



# THE DIFFERENCE

STARTING YOUR FUTURE  
AT ABERDEEN



UNIVERSITY  
OF ABERDEEN





# IN THE VANGUARD

**ABERDEEN HAS ALWAYS BEEN DIFFERENT. THERE'S A PIONEERING SPIRIT, AN URGE FOR DISCOVERY, DEEP IN THE LOCAL GRANITE. WHAT ELSE WOULD HAVE INSPIRED A MEDIEVAL BISHOP IN A SMALL NORTHERN PORT TO FOUND HIS OWN UNIVERSITY IN 1495?**

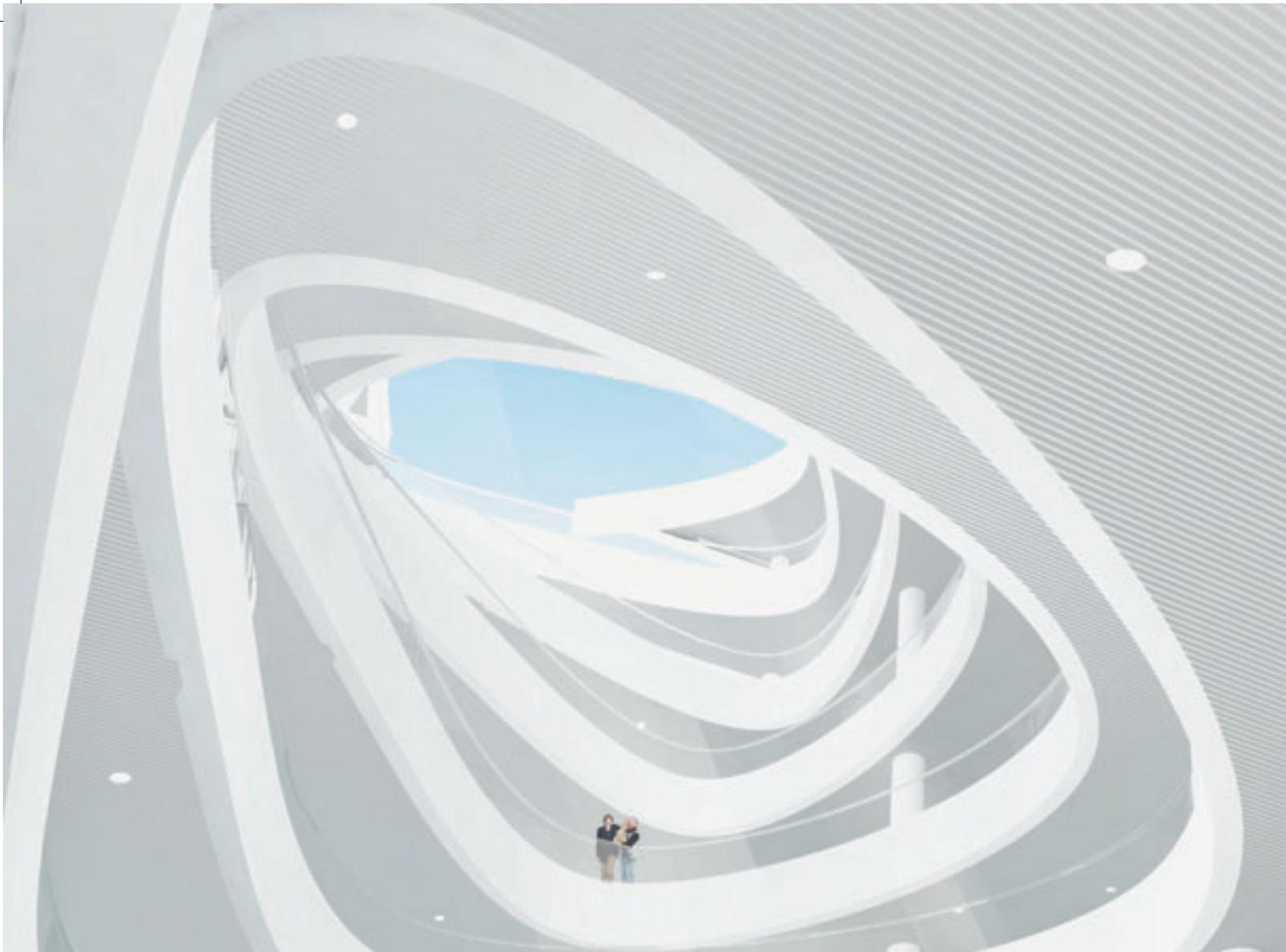
Columbus had just made landfall in the New World. It was the age of Leonardo and Michelangelo. Gunpowder and firearms were new to Europe. Witchcraft was punishable by burning and Caxton's Westminster printing press was less than 20 years old.

The Bishop's students learnt what they needed to face the challenges of their age, to bring prosperity to their region and boldly take their ideas to distant shores. But five hundred years on, the world is a far more complex place. It makes very different demands on our intellects and abilities.

Here at Aberdeen we're in the vanguard once more when it comes to recognising what we must do to prepare people for life as independent thinkers in the 21st century. We must nurture minds, of course, but we have to take care of bodies and spirits too.

So we're investing heavily in the campus, in the facilities you need for study and play, and in the support we offer you as a student. But also, perhaps most importantly, we're investing in the courses themselves where we're now making far-reaching changes.

We want the Aberdeen experience to be the best you can have anywhere. Read on to discover what this could mean for you – and how it's more than geography that sets us apart from others.



**£57M**  
**INVESTMENT**  
**IN NEW LIBRARY.**

**THAT'S THE DIFFERENCE**



# THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

There's something about ancient masonry that's conducive to thinking and learning – and we've got plenty of it. King's College campus has all the beauty and tranquillity you'd expect from a place that's been home to five centuries of continuous scholarship.

But there's nothing medieval about the way we look after our students. Take internet access for example. We've got one of the largest wi-fi campuses in Europe, and that includes our student accommodation.

For the energetic, we've just opened the new, state-of-the-art Aberdeen Sports Village, which we developed with **sportscotland** and Aberdeen City Council. It has an indoor athletics hall, football pitch, games hall and studio spaces - so the games can go on even when northern nights close in.

We've begun work on our stunning new £57m library of the future – the biggest cultural building project in Scotland of the new century. Due for completion in 2011, the glittering glass cube will change the way you think about libraries forever.

Around the campus we're creating congenial new learning spaces to complement the lecture theatres and labs. Here you can meet with a study group, discuss a project with a friend, or simply sit and read on your own.

And to make sure you can easily get all the help you need while you're studying, we're rolling all the different services together into a single one-stop student support shop.

Then, of course, there's the city life, the nearby beaches and spectacular Highland scenery. They're all part of that same difference that has made the Aberdeen experience a highlight of so many people's lives.

Why not find out more by reading the Lonely Planet guide to studying at Aberdeen at [www.abdn.ac.uk/documents/lonely-planet.pdf](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/documents/lonely-planet.pdf)

## Nourishing The Mind

What and how should we really be teaching in the 21st century? To answer this we've spent the last two years looking at ground-breaking models elsewhere in the world. We've talked to employers and professional bodies, educators and students past and present, along with their parents.

Now we're reshaping our curriculum to produce graduates who are more rounded, better informed and more intellectually flexible. Who can be critical thinkers and effective communicators. Who are more committed to personal development and better prepared to be active citizens.

When you study at Aberdeen, your degree will still have all the quality and depth of the traditional Scottish degree, but from 2010 it will also offer you:

- more choice – so you can study around your core subject to gain breadth and context; add a language, a science or business study as an extra subject during the first two years of your degree; or choose from a range of new multidisciplinary courses based on real world problems
- wider opportunities – so you can broaden your experience and skills through a choice of activities such as overseas study, work placements and voluntary work, all overseen by the University
- better support – including more scholarships, a new one-stop student support shop that brings together different support services, and new flexible learning spaces on campus to complement lecture theatres and labs
- more flexibility – so you can fit your studies around other life demands and take study breaks if you need them; we'll award formal qualifications for the study you've already completed, so you can easily pick up where you left off when you decide to return



**COME HERE.  
GO ANYWHERE.**

**THAT'S THE DIFFERENCE**

# BROADER BRUSHSTROKES

ONE THING ABOUT THE 21ST CENTURY IS CERTAIN: YOU'LL NEED TO BE MORE VERSATILE, MORE ADAPTABLE, THAN EVER BEFORE TO MEET THE CHALLENGES OF LIFE AND WORK.

At Aberdeen we believe this demands an appreciation of disciplines other than your own, and a deeper understanding of the context of your own core discipline. We call the courses that provide for this, and for other broadening experiences, the Enhanced Study options.

From 2010 everyone studying for a first degree at Aberdeen, with the exception of Medicine and Dentistry, will be able to include Enhanced Study options as part of their course.

We've taken care to restructure the degree programmes so that this won't increase your overall workload. There are three types of Enhanced Study:

- Sixth Century Courses
- Sustained Study Programmes
- Discipline Breadth Courses

## Sixth Century Courses

People have been studying at Aberdeen for over five centuries. Now, these exciting new cross-disciplinary courses place you at the cutting-edge of modern learning.

They invite you to consider different approaches to knowledge and enquiry as you look at issues affecting the world in which we live today. They're designed to help you develop a deeper critical understanding of your chosen area of study by setting the subject in a wider context. You will normally be expected to take one of these courses during your first two years of study.

These are the Sixth Century Courses that are currently approved, though the titles are subject to change:

### Humans and Other Animals

We humans have a rich and complex relationship with the animal kingdom. You will explore this via themes such as domestication, animal rights and welfare, hunting, pets, animal symbolism and conservation. The course will lead you to a deeper understanding of the differences and similarities between humans and animals, and help you develop a more informed appreciation of contemporary and historical issues in human-animal relations.

### The Digital Society

Many disciplines meet at the crossroads that is the digital society. On this course you will explore the impact of the digital society on individuals, organisations and society as a whole; and consider its main issues and challenges, including the digital divide and the tension between privacy and security. The course will prepare you for life as an active citizen in the digital society and help you contribute to related debates.

### Health and Wealth of Nations

Across the globe, health and wealth seem to be inextricably linked. It is therefore important to be able to analyse the association between them from an international perspective. The course brings together knowledge and understanding from economic, medical and political developments to help you towards an accessible and thorough analysis of the current state of the world, and the changes that are likely in the future.

### Sustainability

Sustainability, environmentalism and renewable energy are among the most pressing issues of the new century. Governments, policy-makers, legal systems, environmental groups, scientists, pressure groups and the general public – all have a role to play in shaping the future. On this course you will consider how to foster dialogue across disciplines including psychology, politics, international relations, sociology, the geosciences, anthropology, philosophy, biology, history, law and business.

### Science and the Media

How does society present and interpret scientific data? What are the varied, often conflicting, interests that come into play in the reporting of scientific matters? You will consider reports on diverse scientific issues in different media to promote your investigative, analytical and critical thinking faculties. In particular this course will help sharpen your literacy, communication and numeracy skills.

## Risk in Society

Everything is susceptible to risk – from us as individuals to the very fabric of our society. This course will help you to understand risk when you analyse information associated with a particular issue; to quantify it in a realistic way, and communicate it effectively. You will gain a basic knowledge of the science and technology in certain exemplar areas, and an introduction to risk perception, risk assessment and the quantification of risk.

## The Mind Machine

What is the relationship between mind and matter? What is consciousness? Are thought and language one and the same? Are we unique among animals because of our minds? These questions fascinate philosophers, psychologists, linguists and neuroscientists alike. On this course you will study aspects of the functioning of mind and brain to a level at which you will be able to give informed answers to the questions that people might ask.

## Natural World

This is an interdisciplinary course that will encourage you to engage with the natural world, both intellectually and experientially. It provides a forum for exploring different perceptions of the natural world, as well as the context and opportunity for reflection on your personal place within it. Lectures will introduce key ideas associated with perceptions of the environment and how different groups of people describe and value nature. Each student will get to choose three fieldtrips to attend, which are intended to provide experience of different natural environments, the species within them and human interactions with them.

## Oceans and Society

Seventy percent of the earth is covered by oceans that have a measurable value for society, but they are also increasingly perceived as a threat. On this course you will explore society's fast changing relationship with the oceans. From melting ice caps to ocean acidification and a weakening Gulf Stream, we are now changing the structure and function of the marine system and the ecosystems it supports, on a global scale.

## Mankind in the Universe

What do we know and what don't we know about the universe and our place in it? This course will start with a conventional scientific overview of our knowledge of the physical universe, as seen through the lenses of history, society and religion; and progress to an enquiry into the limits to our knowledge and comprehension. You will gain a broad view of science and its practice, and you will start to explore the nature of knowledge itself.

## Fearsome Engines

As modern technology becomes more successful we grow ever more insulated from the realities of engineering. By studying early technology, you will be exposed to a comprehensible, non-mathematical world without the benefits of modern sources of energy. The main focus of the course will be those projects in recent years that have combined the skills of historians and engineers to solve mysteries of past engineering.

## Sustained Study Programmes

Would you benefit from having a language, or perhaps some knowledge of business or science, alongside your main degree subject? These programmes are designed to provide you with continual exposure, throughout the first two years of your degree course, to an area of study that is distinct from, but complementary to, your core discipline.

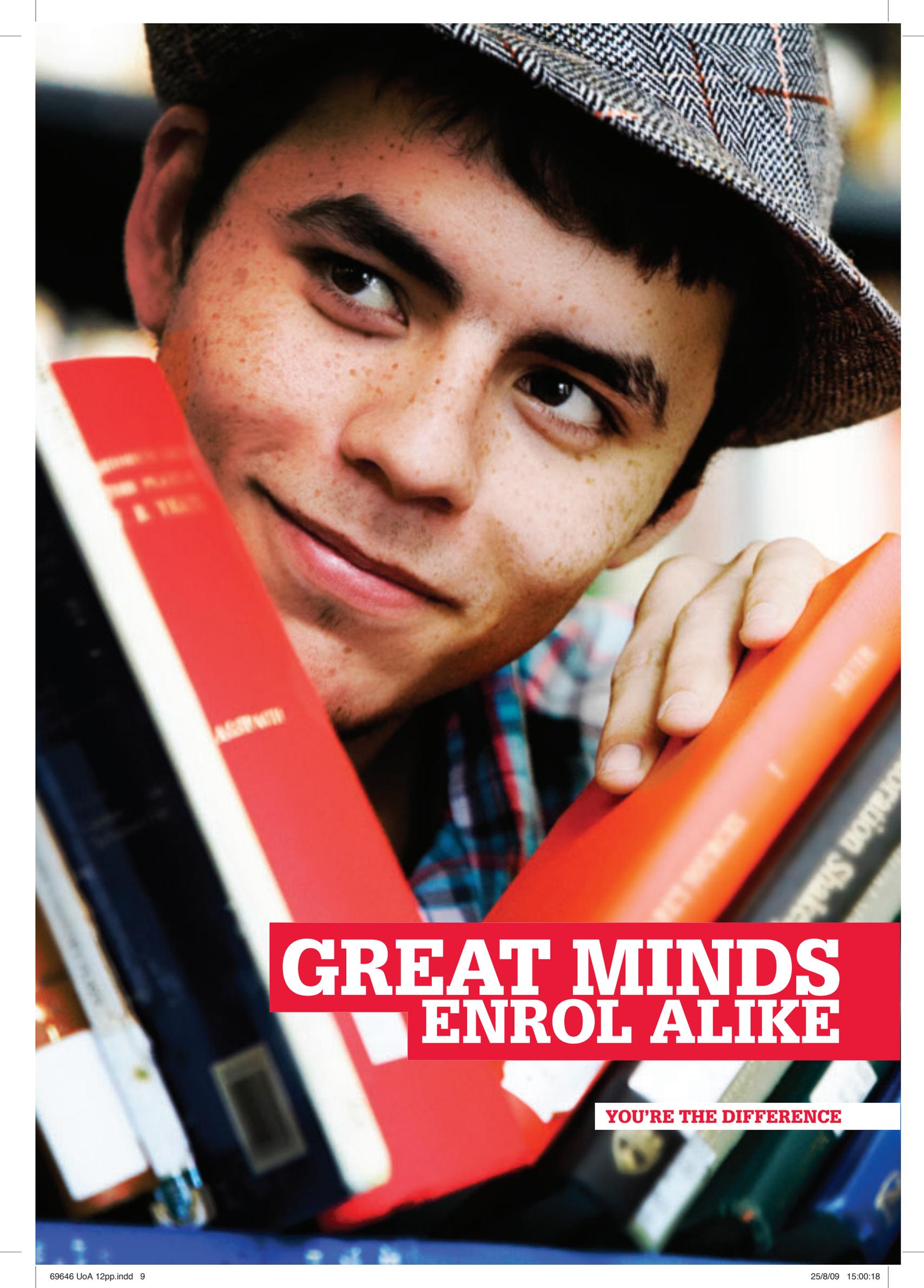
We are currently developing sustained study programmes in areas such as French; German; Hispanic Studies; Gaelic Studies; Arabic; Mandarin Chinese; Business; Latin; Biblical Languages; The Classical Tradition; Fit for Life; Computing; Conservation & Environment; and more.

## Discipline Breadth Courses

These courses allow you to extend the scope of your study by taking a single course that interests you but is separate from your core discipline. It might be related to your core subject or entirely unrelated to it – the choice is yours. For example, if you were taking Anthropology along with History and Sociology, you might also want to do some Archaeology (related) or Biology (unrelated). You have the whole catalogue of undergraduate study subjects to choose from.

**YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION  
ON THE SIXTH CENTURY COURSES AT:**

**[WWW.ABDN.AC.UK/THEDIFFERENCE](http://WWW.ABDN.AC.UK/THEDIFFERENCE)**



# **GREAT MINDS ENROL ALIKE**

**YOU'RE THE DIFFERENCE**

# ABOUT THE NEW COURSES

## Why change things?

We want to give you - our future graduates - the best possible preparation for modern life. We regularly look at the curriculum to make sure it reflects the demands of contemporary society and meets the requirements of students from many countries with widely varying expectations and needs.

Our ambition is to be ranked in the world's top 100 universities. Currently among the top 200, we see our research ratings go from strength to strength, with 89% of our research activity of international quality, and we believe the new courses will help move us still closer to our goal.

## Is anyone else doing it?

Other leading universities including Harvard, Yale, Melbourne and Hong Kong have recently reformed their curricula, and we visited them during our own review. We're the first university in the UK to consider such far-reaching changes.

## Do I have to take the new courses?

Yes. You will be expected to include Enhanced Study options as part of your study throughout your degree programme.

## Will it mean more work?

No. We're restructuring the degree programmes so that the Enhanced Study courses won't mean an increased workload. You may take more courses than you would currently, but the overall workload across all courses will remain the same.

## Will I be more employable?

Yes. By learning to become better informed, more rounded and more intellectually flexible, you'll develop the qualities employers have told us they want, and so increase your employability. You'll also be better prepared for the challenges of a fast-changing workplace, and the likelihood of several careers during your working life.

## What extra skills will I learn?

The new curriculum will help you to become academically excellent, a critical thinker and effective communicator, open to learning and personal development, and an active citizen - the four attributes of a successful modern graduate. There are also more opportunities for you to take part in activities alongside your studies which will further develop your skills and employability.

## Will I still come out with an MA/BSc?

Yes. The traditional MA/BSc degrees are still at the heart of everything we do. Though if you leave a programme before the end of it, we'll now give you a qualification that recognises the study you have so far completed. Employers will recognise these additional qualifications.

## Will my degree still take four years?

If you start one of our MA or BSc programmes, and wish to achieve an Honours degree at the University, it will normally take four years to complete as before. However, Advanced and Accelerated three year Honours programmes are an option for suitably qualified candidates, and there is also a three year Designated degree. But importantly, we're now making it easier for you to fit your studies in with the other demands life may make on you, so you can also enter, leave and re-enter a degree programme at different stages. If you choose to do this we'll provide you with exit qualifications to recognise the levels of study you've completed.

## Will I still be able to study abroad?

Yes. In fact, as part of the changes, we're making it easier for people who want to study part of their degree programme overseas, and we're offering more support to those who do. We're also working to make sure that your degree will be recognised for graduate training or further study outside the UK.

## What about professional accreditation?

The changes won't affect the professional accreditation of your course. We're in constant contact with employers and professional bodies to make sure that our courses exceed their requirements.

## Will this affect my tuition fees?

No, your tuition fees won't change. But with more flexibility over when you start and finish your degree programme, you'll have the opportunity to manage the costs of your study more easily.

## What evidence will I have of the extra courses I've taken?

We're not planning to change the degree certificate itself, but we are looking at including all the classes you've taken, including Enhanced Study options, along with other activities undertaken and skills attained, in your graduate transcript.



## WHAT NEXT?

ABERDEEN IS AN ANCIENT UNIVERSITY WITH GRAND AMBITIONS AND A KEEN EYE ON THE FUTURE.

WE WANT TO BE RANKED IN THE WORLD'S TOP 100 UNIVERSITIES. WE'RE A SUCCESSFUL RESEARCH-INTENSIVE UNIVERSITY, OUR TEACHING IS TOP-RATED AND WE HAVE SUPERB STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES.

WE CAN BOAST BRAND NEW WORLD-CLASS SPORTING FACILITIES AND WE'RE BUILDING A SPECTACULAR £57M LIBRARY. THE GRANITE CITY IS VIBRANT, AND THE SURROUNDING LANDSCAPE AND COASTLINE BREATHTAKING. NOW WE'RE OFFERING A DEGREE THAT SETS YOU UP UNIQUELY FOR THE OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES OF THE 21ST CENTURY.

# THE WORLD AWAITS YOUR GRADUATION

MAKE A DIFFERENCE



**THAT'S THE DIFFERENCE**

# AT ABERDEEN

To find out more either visit our website  
at [www.abdn.ac.uk/thedifference](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/thedifference)

Call +44 (0)1224 272090/91  
or email [sras@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:sras@abdn.ac.uk)



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