Level 3 - The Co-curriculum: A Quick Guide for Personal Tutors

This ‘at a glance guide’ has been designed to provide Personal Tutors with the key information needed to support and signpost their tutees to the relevant services to support their engagement with the co-curriculum.

The ‘Quick Guide’ is not meant to be prescriptive; it is designed to provide a source of information on the topic of the co-curriculum along with a series of prompts which might be useful when interacting with your tutees.

What is the co-curriculum and why is it important?

The co-curriculum is a term used to describe any activity which complements the academic curriculum and enhances the student experience. The table below summarises key information regarding the wide range of co-curricular activities associated with the University. Students are encouraged to participate based on their interests and the time they have available. These activities provide students with opportunities to enhance their employability and develop their CV.

Many of the co-curricular activities can be recorded on a student’s Enhanced Transcript which is a new supplementary transcript all undergraduate students receive when they finish their studies. It functions as evidence for employers and postgraduate recruiters, and helps students to become more aware of their skills and how to articulate them in recruitment situations.

What is the difference between co-curricular activities and extra-curricular activities?

The phrase ‘co-curricular activities’ refers to opportunities which complement the academic curriculum and which are recognised formally by the University (e.g. work placements, study abroad & volunteering). In comparison, involvement in off-campus community initiatives and/or other recreational activities are referred to as ‘extra-curricular activities’. Both co-curricular activities and extra-curricular activities are important to students’ personal development and their CV profile, and are valued by employers.
How do your tutees access co-curricular opportunities?

The University’s Careers Service (located on the 2nd Floor, The Hub) offers information on and access to a wide range of co-curricular activities which provide students with the opportunity to develop transferable skills and Aberdeen Graduate Attributes. These opportunities include: work placements, the BP Student Tutoring Scheme, career mentoring, enterprise & entrepreneurship events and the STAR (Students Taking Active Roles) Award initiative. Additional co-curricular activities such as sports clubs, societies, volunteering and study abroad are also offered by the Students’ Association and by the Student Recruitment & Admissions Service (SRAS) respectively.

### Selected Co-curricular Activities Available to Students at the University of Aberdeen

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Target Group(s)*</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>URL</th>
<th>Application Deadline*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Go Abroad Erasmus</td>
<td>Mainly available to level II and some level III undergraduates</td>
<td>Offers students the opportunity to study or work in another European country for one semester or a full academic year as part of their degree programme. Summer work placement opportunities are also available.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.abdn.ac.uk/erasmus/">www.abdn.ac.uk/erasmus/</a></td>
<td>Mid-January</td>
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<tr>
<td>Go Abroad International Exchange Programme</td>
<td>Mainly available to level II undergraduates</td>
<td>Offers students the opportunity to study or work in a non-European country for one semester or a full academic year as part of their degree programme.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.abdn.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/international-exchange-programme-368.php">www.abdn.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/international-exchange-programme-368.php</a></td>
<td>Mid-January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Reps</td>
<td>Available to all undergraduates</td>
<td>Offers students an opportunity to represent their peers at a course level.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ausa.org.uk/representation/academicreps/">www.ausa.org.uk/representation/academicreps/</a></td>
<td>At the start of each year</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Students 4 Students (S4S)</strong></td>
<td>Mentor opportunities available generally to level II and III undergraduates</td>
<td>Transitional mentoring opportunities for experienced students with first year students or direct entrants.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.abdn.ac.uk/newstudents/undergraduate/s4s/">www.abdn.ac.uk/newstudents/undergraduate/s4s/</a></td>
<td>September or earlier</td>
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<td><strong>Students’ Association Sports Clubs &amp; Societies</strong></td>
<td>Available to all undergraduates</td>
<td>Offers hundreds of activities for students to explore their interests and talents.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ausa.org.uk/">www.ausa.org.uk/</a></td>
<td>On-going throughout academic year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>STAR (Students Taking Active Roles) Award</strong></td>
<td>Available to all undergraduates</td>
<td>Provides students with a framework to develop their employability in roles outside of their academic studies.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.abdn.ac.uk/careers/co-curriculum/staraward/">www.abdn.ac.uk/careers/co-curriculum/staraward/</a></td>
<td>Early October</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Career Mentoring</strong></td>
<td>Available to all undergraduates</td>
<td>Matches students with graduates from a range of employment sectors who are willing to share their professional experience and expertise and support students in developing their careers ideas.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.abdn.ac.uk/careers/co-curriculum/mentoring/">www.abdn.ac.uk/careers/co-curriculum/mentoring/</a></td>
<td>End of September</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Work Placements</strong></td>
<td>Mainly available to penultimate year undergraduates</td>
<td>Employer-hosted work placements sourced by the Work Placement Team within the Careers Service. Vacancies are advertised via the Careers Service website.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.abdn.ac.uk/careers/jobs-work-experience/vacation-work-internships-placements.php">http://www.abdn.ac.uk/careers/jobs-work-experience/vacation-work-internships-placements.php</a></td>
<td>On-going throughout academic year but large organisation deadlines are normally before Christmas.</td>
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<td><strong>BP Student Tutoring Scheme</strong></td>
<td>Currently open to penultimate year and final year undergraduates</td>
<td>Places students in local primary and secondary schools for eight weeks to work with pupils under the supervision of the classroom teacher. The Scheme covers student travel expenses to their host school.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.abdn.ac.uk/careers/co-curriculum/bpscheme/">www.abdn.ac.uk/careers/co-curriculum/bpscheme/</a></td>
<td>Information session early October and application deadline mid-October.</td>
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### Aberdeen Internship Programme

**Penultimate year undergraduates**

Provides an extensive range of paid placement opportunities within the University’s professional services e.g. HR, IT Services etc.


**February**

### Enterprise and Entrepreneurship

**Available to all undergraduates**

Offers in conjunction with organisations such as the Scottish Institute for Enterprise and Business Gateway, enterprise entrepreneurship events and initiatives.

[www.abdn.ac.uk/careers/curriculum/enterprise/](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/careers/curriculum/enterprise/)

**On-going throughout academic year**

### Volunteering Opportunities

**Available to all undergraduates**

Advertised via the Volunteering Centre at the Students’ Association.

[www.ausa.org.uk/volunteer](http://www.ausa.org.uk/volunteer)

**On-going throughout academic year**

*Application deadlines and target groups are subject to change, consult relevant web pages for latest information.*
Level 3 Personal Tutor Meeting: The Co-curriculum

September Meeting

Suggested meeting agenda:

- Re-examine and discuss the menu of co-curricular opportunities offered by the University, especially those initiatives targeted at Level III students.
- Encourage students to think about their skills, attributes and experiences developed through co-curricular and extra-curricular activities and how these can enhance their employability in relation to employer requirements and desired skill-sets. Encourage your tutees to use the skills and attributes audit available via the online site ACHIEVE to help them identify their strengths and development needs.
- Remind students that many internship positions are only open to penultimate year students, so this final summer vacation is a key time to gain crucial experience.

Suggested questions to use at your meeting:

- What have you enjoyed about your time at university and the co-curricular/extra-curricular activities you have been involved with so far?
- How will you go about identifying co-curricular opportunities to further develop your skills and attributes this year?
- How have you made use of the Careers Service and other specialist services to identify work placements, career mentoring opportunities and other co-curricular activities?