may be asked to work independently, to catch up with coursework/tasks, to undertake some revision and reflection activities, and so on.

## **A5.2 Administrative Support**

Students can access administrative support via the Student Service Centre located in the Hugh Nisbet Building. The Student Service Centre is open daily from 10am to 4pm.

Support can also be accessed via the Student Information Desk on the Student Self Service Portal (<http://www.hw.ac.uk/selfservice>) or by emailing [macs-student-support@hw.ac.uk](mailto:macs-student-support@hw.ac.uk).

The student helpline can be contacted on 0131 451 8899, Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm.

Updating personal information, such as a change of address, is done through the Student Self Service portal:

## **A6. Programme Overview**

Information concerning examination timetables, University regulations and other general information can be found on the Academic Registry website at [www.hw.ac.uk/registry](http://www.hw.ac.uk/registry). Further sources of information are the MACS web site at [www.macs.hw.ac.uk/students](http://www.macs.hw.ac.uk/students)

Students normally study 4 courses per semester giving a total of 8 courses per year. The assessment may be by formal examination, or by continuous assessment, or by a mixture of the two methods. Each Heriot-Watt course is regarded as requiring 150 hours of student effort and is worth 15 SCQF credits. Thus in each year of full-time study a student should accumulate 120 credits. For more information about courses offered in each year and about progression and degree requirements, see Part B.

### **A6.1. Canvas – the Heriot-Watt Virtual Learning Environment**

Heriot Watt University has a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) called Canvas. Each of your courses will have a site on Canvas where you will find all the information that you need to engage in your courses, including course materials, weekly activities, assessment information, etc. You may also be required to use Canvas to upload your work through Turnitin, a similarity detection programme which is in regular use by the Schools. Many courses will also include online assessments which are accessed and submitted through Canvas.

You can find the log-in to Canvas at [canvas.hw.ac.uk](http://canvas.hw.ac.uk) and your User ID is the same as your User ID for the University Desktop Service, and your password is the same as your password for the University e-mail system.

## **A6.2. Lectures, Tutorials, Computer Labs and Feedback**

Timetabled classes for courses will include lectures / online learning units, and tutorials / online interactive sessions, and, in some case, computer labs . In a face-to-face lecture you will usually need to make notes of the topics being taught and participate in interactive activities. Online learning units are accessed via Canvas and are structured activities based on a reading assignment and other self-study activities. Tutorials and online interactive sessions provide opportunities to get feedback on the work you are doing, to ask questions about the course material, and to get extra help with problems.

Feedback is provided in a variety of ways in order to help you to reflect on and to evaluate your progress and to assist you to take steps to improve your work before the next relevant assessment. You can expect feedback on assessed coursework within three teaching weeks of the coursework submission deadline.

If you have problems after working through your course notes and attempting the tutorial questions or computer lab exercises, please ask for help: all lecturers can be contacted for help and advice (see course web pages on Canvas for contact details and for any scheduled office hours).

## **A6.3. Engagement with Courses**

Please contact your Personal Tutor or Year Co-ordinator as soon as possible if there are problems that affect your attendance or your ability to study. If there are things that we or the University services can do to help then we will try our best to do that.

In order to satisfy the programme learning outcomes in each course, a satisfactory record of engagement with each course is required. This includes attending, physically or virtually, all scheduled course learning sessions, and handing in coursework by the stipulated dates. Students who, in the opinion of the Head of Department, fail to satisfy these requirements without good cause for any of the courses for which they are registered may, after due warning, be disallowed from presenting themselves for examination in those courses. In this case they will be deemed to have failed those courses. Please get in touch long before things get to that stage!

- Students are responsible for finding out where and when their classes, assessments, exams, resit exams etc. take place and for making the necessary arrangements to attend them.
- For students with medical and similar problems which cause them to miss face-to-face or online classes for periods of incapacity of greater than 4 days or if the absence occurs during an examination or other assessment students should fill in an online Mitigating Circumstances form and have supporting evidence such as a medical certificate (see Section A8 below for more details of what constitutes Mitigating Circumstances.) The Mitigating Circumstances Forms and processes can be found at <https://www.hw.ac.uk/uk/students/studies/examinations/mitigating-circumstances.htm>

## **A6.4. Teaching, Revision and Exam Weeks**

The academic year consists of 30 weeks, divided into 2 semesters. In Semester 1 there will normally be 12 weeks of teaching (including a Consolidation Week in week 6, and revision time at the end) followed by a 2-week exam session. In Semester 2 there will be 12 weeks of teaching (including a Consolidation Week in week 6, and revision time at the end), followed by a 3-week break and then a 4-week exam session. Exams for 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year courses are usually in the first part of this exam period and those for 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year are in the later part.

Some courses will be assessed entirely by coursework, without a formal examination.

The University Registry is responsible for the scheduling and organisation of examinations: see [www.hw.ac.uk/students/studies/examinations.htm](http://www.hw.ac.uk/students/studies/examinations.htm)

## **A6.5. Examinations and other assessments**

It is the student's responsibility to check all relevant examination timetables (including resits) on the Registry webpage <https://www.hw.ac.uk/services/academic-registry.htm>.

Should you be required to resit any exams, you **must** be available to take them. Therefore **do not book holidays or take on any other commitments during the resit diet**. Students who are taking face-to-face exams are normally expected to take the examination at the campus at which they are studying. Resits can only be taken at an overseas location in exceptional circumstances.

Any basic scientific calculator **other than** graphics calculators, programmable calculators, or those with text storage or retrievable facilities may be used in examinations. (Calculators are not provided.). Unless there are special circumstances, students are **not** allowed to use translation dictionaries in examinations.

Students are **not** allowed to have mobile phones or other communication devices on or about their persons during face to face examinations. Phones may be left at the front of the examination room but they must be switched off.

**Cheating in an exam or other assessed work is considered to be a very serious offence.**

Students should be aware that taking unauthorised material into an exam room (even if you don't use it), is considered to be an attempt to cheat. **Do not take any material into the exam hall with you – put it in your bag or in the bin.**

If a student is found cheating in an exam the Student Discipline policy will apply – see <https://www.hw.ac.uk/students/doc/discguidelines.pdf>.

### **Coursework and continuous assessment**

As well as end of semester examinations, most courses on the AMS degree programmes involve some element of coursework or continuous assessment such as midterm tests. Students will be informed on the course Canvas site of the important dates for tests and project submission and must ensure that they attend / submit at these times. These dates are fixed and cannot be altered for individual students.

If you are unexpectedly unable to attend an assessment or submit a piece of coursework due to circumstances beyond your control you should contact the course lecturer and your personal tutor as soon as possible, as well as submit an application for consideration of Mitigating Circumstances (see Section A9 for more detail).

### **Submission of Coursework Policy**

The University recognises that, on occasion, students may be unable to submit coursework and dissertations by the submission date. As such, the University has agreed a policy which states:

- No individual extensions are permitted under any circumstances (unless course coordinators decide to give an extension to an entire class).
- Standard 30% deduction from the mark awarded (maximum of five working days);

In the case where you submit coursework up to five working days late and you have valid mitigating circumstances, the mitigating circumstances policy will apply and appropriate mitigation will be applied.

Formative feedback will be provided on all coursework submitted up to five working days late. Any coursework submitted after five working days of the set submission date shall be automatically awarded a no grade with no formative feedback provided.

There will be no extensions granted to coursework (this includes undergraduate and postgraduate taught dissertations).

A link to the policy can be found here:

<https://www.hw.ac.uk/services/docs/learning-teaching/policies/submissionofcoursework-policy.pdf>.

## **Plagiarism, Collusion and Cheating**

Cheating in examinations and coursework, plagiarism (i.e., the presentation of another person's ideas or work as one's own), and collusion (i.e., the presentation of work produced collectively as individual effort), are very serious offences and are dealt with severely. They carry a range of penalties up to and including expulsion from the University. Students are responsible for familiarising themselves with the University policy on these matters.

The University website contains detailed explanation of what is meant by plagiarism with examples and consequences, see <https://www.hw.ac.uk/students/studies/examinations/plagiarism.htm> as well as Appendix A of this Guide, and Regulations 9 and 50 on the Registry's website <http://www1.hw.ac.uk/ordinances>.

Your course leader will always be very clear about the extent to which you can collaborate and share ideas with your classmates. It is never acceptable to share your electronic files, your reports (as hard copy or in electronic form), or your computer code with anyone else.

### **A6.6. Course Experience Survey**

At the end of each course you will be asked to complete a Course Experience Survey. Your views and feedback are important to your lecturers and to the School. The information gathered from these evaluations is used by your lecturers to continue to enhance the courses that they teach. The information is also analysed by the department and the School and contributes to the annual review of your programme. Please be sure to provide course feedback whenever it is sought.

### **A6.7. Student-Staff Liaison Committee**

The Staff-Student Liaison Committee (SSLC) provides a forum for the discussion of various issues affecting undergraduate courses and provides valuable feedback to the Department. Typical issues raised include organisational problems encountered by students and or matters related to course content and delivery.

The Committee consists of the School Officer, the Year Co-ordinators, the President of the Students' Actuarial Society and two student representatives from each of the four undergraduate years. Student representatives are elected annually.

The Committee meets once or twice a semester and the minutes of its meetings are made available to all students.

## **A7. Communication**

### **How We Will Contact You**

When we contact you during term-time we will use your University e-mail address. In some circumstances, we will also use your term-time address. In emergencies we will use e-mail or telephone. Outside term time, we may continue to use your University e-mail address, and we may write to your home address. You must keep your contact addresses up to date and **check your University e-mail regularly**, otherwise you might miss important information

## Your Responsibilities

It is your responsibility to ensure that the University has the most up to date contact information.

Please inform the University of any changes to personal details, particularly term-time and home addresses, to ensure that we hold up-to-date records.

If you need to change your address, please login to Student Self Service (<http://www.hw.ac.uk/selfservice>).

If you require your name to be changed, please inform the Student Service Centre and provide the appropriate paperwork.

Please note that letters from the University are automatically sent to students' term addresses as recorded on the student record system, so it is particularly important to ensure address details are kept up to date.

## How to Contact Us

Information about the best way to contact your course lecturers are available on Canvas course pages.

More generally, the best way to contact staff is via email. You can use the University's People Finder to find email addresses for University staff: <https://www.hw.ac.uk/uk/about/contact/people-finder.htm>

Photographs of staff are also displayed outside EM.125 with their office room numbers.

## Approved University Communication Channels

To help enhance communication and collaboration with all students across our campuses, staff must use approved Heriot-Watt University internal channels / tools when sharing learning and teaching advice, information and guidance (e.g. official Heriot-Watt email and telephone, Skype for Business, MS Teams, and the Virtual Learning Environment).

Students should also communicate with academic and administrative staff via approved Heriot-Watt University internal channels (e.g. official Heriot-Watt email and telephone, Skype for Business, MS Teams, Collaborate Ultra and Canvas). Students must not use their personal social media profile (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter etc.) or personal channels / tools for any communications with students (e.g. personal mobile use for calls, text / WhatsApp, personal emails etc.).

Heriot-Watt University's official social media channels including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn are outward facing and used to showcase the University to external parties. Their use is aligned with our goals, for example, around enhancing research reputation and in connection with student recruitment.

## A8. Tell Us About Things That Impact on Your Studies

Every year a few students run into serious personal difficulties (e.g. family illness, accommodation, financial, etc.). As well as being generally supportive, your personal tutor can help in a number of practical ways. For example, if you are prevented from completing project work or sitting exams due to mitigating circumstances, your personal tutor can advise you about the Mitigating Circumstances process. However, you must notify your personal tutor as soon as possible if you are having difficulties. This is particularly important if the difficulty affects your sitting Level 9 or 10 honours examinations, as once taken there are no resits allowed for honours papers.

If you have any mitigating circumstances that could adversely affect your assessment performance you should complete an online Mitigating Circumstances Application form and submit it, along with appropriate supporting evidence **as soon as possible**. Examiners can take illness into account *only* if valid medical evidence is supplied. We are also required to ask for documentary evidence of other circumstances. We may then be able to take this into account in decisions on examinations or other assessments, to discuss various options for advancing your studies, or simply to help put you in contact with appropriate University support specialists.

The online form and the policy document can be found at [www.hw.ac.uk/students/studies/examinations/mitigating-circumstances.htm](http://www.hw.ac.uk/students/studies/examinations/mitigating-circumstances.htm)

Events or circumstances that would normally be recognised as grounds for consideration of mitigating circumstances might include:

- Illness or accident affecting the student
- Bereavement – death of a close relative or significant other
- Significant adverse personal or family circumstances
- Other significant exceptional factors that are outside the student's control (e.g. Jury Service, although University assessments might be a reason for a student to be excused), or for which there is evidence of adverse effects.

Events or circumstances that would not normally be considered grounds for consideration of mitigating circumstances include:

- Holidays or other events that were planned or could reasonably have been expected
- Assessments that are scheduled close together or on the same day, or that clash due to incorrect registration by the student
- Misreading the timetable for examinations or otherwise misunderstanding the requirements for assessment
- Inadequate planning or time management
- Last-minute or careless travel arrangements
- Consequences of paid employment
- Exam stress or panic attacks not supported by medical evidence

Mitigating Circumstances information is handled in confidence, so do not be afraid to tell us something. Notification should be before the examination session concerned, and certainly no later than the Examiners' Meeting (usually at the end of the semester, or mid-August in the case of resits). It is particularly important for final-year students to present all information to the department before the final degree award meeting, since it takes time to reconsider a degree award decision after it is made (you have to make a formal appeal) and you will certainly miss the summer graduation.

Your personal tutor can also direct you to appropriate University support services (Chaplaincy, Medical Centre, Student Wellbeing Services or Student Union) for professional advice and help with a problem. Personal tutors are there to help; do not hesitate to contact yours if you need help.

In certain situations it may be in your best interests to suspend your studies temporarily. It sometimes helps to take time out to deal with issues that are stopping you studying effectively – this might be a health or personal issue – and return to University at an agreed date. A **Temporary Suspension of Studies (TSS)** is when a student stops studying at the university for an extended period of time (usually no longer than one academic year), and then returns to resume their studies.

For further information see

<https://www.hw.ac.uk/students/studies/leaving/temporary-suspension-studies.htm>.

If you are considering applying for a suspension of studies you should contact your personal

tutor or Year Co-ordinator to discuss this with them.

## **A9. Changes to Course or Programme Registration**

If you wish to change your course registration, you can do this [online](#) after you complete online enrolment up until the **end of the second week of the semester**.

Occasionally the online system may block a course change request. In such cases, please consult your personal tutor or Year Co-ordinator, and they will advise you about your options for make changes to your course registration.

If you would like to change to a different programme of study, you are advised to discuss the various options with your personal tutor or your Year Co-ordinator. Whether you will be able to change to a different programme will depend on many factors, so please have a discussion with your personal tutor or Year Co-ordinator as soon as possible if you are considering making changing to a different programme.

For further information about course and programme changes, please see <https://www.hw.ac.uk/uk/students/studies/record/change-course-programme.htm>

## **A10. Computing Facilities**

All students are issued with accounts on the University Desktop Service network. E-mail, word-processing, specialist mathematics and statistics packages, and spreadsheet facilities are available on the University Desktop Service network. Details of how to access the University Desktop Service and how to use e-mail are provided to new students. Help is also available via e-mail at [ISHelp@hw.ac.uk](mailto:ISHelp@hw.ac.uk).

Students are expected to use the computing facilities in an appropriate and considerate way. Abuse of the facilities is subject to various disciplinary measures, ranging from a ban on access to the facilities to, in extreme and flagrant cases, expulsion from the University. Examples of abuse include monopolising a terminal for non-academic related purposes, running excessively long or inappropriate print jobs, and displaying, circulating or printing offensive material on or from the Internet. Computer games and relay chat are specifically forbidden. More information regarding Heriot-Watt's I.T. facilities and regulations can be found at: <http://www.hw.ac.uk/is/>.

## **A11. Careers Service**

The Careers Service provides high quality careers guidance, education and information services to Heriot-Watt students and graduates. It delivers these through class based sessions, a dedicated web site [www.hw.ac.uk/students/careers.htm](http://www.hw.ac.uk/students/careers.htm), a well-equipped information centre, drop-in query sessions, and individual appointments. In addition to providing comprehensive information on all aspects of careers, from part-time work to job seeking in the graduate labour market, they also run practical sessions that include *Producing an Effective CV*, *Preparing for Interview* and *Practice Aptitude Tests*.

Lindsay Wilson ([L.Wilson@hw.ac.uk](mailto:L.Wilson@hw.ac.uk)) is the Careers Adviser with responsibility for MACS students in. You can find the Careers Service in the Hugh Nisbet Building, and can be contacted at [careers@hw.ac.uk](mailto:careers@hw.ac.uk) and at 0131 451 3396.

## **A12. Graduate Attributes**

As a student of Heriot-Watt you are part of a global community. You will meet new people, discover new interests, develop your life skills and enhance your employability and career prospects. The University will provide you with the opportunity to develop skills, qualities and academic abilities during your time as a student. These are known as the Four Heriot Watt Graduate Attributes: Specialist, Creative, Global and Professional,

These Graduate Attributes can help you shape your experiences while studying and to present your skills and qualities effectively to employers. For more information see <https://www.hw.ac.uk/services/docs/academic-registry/gradattributes-visual.pdf>.

## **Professional Development & Careers Advice**

Professional development planning (PDP) is incorporated in all four years of the AMS degrees. This is a structured process designed to help students reflect upon their own learning, performance and achievements. One of its main purposes is to support students in the planning of their professional, education and career development, keeping the University's Graduate Attributes in mind.

In addition to taking a PDP course in 1<sup>st</sup> year, students will periodically be asked to attend seminars on developing skills, given by, for example, prospective employers. In later years of your studies there are opportunities to develop presentation and group working skills. Students are encouraged to take every opportunity to help develop their own skills.

Career guidance is available through the University's Careers Advisory Service, which gives a number of presentations on topics related to careers. Students are encouraged to contact Lindsay Wilson ([L.Wilson@hw.ac.uk](mailto:L.Wilson@hw.ac.uk)) in the Careers Service for advice.

## **A13. Code of Practice**

### **What you can expect from MACS Staff**

Teaching is one of the most important duties for MACS staff. Although academic staff have research and administrative duties which also need our attention, we aim to provide:

- Commitment to helping you learn.
- Politeness and respect.
- Availability for meetings, either during scheduled office hours or at pre-arranged times.
- Timely feedback and marks for coursework.
- A prompt response from your personal tutor.
- A timely reply to general email questions.
- An opportunity to see your exam script to see where you went wrong, either at scheduled feedback sessions or by contacting the course leader.

Sometimes staff members are away on University business 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 or any other problem that is interfering with your studying, please discuss it with your personal tutor. We are here to help. You can also discuss any personal problems with the staff in the Student Support Office.

For problems about a course, talk to the lecturer first. If that doesn't help, you can raise the matter with your Class Rep. or the Year Co-ordinator.

### **What staff can expect from MACS 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 the University you need to be independent and proactive. We understand that you may have other demands on your time, but as full-time students, your studies should come first. In addition, we expect:

- Commitment to your learning.
- Politeness and respect, including switching off phones and other social media during classes.
- Attendance, physical or virtual, at all scheduled learning sessions and tests
- Preparation for classes as specified by your lecturers, such as studying lecture notes, working on tutorial questions and participating in online activities. For every hour of timetabled class, we expect you to spend 2-3 hours in private study.
- Persistence. Some topics and problems in mathematics are challenging and we expect you to make a sustained effort to master difficult topics. We are there to help you if you get stuck.
- Basic organisational skills, including coming to classes with pen and paper ready to take notes or with equipment for electronic note-taking, and using a calendar so that you don't forget deadlines and appointments.
- Attendance at any scheduled meeting with a staff member. If you can't make a scheduled meeting with a staff member, please notify them in advance rather than just not turning up.
- Checking your email daily and logging into CANVAS at least every other day.
- A timely reply to email from staff.
- Willingness to learn from feedback on tutorial work, projects and exams, and an attempt to improve your work based on that feedback.
- Finally, we encourage you to keep yourself informed about new and interesting developments in your discipline (beyond what you learn in your courses). The department is full of experts in a wide range of areas who are happy to chat with you about topics of current interest. Seek them out!

## PART B: PROGRAMME INFORMATION

### B1. Programme structure

The academic year is divided into two semesters. Each semester consists of 12 weeks teaching followed by an assessment period (2 weeks in Semester 1, and 4 weeks in Semester 2). Students must register for four courses each semester.

Programme structure and progression requirements can be found at the following link:  
<https://www.macs.hw.ac.uk/students/cs/ug-programmes/bsc-data-sciences/>

Each course has a five-character code; the first two characters indicate the department, the third is the level (0, 1 indicate Levels 10, 11 respectively). Usually, but not always, Level 7 courses are taken in the 1st year, Level 8 in the 2nd year and Level 9 and 10/11 courses in the 3rd and 4th years respectively.

A course is regarded as requiring 150 hours of student effort, and is worth 15 SCQF credits.

### B2. Course Assessment

Each course is awarded a grade in the range A-F: grade E is the minimum required for the award of credits, but at least a grade D is needed for progression to subsequent courses. Other grades are interpreted as follows:

A - excellent, B - very good, C – good, F - inadequate. (See University Regulations for details).

The minimum mark needed to gain a grade D is usually 40%. The correspondence between marks and other grades varies from course to course, but is approximately as follows: grade A, 70% or over; grade B, 60-69%; grade C, 50-59%; grade D, 40-49%.

#### Level 7 and 8 Courses

Course assessment is generally based on either coursework, an exam at the end of the semester, or a combination of both. Details for individual courses can be found in the relevant course description and on the course Canvas site. If you do not obtain a grade D (or higher) in a Level 7 or 8 course at the first attempt, you are entitled to one further attempt.

#### Level 9, 10 and 11 Courses

Assessment of Level 9, 10 and 11 courses is generally as for Level 7 and 8. However, in some cases, the exam for a first semester course may take place at the end of the second semester. Also, note that some pairs of courses are **synoptically linked**; that is, both courses are assigned the same grade, based on the average mark for the individual courses. Details about which pairs of course are synoptically linked are given in course Canvas sites.

## PART C: UNIVERSITY INFORMATION

### C1. Programme and Course Content

The content of our programmes and courses is reviewed annually to make sure it is up-to-date and relevant. Individual courses are occasionally updated or withdrawn. This is in response to discoveries through our world-leading research; funding changes; professional accreditation requirements; student or employer feedback; outcomes of reviews; and variations in staff or student numbers. In the event of changes the University will consult and inform students in good time and will take reasonable steps to minimise disruption.

### C2. Our Values

At Heriot-Watt, we have an established set of values that help us to nurture innovation and leadership and show our commitment to continuous development in all our activities. They are:

- **Belong** to a diverse, inclusive and international community working together across boundaries and cultures
- **Inspire** curiosity to learn and find solutions that transform lives
- **Collaborate** by working in partnership to shape the future whilst taking responsibility for our own actions
- **Celebrate** excellence and take pride in the achievements of our students, staff and alumni

Find out more about the [Heriot-Watt Values](#) and what they mean to us.

### C3. Student Partnership Agreement

Heriot Watt University and the Heriot Watt University Student Representative Bodies work in partnership to develop a Student Partnership Agreement (SPA) each year. The Agreement identifies the main, agreed priorities for working in partnership each academic year and outlines an associated action plan.

Heriot-Watt University has a long and proud tradition of student engagement in institutional governance and decision-making and the Student Partnership Agreement sets out our ambition to continue to work in partnership across all of our campus locations, with the aim of increasing engagement with the institution, enhancing the student experience and engendering a sense of belonging to the University community.

The Student Partnership Agreement is available [here](#).

### C4. University Regulations

Heriot-Watt has a detailed set of rules that govern how the University operates, these are the University's [Ordinances and Regulations](#). Ordinances are set by the Court, which is the University's governing body, outline how the University is governed. University regulations provide the framework for the University's academic work and the education of our students and they define the policies, procedures and support outlined in the **Quick Finder Guide to Heriot-Watt University** section of this Handbook.

### C5. Your Student Portal

The Student Portal brings together your services and relevant information in one place. Below is a summary of the services available to you via the portal:

- Office 365 suite: through single sign-on, all of your Office 365 services will be accessible through the Portal.
- Library: whether you want to search for books or view your loans & reservations, the Portal allows you to do this on your phone or desktop.
- Canvas: access your courses here, including announcements, tasks and assignments.
- Student Information: all university-level regulations and policies relating to your studies can be found on the Portal.
- Campus and School News: the Portal enables the University to promote events and experiences which will help you develop your skills.
- Personalised: You can hide, add and move tiles on your dashboard.

- AskHWU: You can find everything you need to help you navigate your time at HWU through the new AskHWU search tile. Ask questions of the University and enquire directly with members of staff to get information about ID cards, student finance, confirmation of studies letters, exams, enrolment, Careers, Wellbeing Services and much more.
- Appointments: book appointments with a range of different services (Student Wellbeing Services, Careers, Finance etc.) through your student portal.

You can access your student portal [here](#).

## **C6. Your Virtual Learning Environment**

For the academic year 2021-22, Heriot-Watt will have a new Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) called [Canvas](#). It is an engaging and student friendly system adopted in response to student and staff feedback. Canvas is a vital learning and communication tool for you and your lecturers, so make sure you log in and check Canvas every day. For further support see the [Canvas Student Guides](#).

## **C7. Quick Finder Guide to Heriot-Watt University**

The following provides a guide to the support, resources, procedures and more which are available to you during your studies. This section is arranged alphabetically under four thematic headings:

- **Learning and Teaching**

This covers issues related to your academic study.

- **Our Community**

As a Heriot-Watt student you are part of a community where we value and draw strength from our diversity, and from the range of different experiences which have brought us together. This section helps you to find out about events, activities and opportunities for you to meet new people and get to know other students.

- **Supporting Success**

This covers issues relating to student life in general and the support resources available to help you.

- **Developing Your Skills**

It's not just knowledge of your subject that you acquire as a student, you will develop a range of skills that will not only help you study, but also help in everyday life. You will also develop skills which will help you get a job and develop your career.

Clicking on the links below allows you to find relevant information on the student web pages. Please make sure that you check myHWU the Student Portal and the University web pages throughout the year for the most up-to-date information.

## Learning & Teaching

### [Academic Appeals](#)

An academic appeal is a formal request by a student for the review of a decision made by the University on the student's progression, assessment or academic award. There are [valid and invalid grounds](#) for an appeal. Appeals cannot be made on the basis of academic judgment (for example, thinking that your work deserves a higher grade). You are strongly advised to seek advice before starting an appeal, and to try and seek an informal resolution before making a formal appeal

### [Assessment](#)

Assessment is an essential part of learning at university. Make sure you are aware of the guidelines and regulations around University assessment.

### [Assessment Feedback](#)

Heriot-Watt University aims to support students in becoming confident, independent learners; feedback is a key part of the student learning experience, as it is designed to help students to learn and improve. It's also important to know [what to do with the feedback](#) when you receive it. Please also see this guide: [Making the Most of Assessment and Feedback: A Guide for Students](#)

### [Assessment Results](#)

Once your course results have been released, you will automatically be sent an email (to your Heriot-Watt email address) to inform you that new assessment results are available online to view/download via the [Student Self-Service](#). Guidance is available on the [results and the grading system](#) used by the University.

### [Changing Your Course](#)

If you wish to change your course you can do this [online](#) after you complete online enrolment up until the end of the second week of the semester. To swap a course you go to the 'Student menu' in self-service and select 'Course Swap'. There is further guidance online as you follow the process.

Learning, teaching and assessment will be delivered through a combination of online and face-to-face methods as part of the University's Responsive Blended Learning Approach. Online activities will be delivered through Canvas, the University's VLE. Prompt course registration will ensure that you are able to participate in all online activities.

### [Changing Your Programme](#)

The University recognises that students may wish to transfer to a different programme of study and will normally allow this provided that a student's prior study or subject knowledge meets the entry requirements of the new programme. Transferring after year 1 may be difficult without repeating stages of study. If you are considering changing to another Heriot-Watt programme please make sure you discuss this with your personal tutor and see the following advice.

- Think carefully about what you want to study instead
- Access all sources of information about any alternative programme. Find out who the programme contact is, what the entry requirements are and what careers it might lead to. You can find out the programme contact by contacting the School Office. Find out if you would you have to repeat a year.
- Talk to programme staff and students who are currently studying the programme.
- Remember, it is not automatic that you will be allowed to transfer to a different programme.
- If you are able to transfer, make sure you complete the correct forms and have the appropriate approval. Your new programme leader can advise you on this.
- You may have to repeat a year on your new programme, e.g. start again at Year 1, in which case you should check with your funding body what financial support will be available if you do this. Repeat funding can sometimes be offered but this will depend on your circumstances.

### [Examinations & Examination Diets](#)

**There are three examination diets (assessment periods): December, Spring and Summer.**

### [Exam Conduct and ID Checks](#)

Make sure you know what is required and permitted within each of your exams and understand the University exam conduct.

### [Exam Timetables](#)

Information on the exam timetable and when it will be available. Please note that exam timetables are subject to change so check regularly – we recommend checking the morning of each exam for any adjustments.

### [Exit Awards](#)

You will receive an award if you successfully complete your programme of study, however, if you leave the University part way through your programme, you may still have met the required criteria for receiving a Certificate of Higher Education, a Diploma of Higher Education or an Ordinary/Bachelors Degree as an exit award.

### [External Examiners Information](#)

External Examiners are independent of Heriot-Watt and their role is to ensure that students are judged fairly according to the academic standards expected by the wider higher education sector. In addition, they ensure that the processes for assessment, examination and determination of awards are sound and fairly operated, and that the quality of programmes is appropriate. Students can request copies of the External Examiners' reports for their programme by emailing [externalexaminerstaught@hw.ac.uk](mailto:externalexaminerstaught@hw.ac.uk)

### [Periods of Study](#)

The University Regulations explain the maximum time allowed to complete your programme of study.

### [Plagiarism](#)

Plagiarism is the act of taking the ideas, writings or inventions of another person and using these as if they were your own, whether intentionally or not. Here you can find out more about plagiarism, how the University responds to it and guidance on how to avoid plagiarism in your academic work. The Library also provides workshops and support on citing and referencing to avoid plagiarism.

### [Reassessment](#)

If you fail an assessment during the first or second semester of an academic year, then you will have to sit a reassessment for that course before being able to progress. This page contains information on reassessment procedures, how to register and pay for reassessments on your campus, reassessment diet dates, and information about additional reassessment opportunities.

### **Recording of Lectures**

As part of the University's Responsive Blended Learning approach, learning and teaching activities may be recorded for academic purposes. Students will have access to these recordings for use in their studies, but must not download, access or use these recordings for any purpose other than their studies at the University. Equally, students must not copy or share the recordings, in whole or in part, in any way with any other party. Where students have permission from the University to record sessions as part of any reasonable adjustments to ensure the accessibility of their studies, such recordings do not fall within the scope of this guidance. New and continuing students will be invited to sign up to these requirements as part of the Student Declaration at the point of enrolment.

### [Requirements for Awards](#)

Refer to the regulation(s) that are appropriate for your level of study. These regulations explain the number of credits required to receive an award from the University.

### [Recognition of Prior Learning & Credit Transfer](#)

If you have previously been in higher education, have passed courses or have academically relevant professional experience, then this could count as credit towards your Heriot-Watt degree. In the linked page, scroll down to 'Recognition of Prior Learning & Credit Transfer' to view the [policy](#) and [procedures](#) relating to this, as well as other information.

### [Submission of Coursework Policy](#)

You will have a set submission deadline for each piece of coursework. This policy explains how the deadline works.

### [Student Communications Policy](#)

This policy states that only approved Heriot-Watt communication tools should be used by staff in communication with students.

### [Teaching Timetables](#)

Use the link above to find out when and where your lectures, tutorials, or labs will be taking place on your campus.

## **Our Community**

### [Alumni](#)

Information on the opportunities available to students after they graduate from Heriot-Watt. These include membership of The Watt Club (Heriot-Watt's alumni association), how to network and connect with other alumni, and how alumni can give back to the University after they have left.

### **Accommodation**

Information about student accommodation at each of our campuses

[Accommodation \(Dubai Campus\)](#)

[Accommodation \(Edinburgh Campus\)](#)

[Accommodation \(Malaysia Campus\)](#)

[Accommodation \(Scottish Borders Campus\)](#)

[Accommodation \(Orkney Campus\)](#)

### **Faith and Belief**

Heriot-Watt University respects religious and cultural diversity and aims to support individuals in their religious and cultural observance.

[Faith and Belief: Edinburgh Campus](#)

[Faith and Belief: Scottish Borders Campus](#)

[Faith and Belief: Orkney Campus](#)

[Faith and Belief: Dubai Campus](#)

[Faith and Belief: Malaysia Campus](#)

[Residence Life \(Edinburgh Campus\)](#)

Residence Life (Res Life) provide help and support for students living in University accommodation. This can be practical help and information, help with the transition to living in halls of residence, signposting to other sources of support and providing a calendar of social events.

### **Sport and Exercise**

Opportunities for a range of sport and exercise activities are available at all our campuses. From recreational fun to competition, there's a place in the WattFamily for everyone regardless of sporting ability or experience. The Edinburgh campus is also home to [Oriam](#) Scotland's Sports Performance Centre.

[Sport and Exercise: Edinburgh Campus](#)

[Sport and Exercise: Scottish Borders Campus](#)

[Sport and Exercise: Orkney Campus](#)

[Sport and Exercise: Dubai Campus](#)

[Sport and Exercise: Malaysia Campus](#)

### **Student Representation**

All students have representative bodies for their campus who will also oversee clubs and societies and organise events for students.

[Heriot-Watt University Student Union \(Edinburgh, Orkney and Scottish Borders Campuses\)](#)

All Heriot-Watt students at Scottish campuses are a member of the Student Union. In addition to the wide range of societies, the Student Union offers volunteering opportunities for students to get involved in and make friends and connections during their time at university. The Union regularly hold events and host campaigns for good causes. The Student Union can also provide advice and support for all Heriot-Watt students via the [Advice Hub](#) .

[Heriot-Watt University Dubai Student Council](#) is the primary representative body for all students at Dubai campus. Further details can be found on the Student Council's [Facebook](#) page

[Heriot-Watt University Malaysia Student Association](#) represents students at Malaysia campus, manages clubs, implements welfare projects and organises events for students.

**UK Armed Forces Reservists**

The University has signed up to the [Armed Forces Covenant](#) and we are committed to ensuring that current and former Armed Forces personnel and their families are treated fairly. We will ensure that students who are reservists are not disadvantaged in their studies by undertaking compulsory training and service, and this includes the consideration of [Mitigating Circumstances](#) in assessments. You can discuss any issues relating to your service with your [personal tutor](#).

## **Supporting Success**

### [Amendment to Enrolment](#)

Amendments can be made to a student's enrolment at any point during their studies. This can include Temporary Suspension of Studies, extension of study period or amendment to study level or method.

### [Assistive Technology](#)

We have a variety of assistive technology available at Heriot-Watt University. Our Technology Assistant is here to help you with the enabling technology that we have and can assist you with any queries or support needs.

### [Assistive Technology at Edinburgh Campus](#)

### [Assistive Technology at Scottish Borders Campus](#)

### [Assistive Technology at Orkney Campus](#)

### [Assistive Technology at Dubai Campus](#)

### [Assistive Technology at Malaysia Campus](#)

### [Attendance and Absence](#)

It is extremely important that you keep the University informed if you are unable to attend classes. Absence may affect your academic progress, so you should discuss with your personal tutor whether you may need to temporarily suspend your studies or apply for Mitigating Circumstances. If you are unable to attend an exam or complete an assessment due to an unforeseen absence beyond your control, such as significant illness, you will need to make an application for consideration of Mitigating Circumstances in writing with supporting evidence.

### [Togetherall](#)

Togetherall is an online support resource 24 hours a day every day which you can sign up to with your university email address then choose an anonymous username for your time on Togetherall. You can use Togetherall for help with a wide range of mental health and wellbeing issues.

### [Care Experienced Students](#) (Scottish Campuses)

We recognise that students with care experience are under-represented in higher education and are committed to offering support for you to study at Heriot-Watt. We can provide access to the advice, guidance, financial support and accommodation required to help you succeed at university. We offer a named point of contact and support within the University,

### [Caring Responsibilities](#) (Scottish Campuses)

Heriot-Watt University is committed to supporting students who are carers. A carer is anyone who cares, unpaid, for a friend or family member who due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction cannot cope without their support.

## **Change of Address**

For legal, academic and administrative purposes it is very important that the information the University holds about you is correct and up to date, including your address details. You can check and amend your personal information by logging in to [Student Self Service](#).

### [Childcare and School Information](#) (Scottish Campuses)

Information on nurseries, childminders and Schools is available at this link for students at Edinburgh, Scottish Borders and Orkney Campuses. You may be eligible for [financial support](#) for childcare costs.

### [Complaints](#)

If for any reason you are unhappy with action taken (or not taken) by the University, or by the standard of service you have received, you may be able to make a formal complaint using the University's Complaints Procedure.

### [Counselling](#)

Being a student can be a very positive experience but there are also many challenges to deal with such as being away from home, being in a new country, exam pressures and building new relationships with friends. If you are worried about any issue or are thinking about dropping out of University, we can offer you counselling, support, and information to help you deal with the difficulties you may face. It may be that you only need one appointment but can attend more if you wish

### [Data Protection](#)

Information about how the University uses and protects data.

### [Disability Support](#)

The Disability Service provides support for students with a range of disabilities (dyslexia and other specific learning difficulties, sensory impairment, mental health, medical and physical health conditions, Autistic Spectrum Condition). Let us know if you have a disability and we'll arrange an appointment. We also offer advice and screening if you think that you may have a disability. You may be eligible for additional funding from the Disabled Students Allowance. Drop-in times and contact details are available via the link above.

### [Discipline](#)

The University can take action against any student if they have committed an academic offence (such as plagiarism, collusion or cheating in an exam) or a non-academic offense such as improper use of, or damage to, university property, or unacceptable behaviour.

### [Discretionary Credit](#)

A student who has not achieved the minimum number of credit points necessary to qualify for consideration of an award or the minimum number of credit points to progress from one stage to another may be awarded the requisite credit points at the discretion of the Award Board or Progression Board, as appropriate.

### [Effective Learning Service](#)

Our global team of Effective Learning Advisers can provide advice and guidance on study skills for University work e.g. academic writing, study strategies, managing your time and effective group working.

### [Email](#)

Make sure you keep checking your Heriot-Watt email at least every day and use it if you need to contact the University. Sometimes mail from personal e-mail addresses is blocked by the University's IT systems, so use your Heriot-Watt e-mail to be sure your message gets through to us. Essential messages and information will also be available via myHWU the Student Portal.

### [Enrolment](#)

Enrolment is the formal process of becoming a student of the University, agreeing to abide by its rules and accepting any liability for fees or other costs associated with your studies. All new and continuing students must be enrolled while studying at Heriot Watt University. The enrolment process must be completed online at the start of each new academic year.

### [Equality and Diversity](#)

As well as meeting our [legal requirements](#) we make sure that people across the University Community understand how they contribute to a Culture of Inclusion for All. This holistic approach helps us maintain an open and accessible working, living and learning environment where all are supported to reach their full potential.

### [Estranged Students](#)

An estranged student is "someone who no longer has the support of their family due to a breakdown in their relationship which has led to ceased contact. This might mean biological or adoptive parents or wider family members who have been responsible for supporting a student in the past". We recognise that estrangement causes particular challenges to students and the University is able to provide a range of support. If this applies to you, please get in contact.

### [European Exchange](#)

Our European Exchange Programme enables you to study or work in Europe as part of your degree programme, usually for a semester or full academic year. At Heriot-Watt students, have the opportunity to study at a wide range of institutions in Europe and may benefit from an Erasmus+ grant if the placement meets the criteria and is completed by 31<sup>st</sup> May 2023.

### [Exchanges](#)

An Exchange placement can be arranged with an institution abroad, outside of Europe. This can be arranged with your school Exchange Co-ordinator but it is the responsibility of the student to complete the application for that institution.

### [Failing a Course](#)

Failing a course may be a setback, but it is not necessarily a disastrous one. Students who have failed can go on to pass resits and still graduate with a good degree. If you fail a course it is important you discuss this with your personal tutor in the first instance. Your personal tutor will be able to offer advice on how to obtain detailed feedback and suggest sources of support.

### [Go Global](#)

Go Global is the University's inter-campus transfer opportunity and offers students the opportunity to study at a different Heriot-Watt campus.

### [Graduate Attributes](#)

Through your experience at Heriot-Watt University you will develop the skills and qualities of the four graduate attributes: specialist, creative, professional and global.

### [Graduation](#)

All the information you need to apply for and attend your graduation ceremony.

### [Harassment and Bullying](#)

Heriot-Watt University is committed to a working, learning and living environment that is free of discrimination and intimidation. If you feel that you are being bullied or harassed, in person or online, please talk to your personal tutor, or to Student Wellbeing.

### [Health and Wellbeing](#)

During your time at University it is important to look after yourself and use the resources available to help you with this, including Wellbeing Services, and medical and dental services.

### [Library Essentials](#)

Library essentials covers how to navigate the library service across campuses at the University. If you need to borrow a book or book out a study space this can be accessed from the library essentials webpage.

### [Library Resources for Your Subject](#)

There is an Academic Support and Liaison Librarian supporting your subject or School who can provide advice and guidance on library resources and developing your information skills. See also the online subject guides for information about books, journals and online resources for each subject area.

### [Managing Your Money](#)

As a student you will find there is a lot to think about financially. For some of you, studying at university will be the first time you have had to manage your money and keep your expenditure within a fixed budget. Advice and support on money matters is available at all Heriot-Watt campuses.

### [Maternity and Paternity](#)

The University has a set of published guidelines to ensure that students who become pregnant during their studies know where to seek advice and support, including on matters

such as returning to study following a period of maternity leave and on requests for shared leave or paternity leave.

### [Mental Health](#)

If you experience a mental health difficulty while at the University, or have a pre-existing mental health condition, you can discuss any issues and concerns with a professional counsellor or Student Advisor

### [Mitigating Circumstances](#)

There are circumstances which, through no fault of your own, may have affected your performance in an assessment (exams or other assessment), meaning that the assessment has not accurately measured your ability. These circumstances are described as 'mitigating circumstances'. You can submit an application to have mitigating circumstances taken into account.

### [Next Steps: Post result help](#)

Next Steps is a simple guide that can help you after you have received your course assessment results. The guide has information about importance of obtaining feedback from your assessments, and how to reflect and act on feedback to ensure you are more successful in your studies.

### [People Finder](#)

Find a key person on campus by using People Finder

### [Sexual Misconduct](#)

The University is committed to providing a safe environment that allows you to work, study, and fulfil your potential without fear of sexual misconduct and has a policy to combat sexual misconduct.

### [Software](#)

You can access a range of IT software provided by the University to help in your studies.

### [Student Success Advisors](#)

Nobody knows the challenges of being a Heriot-Watt student better than those who have been through it all themselves. With the benefit of recent experience and successful study at Heriot-Watt, the Student Success Advisors will be able to offer advice to students based on their own experiences. They will also have an overview of the other support resources available at Heriot-Watt and point you in the right direction if you need it.

### **Student Service Centre**

The Student Service Centre offers help and support relating to matters on enrolment, examinations, paying tuition fees, graduation, as well as advice for students holding a visa.

#### [Dubai Campus](#)

#### [Edinburgh Campus](#)

#### [Malaysia Campus](#)

### [Student Fees, Funding and Additional Charges](#)

The University can give you advice about paying your tuition fees as well as information on scholarships and bursaries, and other means of financial support.

### [Student Policies and Guidance](#)

Our list of student policies can give you information on University regulations and guidance relating to issues including attendance, mitigating circumstances, mental health, and programme transfer.

### [Student Surveys](#)

Feedback from students is extremely important as it allows the University to further improve and enhance what it offers to students. Surveys give students the opportunity to feedback their thoughts and opinions to the University.

### [Temporary Suspension of Studies](#)

In certain situations, it may be in a student's best interests for them to suspend their studies temporarily to enable them to deal with particular issues and return at an agreed date. A Temporary Suspension of Studies (TSS) can be applied for and approved on the basis of genuine medical, personal, financial reasons or military service.

#### [Thinking of Leaving](#)

If you are thinking about leaving university for whatever reason please talk through your decision with a member of staff at the university. Many students think about leaving university at some stage during their studies. If anything is bothering you or you are thinking about leaving, you can come along to a drop in to speak to a member of support staff to explore and understand all of your options.

#### **Visa Advice**

Advice on visa requirements for studying at Heriot-Watt is available at all our campuses.

[Visa Advice: UK Campuses](#)

[Visa Advice: Dubai Campus](#)

[Visa Advice: Malaysia Campus](#)

## Developing Your Skills

### [Careers](#)

Careers advice and guidance is available to all students and recent graduates to help:

- Develop your employability skills
- Identify your potential career options
- Help you to find work experience/part time work
- Market yourself to employers

### [Careers UK Campuses](#)

Careers: Dubai Campus, contact [dubaicareersandgradfutures@hw.ac.uk](mailto:dubaicareersandgradfutures@hw.ac.uk)

Careers: Malaysia Campus, contact [MYCareers@hw.ac.uk](mailto:MYCareers@hw.ac.uk)

### [Career Mentoring](#)

Career Mentoring can connect a student with a professional working in a student's area of interest. The programme gives students an opportunity to gain an insight into what it is like working in a certain field. A mentor will also be able to support a student with their long-term career planning. This programme is mostly aimed at students in their penultimate year, however all students are welcome to apply.

### [Enhanced Transcript](#)

An Enhanced Transcript is a formal University document which will include not only details of your award and grades, but also a range of academic and extra-curricular activities undertaken whilst at University. The Transcript is designed to help you to maximise your employability as it records your University achievements in one document which you can share with prospective employers and postgraduate recruiters.

### [LinkedIn Learning](#)

As a Heriot-Watt student, you have full, free access to LinkedIn Learning. The platform hosts over 12,000 digital courses on business, creative and technology topics. These courses are broken into bitesize sections, making it easy to focus on developing the skills you need.

### [Maths Gym](#)

The Maths Gym is a cross-campus initiative aimed at supporting all Heriot-Watt students, from any subject, to strengthen their mathematical or statistical skills and gain confidence in applying these skills. We provide support through a variety of activities including:

- drop-in sessions
- one-to-one or small group appointments
- workshops.

Whether you want to brush up on basic skills or need help to understand new material from your course, the Maths Gym is there to help you.

### [Skills Development](#)

Studying at university gives you the opportunity to learn new skills or build on existing skills you already have. Information Services provide many workshops and resources to help you gain or develop the skills you will need to have a successful time at university.

### [Study Spaces](#)

Heriot-Watt provide a large number of modern and contemporary study spaces for both individuals and groups in convenient locations. Some of these spaces are open late, and offer IT access as well as food and drink.

### **Volunteering**

Volunteering offers you the opportunity to develop your skills and experience while helping your fellow students, your community or a charitable organisation. There are numerous opportunities for [volunteering](#) within and outside the University. The Careers service also provide [advice](#) on volunteering. Your experience as a volunteer can be logged and evidenced, and help enhance your employability.

## APPENDIX A: STUDENT GUIDE TO PLAGIARISM <sup>1</sup>

Plagiarism is intellectual theft and is a major offence which the University takes seriously in all cases. Students must therefore avoid committing acts of plagiarism by following these guidelines and speaking to academic staff if they are uncertain about what plagiarism means. Those who are found to have plagiarised will be subject to the University's disciplinary procedures, which may result in penalties ranging from the deduction of credits and modules already achieved by students to compulsory termination of studies. Students are advised to refer to Regulation 50 at <http://www.hw.ac.uk/ordinances/regulations.pdf> and to the Guidelines for Staff and Students on Discipline at <http://www.hw.ac.uk/students/studies/examinations/plagiarism.htm> for further details of how the University deals with all acts of plagiarism.

### Introduction

- 1.1. This guide is intended to provide students at Heriot-Watt University with a clear definition of plagiarism and examples of how to avoid it.
- 1.2. The guide may also be of use to members of staff who seek to advise students on the various issues outlined below.

### Definition

- 1.3. Plagiarism involves the act of taking the ideas, writings or inventions of another person and using these as if they were one's own, whether intentionally or not. Plagiarism occurs where there is no acknowledgement that the writings or ideas belong to or have come from another source.
- 1.4. Most academic writing involves building on the work of others and this is acceptable as long as their contribution is identified and fully acknowledged. It is not wrong in itself to use the ideas, writings or inventions of others, provided that whoever does so is honest about acknowledging the source of that information. Many aspects of plagiarism can be simply avoided through proper referencing. However, plagiarism extends beyond minor errors in referencing the work of others and also includes the reproduction of an entire paper or passage of work or of the ideas and views contained in such pieces of work.

### Good Practice

- 1.5. Academic work is almost always drawn from other published information supplemented by the writer's own ideas, results or findings. Thus drawing from other work is entirely acceptable, but it is unacceptable not to acknowledge such work. Conventions or methods for making acknowledgements can vary slightly from subject to subject, and students should seek the advice of staff in their own School about ways of doing this. Generally, referencing systems fall into the Harvard (where the text citation is by author and date) and numeric (where the text citation is by using a number). Both systems refer readers to a list at the end of the piece of work where sufficient information is provided to enable the reader to locate the source for themselves.
- 1.6. When a student undertakes a piece of work that involves drawing on the writings or ideas of others, they must ensure that they acknowledge each contribution in the following manner:

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<sup>1</sup> The author acknowledges the following sources of information used in preparing this guide to Plagiarism:

"Plagiarism – A Good Practice Guide", Carroll, J and Appleton, J (2001) and various extracts from Student/Course Handbooks 2004/2005, Schools at Heriot-Watt University

- **Citations:** when a direct quotation, a figure, a general idea or other piece of information is taken from another source, the work and its source must be acknowledged and identified where it occurs in the text;
- **Quotations:** inverted commas must always be used to identify direct quotations, and the source of the quotation must be cited;
- **References:** the full details of all references and other sources must be listed in a section at the end of any piece of work, such as an essay, together with the full publication details. This is normally referred to as a “List of References” and it must include details of any and all sources of information that the student has referred to in producing their work. (This is slightly different to a Bibliography, which may also contain references and sources which, although not directly referred to in your work, you consulted in producing your work).

1.7. Students may wish to refer to the following examples which illustrate the basic principles of plagiarism and how students might avoid it in their work by using some very simple techniques:

#### 1.7.1. Example 1: A Clear Case of Plagiarism

Examine the following example in which a student has simply inserted a passage of text (*in italics*) into their work directly from a book they have read:

University and college managers should consider implementing strategic frameworks if they wish to embrace good management standards. *One of the key problems in setting a strategic framework for a college or university is that the individual institution has both positive and negative constraints placed upon its freedom of action.* Managers are employed to resolve these issues effectively.

This is an example of bad practice as the student makes no attempt to distinguish the passage they have inserted from their own work. Thus, this constitutes a clear case of plagiarism. Simply changing a few key words in such a passage of text (e.g. replace ‘*problems*’ with ‘*difficulties*’) does not make it the student’s work and it is still considered to be an act of plagiarism.

### 1.7.2. Common Mistakes

Students may also find the following examples<sup>2</sup> of common plagiarism mistakes made by other students useful when reflecting on their own work:

- “I thought it would be okay as long as I included the source in my bibliography” [without indicating a quotation had been used in the text]
- “I made lots of notes for my essay and couldn't remember where I found the information”
- “I thought it would be okay to use material that I had purchased online”
- “I thought it would be okay to copy the text if I changed some of the words into my own”
- “I thought that plagiarism only applied to essays, I didn't know that it also applies to oral presentations/group projects etc”
- “I thought it would be okay just to use my tutor's notes”
- “I didn't think that you needed to reference material found on the web”
- “I left it too late and just didn't have time to reference my sources”

**None of the above are acceptable reasons for failing to acknowledge the use of others' work and thereby constitute plagiarism.**

1.8. What follows are examples of the measures that students should employ in order to correctly cite the words, thought or ideas of others that have influenced their work:

#### 1.8.1. Example 2: Quoting the work of others

If a student wishes to cite a passage of text in order to support their own work, the correct way of doing so is to use quotation marks (e.g. “ ”) to show that the passage is someone else's work, as follows:

*“One of the key problems in setting a strategic framework for a college or university is that the individual institution has both positive and negative constraints placed upon its freedom of action”.*

#### 1.8.2. Example 3: Referencing the work of others

In addition to using quotation marks as above, students must also use a text citation. If the work being cited is a book, page numbers would also normally be required. Thus, using the Harvard system for a book:

*“One of the key problems in setting a strategic framework for a college or university is that the individual institution has both positive and negative constraints placed upon its freedom of action” (Jones, 2001, p121).*

The same reference could also be made to a book using the numeric system:

*“One of the key problems in setting a strategic framework for a college or university is that the individual institution has both positive and negative constraints placed upon its freedom of action” (Ref. 1, p121).*

More often, a piece of work will have multiple references and this serves to show an examiner that the student is drawing from a number of sources. For example, articles by Brown and by Smith may be cited as follows in the Harvard system

*“It has been asserted that Higher Education in the United Kingdom continued to be poorly funded during the 1980's [Brown, 1991], whereas more modern writers [Smith, 2002] argue that the HE sector actually received, in real terms, more funding during this period than the thirty year period immediately preceding it”.*

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<sup>2</sup> Extract from 'Plagiarism at the University of Essex' advice copyrighted and published by the Learning, Teaching and Quality Unit at the University of Essex (<http://www.essex.ac.uk/plagiarism/reasons.html>), reproduced with kind permission.

or as follows using the numeric system:

*“It has been asserted that Higher Education in the United Kingdom continued to be poorly funded during the 1980’s [Ref 1], whereas more modern writers [Ref 2] argue that the HE sector actually received, in real terms, more funding during this period than the thirty year period immediately preceding it”.*

### 1.8.3. Example 4: Use of reference lists

Whichever system is used, a list must be included at the end, which allows the reader to locate the works cited for themselves. The Internet is also an increasingly popular source of information for students and details must again be provided. You should adhere to the following guidelines in all cases where you reference the work of others:

If the source is a book, the required information is as follows:

- Author’s name(s)
- Year of Publication
- Title of Book
- Place of Publication
- Publishers Name
- All Page Numbers cited
- Edition (if more than one, e.g. 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, 2001)

If the source is an article in a journal or periodical, the required information is as follows:

- Author’s name(s)
- Year of Publication
- Title of Journal
- Volume and part number
- Page numbers for the article

If the source is from the Internet, the required information is as follows:

- Author’s or Institution’s name (“Anon”, if not known)
- Title of Document
- Date last accessed by student
- Full URL (e.g. <http://www.lib.utk.edu/instruction/plagiarism/>)
- Affiliation of author, if given (e.g. University of Tennessee)

The way in which the information is organised can vary, and there are some types of work (for example edited volumes and conference proceedings) where the required information is slightly different. Essentially, though, it is your responsibility to make it clear where you are citing references within your work and what the source is within your reference list. **Failure to do so is an act of plagiarism.**

- 1.9. Students are encouraged to use a style of acknowledgement that is appropriate to their own academic discipline and should seek advice from their mentor, course leader or other appropriate member of academic staff. There are also many reference sources available in the University Library which will provide useful guidance on referencing styles.

## **Managing Plagiarism**

- 1.10. Students, supervisors and institutions have a joint role in ensuring that plagiarism is avoided in all areas of academic activity. Each role is outlined below as follows:

*How you can ensure that you avoid plagiarism in your work:*

- Take responsibility for applying the above principles of best practice and integrity within all of your work
- Be aware that your written work will be checked for plagiarism and that all incidents of plagiarism, if found, are likely to result in severe disciplinary action by the University. The standard penalty is to annul all assessments taken in the same

diet of examinations (for details please refer to Regulation 50 at <https://www.hw.ac.uk/documents/HWU-Regulations-WEB.pdf> and to the Guidelines for Staff and Students on Discipline at <http://www.hw.ac.uk/students/studies/record/discipline.htm>).

*How your School will help you to avoid plagiarism:*

- Highlight written guidance on how you can avoid plagiarism and provide you with supplementary, verbal guidance wherever appropriate
- Regularly check student work to ensure that plagiarism has not taken place. This may involve both manual and electronic methods of checking. A number of plagiarism detection packages are in use at Heriot-Watt University, one example being the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) “Turnitin” plagiarism detection software.
- Alert you to the procedures that will apply should you be found to have committed or be suspected of having committed an act of plagiarism and explain how further action will be taken in accordance with University policy and procedures.

*How the University will endeavour to reduce student plagiarism:*

- Provide clear written guidance on what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it directly to your School and to you
- Alert you and staff in your School to the penalties employed when dealing with plagiarism cases
- Take steps to ensure that a consistent approach is applied when dealing with cases of suspected plagiarism across the institution
- Take the issue of academic dishonesty very seriously and routinely investigate cases where students have plagiarised and apply appropriate penalties in all proven cases.