



Course Handbook

Post Graduate Certificate (PgCert) Research Methods UX200

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Welcome / Fáilte

The programme team for the PGCert Research methods offered here at the University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) would like to welcome you to our programme and hope that you will enjoy your studies with us during this session.

The purpose of this handbook is to outline arrangements and regulations for the Postgraduate Certificate in Research Methods (PGCert Research).

The programme is delivered wholly online and is managed by UHI North, West and Hebrides, in the Innse Gall (Outer Hebrides), as the Responsible Partner within UHI.

This is a very bespoke approach to each student's research focus and development goals over the course of the programme, and lecturers will meet with students individually online to develop these research interests and approaches.

For some just entering the programme, the move to a higher level of SCQF Level 11 (L11) study can seem daunting, when confronted with the demands of reading and preparation advised by staff. Please realise that we will guide and advise you, particularly in the early months of your studies.

An advantage of a programme such as this is the number of opportunities it affords you to contact your tutors via telephone, message, e-mail and the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) discussion forum.

You are also one among a cohort of participants learning more about research design in the Social Sciences. Regular contact with your peers, enables sharing of ideas which helps with your learning. Also sharing concerns or worries about the progress of your studies is useful and we would encourage you to use the chat facility of the VLE for this.

We look forward to guiding your progress within the programme, and hope that you find it relevant, interesting and worthwhile as a major contribution to your continuing professional development.

Please note: This handbook is produced for your guidance only. Nothing in the handbook forms a contract between an individual student and UHI or its academic partners.

Programme information

The Postgraduate Certificate in Research Methods (PgCert Research) programme is designed for students who wish to develop their research skills in the Social Sciences and will equip you with the skills to carry out research of a professional standard. The choices offered in the programme will enable you to examine quantitative, descriptive statistics, qualitative, participatory, indigenous, action and mixed methods in depth, and to become competent practitioners in these methods.

Research methods training at level 11 is a cornerstone for success in a research team and at doctoral study, and the Postgraduate Certificate in Research Methods programme fills this gap in UHI's provision and in the wider market. You will be encouraged to think critically about the selection of appropriate research methods to answer a developed research query and to select the most appropriate strategy for collecting and analysing data.

As you progress through the programme, we will expect you to make clear links between the modules which reflect your ongoing learning and the development of your professional practice in a unique and holistic way. In addition to this, the emphasis is placed on reflective practice, and you are encouraged to consider what you have learned and how you might change your practice through your experience of the module.

The programme is delivered wholly online, *asynchronous learning*, but the programme begins with an individual face-to-face (if in the Hebrides) or online induction. Delivery from then onwards is done entirely online through the Brightspace Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and Teams for individual tutor meetings, allowing considerable flexibility to choose when and where to study, making it ideal for international delivery.

Programme Leader

Dr Kara Smith

UHI North, West and Hebrides

Stornoway

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Key contacts

Fees: <https://www.uhi.ac.uk/en/courses/pgcert-research-methods>

Enrolment: registry.nwh@uhi.ac.uk

Applications: admissions.nwh@uhi.ac.uk

RPL: kara.smith@uhi.ac.uk

IT help: 150@uhi.ac.uk

Programme team

This section tells you a little about the staff who run the PgCert Research Methods (X200) and their roles within the programme.

Dr Kara Ghobhainn Smith, UHI NWH: kara.smith@uhi.ac.uk

Fáilte, welcome to this space for thinking about how we learn and develop our skills as professional educators. As Programme Leader, I am here to support you through the modules you need, and will be on the other end of Brightspace in your Tertiary and Higher Education (THE) module, Qualitative Inquiry (QI) module, and/or your Masters Dissertation. Both a *Leosaich* and a *Canadienne*, I am a SFHEA, FRSA and an educational researcher and writer. My PhD in language education was completed two decades ago at Stirling University, and most of my work as an educator has been with UHI and the University of Windsor. [Publications](#) can be found on PURE or [ResearchGate](#). I look forward to learning much from all of you.

Dr Eddy Graham, UHI NWH: edward.graham@uhi.ac.uk

Eddy, also known as, 'Eddy Weather' is the Module Leader in the Quantitative Research and Data Analysis (QRDA) module, and an expert in working with number systems across a wide range of disciplinary field research.

Dr Steven Timoney, UHI Perth: steven.timoney.perth@uhi.ac.uk

Steven is the Module Leader for Research Methods and Techniques (RM), and works with Kerry Hannigan, also at Perth, to deliver that foundational module. He is Programme Leader for the MSc Interpretation: Management and Practice, and the MSc Tourism programmes. He has an undergraduate honours degree in Human Geography (University of Aberdeen) and MPhil and PhD in Archaeology (University of Glasgow).

Steven has undertaken a variety of heritage interpretation and tourism projects, and research into different aspects of interpretation practice and tourism development. His wider research interests include the interpretation of cultural heritage; the visitor experience at heritage sites; public and community archaeology; and social geography, particularly landscape and societies past and present. Outside of work Steven enjoys running long distances up hills and mountains!

Dr Tamara Griffiths, UHI NWH: tamara.griffiths@uhi.ac.uk

Tamara is the module leader for Action research and mixed methods: rising to today's research challenges and has a particular research interest in community change and participatory land-based research narratives. She is based at Fort William in the Highlands and will be meeting with each student individually as they come onto the module.

Programme and module leader roles

The current programme leader is: Dr kara.smith@uhi.ac.uk

The role of the programme leader is to:

- ensure that appropriate timetabling and staffing arrangements are identified for the delivery of the programme
- monitor and evaluate the programme, and produce an annual report in conjunction with the Programme team
- ensure that Programme Committee meets the relevant UHI quality assurance procedures
- liaise with external agencies as appropriate on matters relating to the programme
- ensure that evaluation findings are discussed and evaluated within the Programme Committee and appropriate action as necessary

The role of a module leader is to:

- oversee the development and delivery of the module(s) for which they are responsible
- monitor the delivery of the modules and report to the Programme Committee
- ensure that participants receive feedback on their work promptly
- be responsible to the Programme Committee for the assessment of participant work and for liaison with external examiners
- propose new modules and the significant modification of existing modules to the appropriate bodies
- make minor module modifications, as indicated in section 7 of the UHI Academic Regulations

Programme objectives and educational aims

Programme objectives

There is one level of outcome for this programme, namely a postgraduate certificate at SCQF level 11.

On completion of the requisite number of modules for the award of Postgraduate Certificate in Research Methods, students will be able to:

- demonstrate critical understanding of different methodological approaches used in a variety of research environments
- demonstrate critical understanding of the range of different research designs
- demonstrate awareness and critical understanding of the range of different methods of data collection and analysis
- synthesise the theory and practice of research to produce reports of research to a professional standard

Educational aims

The educational aims of this programme are to:

- provide highly motivated graduates with the academic skills, knowledge and abilities to enhance their professional practice
- provide equal opportunities of access to those potential participants restricted by employment, geography or personal circumstances within Scotland and internationally
- provide opportunities to develop transferable skills relevant to the wide-ranging demands of professional life
- enable participant to pursue their interests in specialist areas within their field of study
- enable participants to develop skills in reflective practice and encourage lifelong learning
- encourage Continuing Professional Development within professional practice or further study
- encourage successful participants to engage in appropriate pedagogical research and scholarship

Masters level criteria

All the modules within this programme conform to the Scottish Credit Qualifications Framework (SCQF) level 11 for master's level.

In order to pass each module and to gain awards at Postgraduate Certificate, Postgraduate Diploma and Masters, you must:

- assume responsibility for your own learning, and apply this learning to your professional context, and present your reflections with rigour, coherence and originality
- demonstrate a critical awareness and understanding of current research and relevant theoretical literature; and demonstrate an ability to synthesise this awareness and understanding with your own professional experience in order to identify the implications for your own professional practice
- demonstrate a critical awareness of current national, UK and international debates on issues which are relevant to your profession
- apply appropriate research paradigms, methods and techniques to systematically investigate issues and problems relating to your own professional practice and that of your profession as a whole
- justify the approach you have adopted for examining and critically evaluating aspects of your professional practice by reference to appropriate theoretical literature and literature on research methods and paradigms
- formulate innovative proposals for developing or changing some aspect of professional practice, based on informed ideas and research
- demonstrate how the critical understanding and skills you have developed through this Programme now inform your professional practice

Entry requirements

The normal entry requirement is an honours degree, or an equivalent professional qualification.

Entry may be open to holders of an Ordinary degree, HND or DipHE who have at least three years of relevant professional experience in education and training. Applicants with formal qualifications below the level of HND who possess substantial experience in an appropriate field, or are judged to have demonstrated exceptional abilities, may also be admitted to the programme.

This is subject to interview, appropriate academic references and evidence submitted of personal, professional and educational experience. The Programme Leader will make the final decision about acceptance onto any aspect of the scheme and where necessary, take advice from the wider programme team.

UHI follows the procedures set out in its Academic Standards and Quality Regulations.

Standard entry master's programmes

The normal entry requirement for a master's programme is an Honours degree (L10) of a recognised UK degree-awarding body, or postgraduate diploma, or a professional qualification recognised as being equivalent to an Honours degree. Other qualifications or experiences which demonstrate that a candidate possesses appropriate knowledge and skills at Honours degree standard may be acceptable.

Any participant enrolling for a module will be required to meet the admissions criteria for the Masters level (11) programme.

Those participants who are uncertain about the standards of academic writing are strongly advised to undertake the module, Preparing for Masters Level Study, as an introduction to Masters level work.

If you have formal qualifications below the level of HND but possess substantial experience in an appropriate field, and can demonstrate exceptional abilities, you may also be admitted to the programme.

It is anticipated that some potential candidates are likely to apply for entry to the PgCert who have HNCs or other vocational qualifications in relevant areas. These may include technical assistants, library assistants and computer technicians, who have extended their skills to develop learning resources or to provide some additional teaching and learning support to participants on HND and degree level programmes. It is also possible that a small number of candidates will be eligible for the programme who do not have HNC or equivalent professional and vocational qualifications but have extended their skills experientially in order to provide direct teaching and learning support to participants.

In all of these cases, a key pre-requisite for admission to the programme is that you will continue your professional involvement in education and training for the duration of the Programme. This is because each module involves some element of enquiry, evaluation or action research which necessitates you being currently engaged in an appropriate professional activity related to education and training.

Admission to the Programme will also be on the understanding that you have a reasonable expectation that you can fulfil the objectives of the programme and achieve the standard required for the award. You will need to provide evidence of personal, professional and educational experience that indicates ability to meet the demands of the programme. This will normally include a written statement indicating how your professional experience has prepared you for postgraduate study, plus two academic references.

International students

We welcome applications from international students. International students will need to demonstrate that they have the necessary equivalent entry qualifications, and they will also need to demonstrate that they have English language communications skills. It must be stressed that admission to our courses depends on a proven level of competence in English.

If English is not your first language, evidence of competence may be provided by taking an International English Language Testing Systems (IELTS) test. Many British Council offices overseas administer this. You should have a minimum IELTS score of 6.0 to gain entry to our programmes.

If you have passed a Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) you should have a minimum score of 550 for a paper-based test or 213 for a computer-based test in order to be accepted onto the course.

All students, whether from overseas or from within Scotland will be encouraged to reflect on the contexts in which they find themselves. For example, if you are following the M.Ed. Tertiary and Higher Education programme, you will be encouraged to reflect upon your teaching practice in your own country.

Please note that international students accepted for a programme will need to pay their fees in advance of an Unconditional offer and enrolment in modules.

Admissions procedures

This section explains what you need to do once you have received a firm acceptance of a place on the PgCert Research Methods programme (X200).

Online enrolment and module selection

Once you have been offered a place on a programme, you will be required to online enrol. You can do this by going to [Online enrolment](#) and following the instructions. You will also need to select your modules for the academic year. You can speak with your Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) or the Programme Leader for some guidance about this if you like.

Induction

Induction is an important part of your learning journey and UHI have a dedicated site for this: [UHI Essential Student Skills](#) and all programmes and CPD modules covered in this handbook have an induction element to them.

There is an individual online induction each year, at the start of semester 1, usually at the very end of August or the beginning of September. While the induction event is not compulsory, we do encourage you to attend if possible.

The event will cover things like study skills at postgraduate level, use of the Brightspace VLE, the importance of UHI email systems, and the use of other embedded UHI learning technology.

Accreditation of prior learning and experiential learning

Appropriate learning, wherever acquired and, provided that it can be assessed, may be accepted for the purpose of gaining academic credit by an applicant towards the M.Ed. award.

Two forms of prior learning will be accredited; Accreditation of Prior Learning (RPL); and Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL).

This may be granted within the following limits:

- Pg Cert: a maximum of 30 credits, or one module, may be allowed in total
- Pg Dip: a maximum of 60 credits, or two modules, may be allowed in total

APL refers to certificated learning such as Higher National Certificates (HNCs) Higher National Diplomas (HNDs), Open University (OU) programmes, other degree programmes, postgraduate qualifications and certain professional qualifications, and may also be given for parts of academic qualifications completed successfully.

APEL is defined as learning, which has its source in experience, for example at work, or in the community. The assessment of APEL will normally be undertaken by the programme team. Any member(s) of the programme team involved in assisting an applicant in preparing a claim will not be concerned with the assessment. Final approval of credit will rest with the Exam Board. Recommendations by the programme team about APL and APEL are considered by the Exam Board on the same basis as module assessments.

Programme evaluation and monitoring

UHI and its Academic Partners are committed to making available to you the most appropriate channels for your comments about the programme.

Should you wish to use it, the procedure for academic complaints and appeals is set out in [UHI's Academic Standards and Quality Regulations](#).

Module evaluation and surveys

A module evaluation questionnaire should be completed at the end of each module. Please take time to complete these as they help us to ensure the quality of the programme.

Module Evaluations are available via the [UHI Records](#) hub. Log in and go to the surveys at Modules > Module surveys.

Programme modules

To achieve the PG Certificate Research Methods, you must successfully complete **three** of the following four modules.

Semester 1 (S1)

PG S1 begins the first week in September each year.

Research Methods (RM) UN811989

This foundational module focuses on designing research projects and analysing data in a quantitative, qualitative or mixed methods' approach. Level 11 (20 course credits, cc).

Module Leaders: Steven.Timoney.perth@uhi.ac.uk, Kerry.Hannigan.perth@uhi.ac.uk

Quantitative Research and Data Analysis (QRDA) UX311001

This module will provide students with the opportunity to explore a variety of quantitative and statistical techniques for the successful design, implementation, and methodology of research studies. It includes data collection, descriptive statistics, hypothesis testing and correlation analysis as well as other techniques. Level 11 (20 course credits, cc).

Module Leader: Dr. Eddy.Graham@uhi.ac.uk

Module Learning Outcomes: *"On successful completion of this module, students should be able to..."*

- **Learning Outcome 1 (LO1):** Critically select appropriate statistical and quantitative techniques for collecting and analysing data
- **Learning Outcome 2 (LO2):** Critically and robustly demonstrate the effective and rigorous use of different advanced statistical techniques, both parametric and non-parametric
- **Learning Outcome 3 (LO3):** Present research analyses in a fully referenced, professional report, of publishable, peer-reviewed standard

Semester 2 (S2)

PG S1 begins the first week in February each year.

Action research and mixed methods: rising to today's research challenges

(ARMM) UX311997

This module will focus on action research and mixed methods literature, approaches and studies. The purpose is to deepen students' epistemological and ontological understanding of methodology and the philosophy of science, beyond the traditional qualitative – quantitative debates, by critically exploring the application of action research approaches in community contexts.

The module will provide opportunities for students, as research practitioners, to explore and critically reflect on both the complexities of professional practice and research methodologies. They will be required to systematically address an issue or a problem in practice by planning an action research project in their area whilst simultaneously enhancing understanding of their own practice and the underpinning assumptions.

Level 11 (20 course credits, cc).

Module Leader: Dr. Tamara.Griffiths@uhi.ac.uk

Module Learning Outcomes: *"On successful completion of this module, students should be able to..."*

- **Learning Outcome 1 (LO1):** Demonstrate a critical understanding of mixed methods research and action research and its implications for the student's professional practice by drawing on relevant literature and research and reflecting on how these approaches to research will enhance and be embedded in their own practice
- **Learning Outcome 2 (LO2):** Critically assess the suitability of action research as a methodology and reflect on its applicability within the student's own professional practice context
- **Learning Outcome 3 (LO3):** Show enhanced understanding of and the use of complex methodological approaches, such as action research with mixed methods
- **Learning Outcome 4 (LO4):** Plan and design an action research or mixed methods project into an aspect of one's own practice where scope for potential improvement or change has been identified after critical reflection

- **Learning Outcome 5 (LO5):** Produce a fully developed proposal, which reflects a deep understanding of action research and specific methods, and their potential to reflectively address a specific area of one's own professional practice

Qualitative Inquiry and Hebridean Research Methods (QI) UX211935

Established and emerging qualitative methods of collecting, analysing, and representing data, or honouring human voice, is covered in this module, including Hebridean educational research methods. Students will develop a qualitative research proposal in this module in preparative for future research and dissertations. Level 11 (20 course credits, cc).

Module, Programme Leader: Dr. Kara.Smith@uhi.ac.uk

Module Learning Outcomes: *“On successful completion of this module, students should be able to...”*

- **Learning Outcome 1 (LO1):** understand the role and limitations of qualitative inquiry in the context of global methodological, participatory and theoretical perspectives in the wider social research context
- **Learning Outcome 2 (LO2):** critically select from a wide range of qualitative research techniques to answer a developed research question after critical analysis of appropriate literature
- **Learning Outcome 3 (LO3):** design and plan a piece of qualitative research, justifying the methods chosen for the collection and analysis of qualitative data
- **Learning Outcome 4 (LO4):** present finding in an appropriate format

Teaching and learning

UHI is committed to moving from knowledge transmission towards a greater emphasis on the facilitation of experiential learning and *critical* reflection. This, in turn, challenges underlying assumptions about professional practice.

As a participant on the programme, you will have a series of clearly defined tasks for each module. These will normally include examining an aspect of your work or organisation in some detail. You will be required to read research and theoretical texts associated with this and to engage in on-line group discussions and group assignments with other participants. Your tutor will guide the discussion and provide guidance, normally using a blended mixture of e-mail, web-based discussion boards and telephone support.

The programme is delivered wholly online with tutor support, within a virtual learning environment (VLE) called Brightspace. You will be expected to access the VLE for at least 3 hours per week during a 20-credit module to review learning materials, participate in online discussions and make use of the chat room facilities, and meet with your module leader monthly.

Libraries and learning resources

UHI Libraries

UHI operates a distributed library service to students, offering support and access to a range of paper-based and electronic information and learning resources. These are designed to complement and support the curriculum, and to meet information needs for research work.

The service is delivered online and through the individual libraries of partner colleges. Participants can access it through the college or learning centre most convenient to them, and an inter-site loan system ensures they can borrow books from any library in the network. The UHI Librarian holds a series of inductions at the beginning of each semester, and it is highly recommended that students attend one of these sessions.

The UHI Library Service also participates in the national inter-library loan scheme, and in the SCONUL Access scheme, which enables participants to access the university library most

convenient to them. Information on this scheme, and a list of member university libraries, are available at [SCONUL Access](#).

As well as print material – books and journals – the UHI Library Service provides access to a wide range of electronic information – e-books, databases, journals, and digitised extracts from specific texts. These are available through the [UHI Library website](#). They include EBSCO Academic Premier, Science Direct, Cambridge University Press and JSTOR, all of which offer full-text access to a wide range of titles relevant to education studies. Details of how to access them are available from UHI library staff.

An integrated library management system allows users to search the combined holdings of all UHI partner college libraries from any location through the UHI Library catalogue. The catalogue includes hyperlinks to digitised extracts, and to eBooks.

UHI aspires to offer seamless access to all resources, or sources for materials not held, required by staff or participants, irrespective of location, attendance or any special requirements of the user. For further information or for assistance in accessing resources, participants should contact library.nwh@uhi.ac.uk

Research students wishing to publish their work(s) may have access to OA funding through the UHI library LibGuide: [Research Publishing \(Open Access\)](#)

TALIS lists

The library also offers a number of TALIS lists useful for your course readings with online links to free books and open access materials: [University of the Highlands and Islands \(talīs.com\)](#)

You can use TALIS to annotate or keep your own list of readings for your assignments.

Brightspace

Throughout your studies, you will use the virtual learning environment (VLE) [Brightspace](#) both to access learning resources and so connect with fellow students. There is a separate area per module. To prepare for using Brightspace you can use our [essential guide](#).

Essential skills

The [Essential Student Skills](#) online resource contains information regarding core skills, using our learning technologies, effective learning, preparing for work, and much, much more. Please spend some time going through the resources and dip in as and when you need a refresher.

IT systems

The [Learning and Information Services](#) (LIS) section of the UHI website provides information and news on services, and how to get help with IT problems. You can also find advice and guidance at [Essential student skills: UHI technologies](#).

Email

As a participant on the programme, you will be allocated a UHI username and password (if you do not already have one) for you to access UHI's email system. If you are not employed by a UHI academic partner college and you experience problems, you should contact the programme leader in the first instance. It is essential that you communicate with your tutors using your student email address.

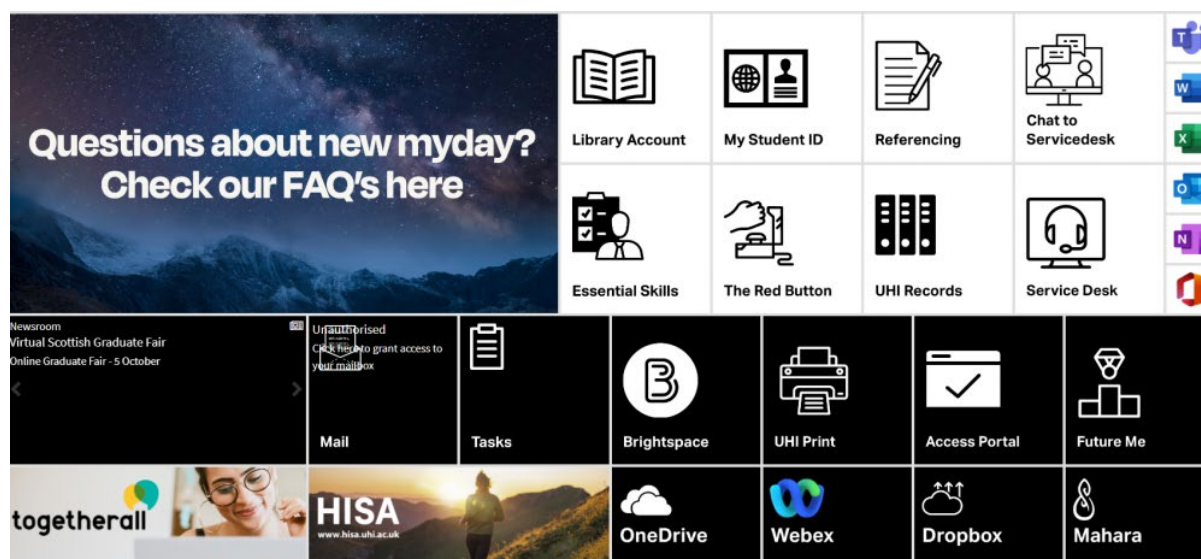
You should be able to set up a 'forwarding rule' from your student email account to another email address so that you will be alerted about any incoming mail to your student account if you don't check it regularly. Your module tutors may well send out module announcements which will be automatically forwarded to your student email account. These announcements often contain important information, and it is important that you get this information in a timely manner. UHI student email is the best way to ensure this.

Your UHI username is simply your student number and your default password is your date of birth: DDMMYYYY. You are advised to change this to something memorable.

MyDay student portal

MyDay is our university student portal. It is packed with fantastic features to keep you up to date with what's going on in and around the university and local college campus, plus all the student information you require in one handy online portal.

As well as your everyday essentials such as pass through access to the VLE, UHI Records, and email (no need to login again!), you will also find links to many other useful things such as software downloads, IT help, local support, news, and more.

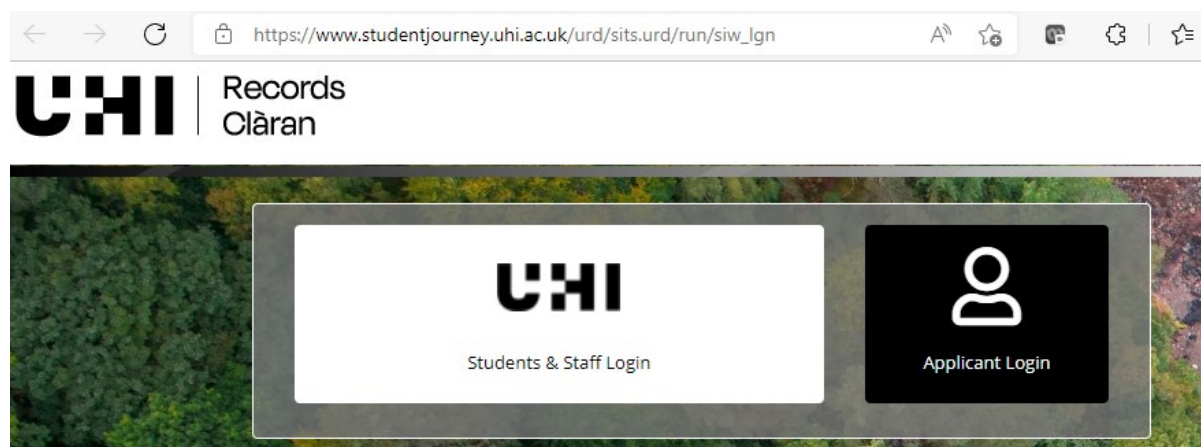


Log in in with your full details (studentnumber@uhi.ac.uk, and your usual password).

You can also download the app from the Apple or Android store (search for MyDay).

UHI Records

[UHI Records](#) portal is where you will find information on enrolments, assessment results and funding information.



Assessment

The assessment strategy of this programme has been designed to recognise the learning of professional and mature participants. It provides transparent guidance to both tutors and participants on the standards which will be applied to assessment, and on the procedures adopted to ensure, through careful monitoring, that assessment is seen to be both fair and reliable.

Modules are subject to two kinds of assessment criteria:

- specific criteria which are indicated in the module descriptors
- general criteria, which apply to all work submitted

In order to pass a module, you will be required to demonstrate that the work submitted has met all the stated learning outcomes of the module. Outstanding performance in meeting one outcome does not compensate for a failure to meet other stated learning outcomes. The work must also meet the general criteria set out in the following page.

General criteria for assessment

All assessed work is required to demonstrate that the standard achieved is at Masters Level, as defined in the Masters level criteria section of this handbook.

To achieve a satisfactory standard, work must display:

- an ability to integrate theoretical understanding with practical experience when reflecting on professional practice
- reflection on, and application of ethical standards appropriate to the professional context
- a critical grasp of the concepts and principles related to the module through appropriate use of language, analysis of situations, response to problems and, where appropriate, choice of research methodology
- an ability to find, comprehend and critically analyse relevant information from published literature
- an ability to locate, interpret and critically evaluate data

In addition, the following criteria must be met:

- material for assessment must be presented in a clear, structured and coherent form

- sources of evidence must be cited in a form which facilitates easy access by others of original sources (normally by using the Harvard referencing system)
- work must display clarity and accuracy in the use of language

Grading and marking

Module tutors will provide a full commentary on how you have performed, and where performance has exceeded or failed to meet the standard required for the programme.

Submitted work is marked in the first instance by the module tutor. All modules operate a second marking system where a proportion of submissions are marked again by a second marker to ensure quality and consistency.

If a submission has been selected for double marking, the two markers will discuss the submission and agree on a mark. The first marker will offer feedback and feedforward, and the second marker will be invited to comment as well. Where student numbers on a module are small (less than 12), all submissions will be second marked. Where a submission is deemed to be below the threshold for a pass, the submission will be second marked.

A sample of assignments are moderated by External Examiners at the end of each session.

Normally you should expect to have feedback within 15 working days from submission. You will receive comments on the assignment and be awarded a provisional grade, subject to the decision of the examination board.

Submission of work

Submission dates for assessments will be communicated to you by module tutors. Different modules will have different submission dates.

The method of submission will vary from module to module but will usually be electronic in nature, either via the Assignment facility on Brightspace or via email directly to your tutor.

It is always prudent to keep a record of your submission date and time.

You should make sure that your student number appears as a footnote on all pages of your submission.

Participation component

Some of the modules you will study have a participation component. This means that a percentage of the marks for the module are awarded on the basis of participation in module discussion boards.

This is treated like any other assessment and in order to pass the module, you will need to pass the participation component. Your module tutor will be able to offer guidance on what is expected, but generally speaking, this means posting and replying to posts from other participants and the module tutor.

Re-use of work between modules

Whilst you are encouraged to make links between modules, you must avoid making use of identical blocks of work in more than one module. Where this cannot be avoided, e.g. because the work has wider reference, it should be clearly stated that you have included the piece in another module and why you think it necessary to repeat.

Mitigating circumstances

We recognise that sometimes students experience difficulties in their day-to-day lives that can affect their ability to study.

If you experience such circumstances, you should contact your Personal Academic Tutor at the earliest possible time. You may, after discussions with your Personal Academic Tutor, submit a claim for Mitigating Circumstances.

Your claim will be treated confidentially and will be considered by the Mitigating Circumstances panel. The panel will make a decision about whether to uphold your claim or not. A successful claim for Mitigating Circumstances will mean that you will be able to submit your assessments late or a second time without a capped mark.

By their nature, personal circumstances will vary from student to student so if you are experiencing difficulties, we would encourage you to speak with your Personal Academic Tutor at the earliest possible time.

Citations and references

Citations and references are integral and essential parts of academic essays at university level. In presenting a statement in academic work, it is necessary to cite the source of your information or facts, and to give the academic backing for your statement. These sources are then referenced - identified in greater detail and in a particular format, at the end of your essay, in a bibliography - an alphabetical listing of all your sources.

Poor referencing will be penalised by examiners, so it is vital to know how to do it properly. There are a number of reasons for the importance of citations and references:

- in acknowledging the work of others, you avoid being accused of plagiarism - passing off other people's work as your own
- it allows your reader to identify the currency of your information as s/he reads your text
- it enables your reader to find the source of your information
- it shows the academic backing for your arguments

For these reasons it is very important that you record the information you need as you use material, e.g. build up a sheet of references as you prepare your essay, so you are creating a bibliography as you go. If you don't do this as you use a book or web page, you might not be able to find them at a later date.

It is important, in ensuring that everyone reading your work can understand your citations and references, that you are consistent and that you follow the UHI referencing protocol which can be found at: <http://www.uhi.ac.uk/en/libraries/how-to>

Plagiarism and academic misconduct

Plagiarism is not allowed under any circumstances. Any participant found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures. Refer to the Post-graduate Quality regulations (UHI Academic Standards and Quality Regulations) available on the UHI Website.

Design and presentation of assignments

At Masters level you are expected to be able to write fluently, spell correctly and present your work in a professional manner. Examiners pay particular attention to spelling, grammar, sentence construction and layout. If you are uncertain about any of this, make sure you

submit an early draft to your tutor. Do not wait until the final submission to discover your problems! You are encouraged, if you are in any doubt, to look at these before you start writing your assignments. Your tutor will encourage you to submit an early draft and will provide helpful comment. You should make good use of this facility.

You will be advised of a word count for each assessment. You should adhere to this word count as closely as you can. It is always best to be as close as possible to the actual stated word count, but this is not a hard-and-fast rule. 10% either over or under the word count is acceptable. If your word count is more than 10% below the stated word limit, your tutor may well assume that you have not gone into enough depth. Please do not write more than 10% over the word limit. Anything beyond this could be ignored by your tutor. Word counts should be added at the end of your work, before the reference section. Word counts do not include front sheets, references or appendices. If you are in any doubt, seek guidance from your tutor.

If you feel that you need some support with study skills, your personal academic tutor will be able to advise you about where such support can be found. All academic partner colleges have study support facilities that can offer advice regarding academic writing etc.

Regulations

The Academic Standards and Quality Regulations (ASQR) have been developed to fulfil the regulatory requirements of the University of the Highlands and Islands and are consistent with the Memorandum and Articles of the university.

This page contains the most pertinent information, but full details of all of the university's standards and regulations can be found at the link below:

- [UHI Academic Standards and Quality Regulations \(ASQR\)](#)
- [UHI Academic Calendar](#)



Attendance and participation

All the lectures and seminars for the PgCert form an integral part of the programme. Whilst delivery of this programme is flexible and attendance is not tied down to time or place, nevertheless, if you cannot fulfil the attendance requirements for the module, you must notify your module tutor as soon as possible. If you are ill for more than 7 days, or if illness prevents the submission of an assignment, a medical certificate is required.

The guidance provided by module tutors in seminars is important. Please let your module tutor know if unusual circumstances occur so that you can agree how to proceed. If you do not contribute regularly to the discussion board and to the set activities, a deferred decision is likely, and you may be required to retake the module.

UHI follows the procedures set out in the Academic Standards and Quality Regulations which can be accessed via the link above.

Examination Boards

There are two examination boards at the end of semesters one and two. The programme team provide recommendations to the examination board – chaired by the Subject Network Leader at UHI Executive Office - and to the team of two external examiners.

Period of study

The normal period of study for one module is one semester; this is part time. Most PGC students complete their certificate in one year.

Student support

If you have a non-academic issue which you would like to discuss, each UHI college has a Guidance Service. This provides a safe and confidential environment where you can talk through your concerns with someone in a non-judgmental manner.

Personal Academic Tutors

Each UHI student is assigned a named [Personal Academic Tutor \(PAT\)](#) whose responsibility it is to provide you with academic support throughout the duration of your studies. Your PAT will be in contact with you at least once each semester to review your academic progress; this is in addition to an introductory meeting at the start of each academic year. If you are unsure who your PAT is, please contact your programme leader.

Programme Leader

If you have an issue or need advice on a matter that goes beyond the scope of your PAT, you should see the Programme Leader.