



THE UNIVERSITY
of EDINBURGH

Postgraduate Virtual
Open Days

MSc Literature and Modernity

School of Literatures, Languages
and Cultures (LLC)



Peter Adkins
Programme Director for 2025/2026

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Meet the programme team

Name: Dr Peter Adkins

Title: Lecturer in Modernist Literature

Bio: Specialist in modernism, ecocriticism and animal studies. Author of *Virginia Woolf and the Anthropocene* and *The Modernist Anthropocene*.



Name: Dr Megan Girdwood

Title: Lecturer in English Literature, 1880-1940

Bio: Specialist in late Victorian and modernist literature, especially in relation to dance and performance. Author of *Modernism and the Choreographic Imagination*.



Student Body

53 students currently on the course (50 fulltime and 3 parttime)

Students come from:

- Scotland, England and Wales
- Continental Europe
- North America
- South Asia
- East Asia
- South-East Asia

Academic Backgrounds include...

- English Literature
- Linguistics
- Creative Writing
- Communication Studies
- Modern Languages
- History
- and many others!



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A Typical Week...

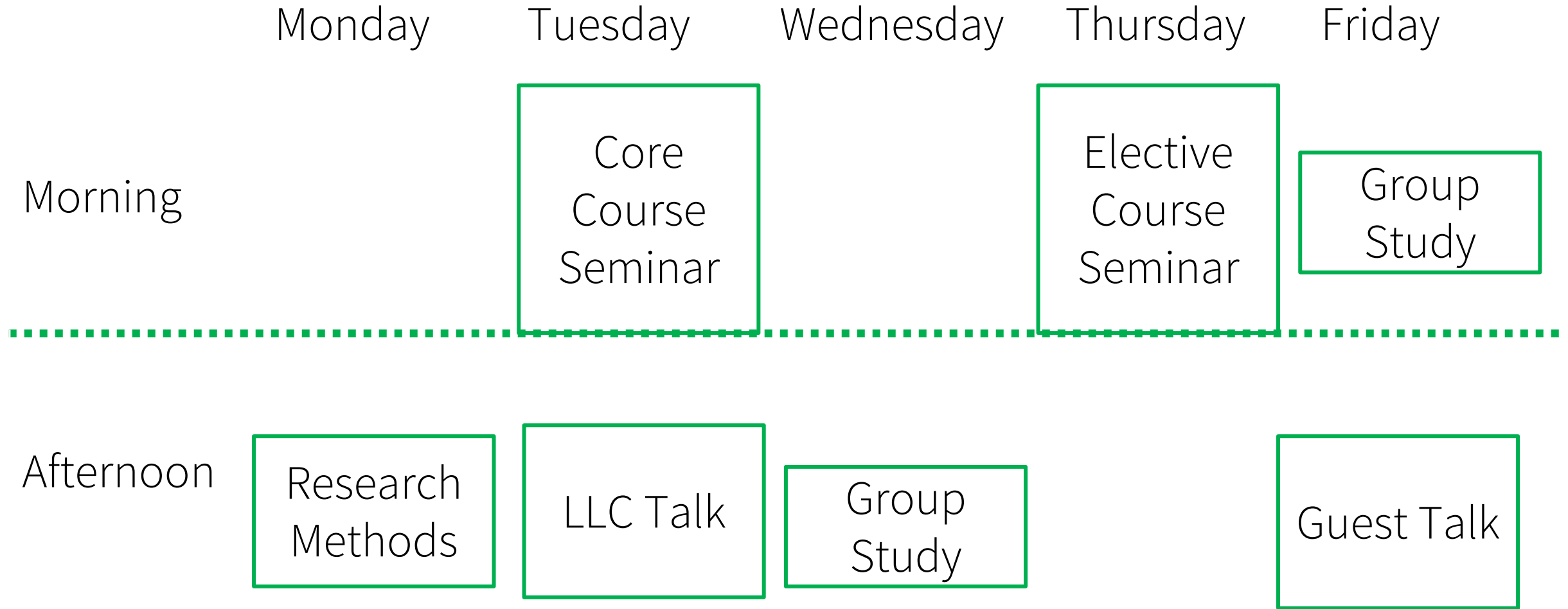
- 4 to 6 class hours per week, 2 to 3 group study hours and 30 independent study hours.
- Most weeks you'll have three classes: your core course, your elective course and your research methods course.
- Classes tend to be taught via seminar with subject specialists.
- MSc students are also invited to attend weekly research seminars.
- Each week students receive an email listing all the other events, talks and guest lectures taking place that they can attend.
- Independent study takes place in the School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures building on Central Campus and University Central Library.



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What a typical week looks like...



Core Courses

Modernist Aesthetics (Autumn Semester)

Writers typically covered: Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, T.S. Eliot, Claude McKay, Zora Neale Hurston, Jean Rhys, Katherine Mansfield, Willa Cather and Hope Mirrlees.

Assessment: 4,000-word essay on a topic of your choice and with input from your seminar leader / subject expert.



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Core Courses

Late Modernism and Beyond (Spring Semester)

Writers typically covered: Samuel Beckett, Elizabeth Bishop, J.M. Coetzee, Toni Morrison, Angela Carter, Abdulrazak Gurnah, Maggie Nelson, Claudia Rankine Shola Von Reinhold

Assessment: 4,000-word essay on a topic of your choice and with input from your seminar leader / subject expert.



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Electives (one per semester)

A Sample From This Year's Offering:

- Twenty-First Century Fiction
- The Graphic Novel
- Modern and Contemporary Life Writing
- Colonialism, Ecology & Culture
- Theatre, Performance, Performativity
- Black American Fiction
- Illness Narratives Through History
- Modern and Contemporary Scottish Poetry
- The American Novel
- James Joyce and Style
- Fiction and Espionage
- Animals, Literature, Modernity
- Global Modernisms
- Fairy Tales



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Some of Our Teaching Staff

Staff	Specialism	Staff	Specialism
Dr Benjamin Bateman	Queer Theory, LGBTQ+ literature	Dr Anna Girling	Decadence, Caribbean literature
Dr Sourit Battacharya	Decolonial studies, Indian literature	Dr Keith Hughes	African American literature
Dr Hannah Boast	Contemporary world literature	Dr Anouk Lang	Digital humanities, Australian lit
Dr Simon Cooke	Life writing, contemporary lit	Professor Michelle Keown	Pacific literature, Postcolonial
Professor Paul Crosthwaite	Economics & lit, American lit	Dr Madeline Potter	Gothic literature, vampires
Professor David Farrier	Literature and the environment	Dr Hannah Simpson	Modern & contemporary drama
Professor Alan Gillis	Irish lit, modern poetry	Professor Alex Thomson	Scottish modernism, Critical theory



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Research Skills & Methods

Ensuring Everyone Feels Prepared and Confident

We recognise that you will all have different educational backgrounds and knowledge practices.

This course provides MSc students with an introduction to the skills and methods required to conduct high-quality research and what is required from postgraduate level coursework.

In the Spring semester, it is focused on dissertation preparation...



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Dissertation

The capstone to your degree!

15,000-words on a topic of your choice.

You're paired with a supervisor, who meets with you on a one-to-one basis from April to June.

Further guidance provided through your Research Methods course and Dissertation Organiser.

Typical you submit in early August (in time for the Fringe!).



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Cohort Events & Support

Welcome lunch and cohort induction - September

Pizza and literary quiz night – late October

Catered lunch and catch up – early February

Dedicated support from your programme director (me!) and a named student adviser in the School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures.

You will also be supported by careers service professionals and have the opportunity to discuss PhD routes and applications.



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Applying

Qualifications:

A UK 2:1 Honours Degree or its international equivalent (see website for full list).

English Language:

IELTS total 7.0 with 6.5 in each component (or equivalent certificate).

Applications are open until July, although we recommend applying early!



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Did you get the info you were looking for?

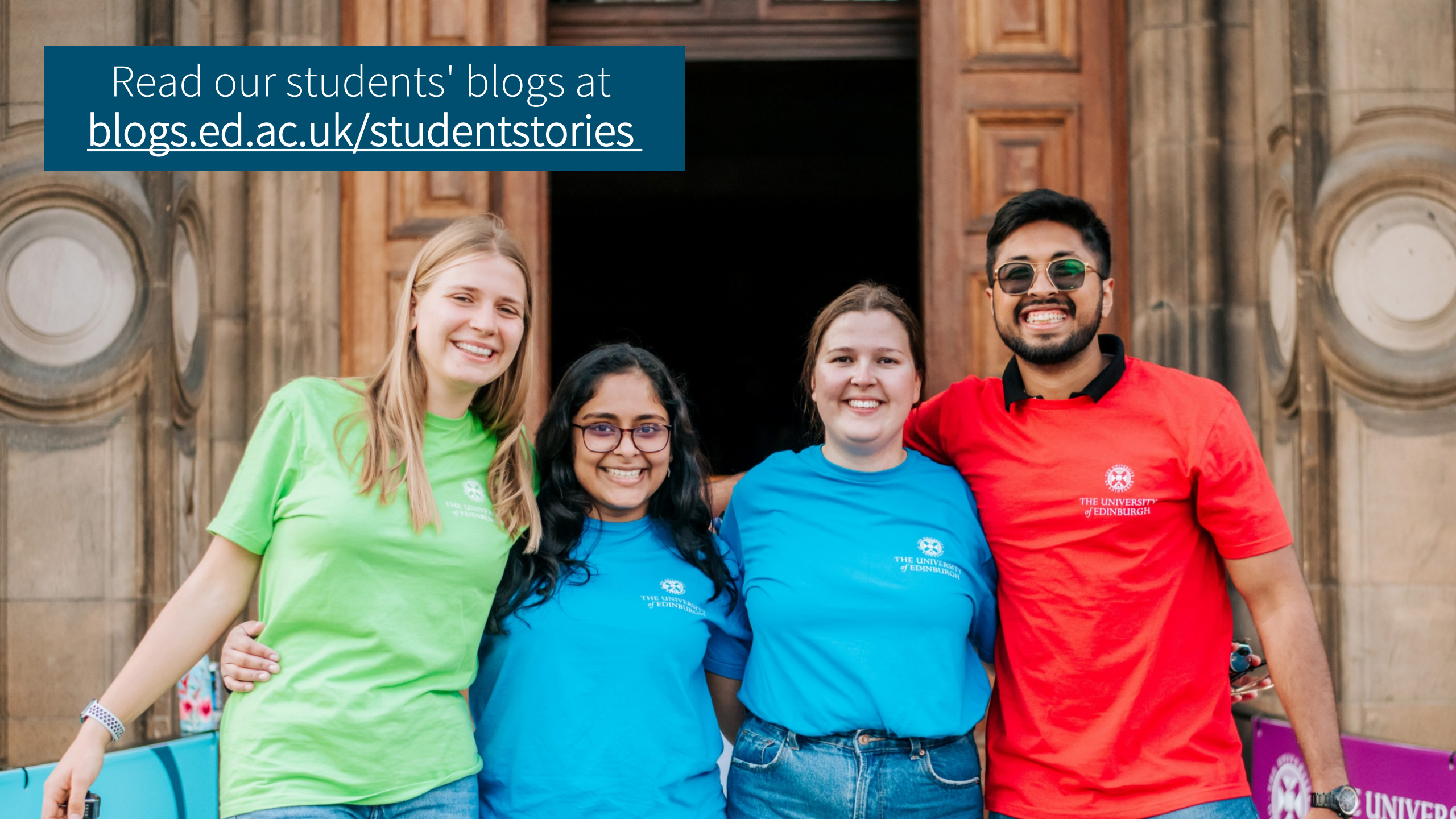
- Programme-specific info: [MSc Literature and Modernity](#)
- Chat to our Students: <https://edin.ac/student-chat-pg>
- Any other questions (including, Fees & Admissions) email: futurestudents@ed.ac.uk



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Read our students' blogs at
blogs.ed.ac.uk/studentstories





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Thank you

Peter Adkins

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