

# Go Beyond Boundaries

Brand Guidelines

# Are you ready to go beyond boundaries?

Going **beyond** disciplines. **Beyond** borders. Beyond rigid thinking and traditional approaches.

The world's greatest challenges cross disciplines and span continents. To solve them we need people who see things from different perspectives. People who refuse to 'stay in their lane'.

Those who see no boundaries for ideas and their impact.

# What does it mean to go beyond boundaries?

Beyond Boundaries is our brand platform. Consider it our north star when writing, communicating, designing, or in any other creative pursuit.

It has sense of movement about it. Forward momentum. A feeling of progress without limits. It removes barriers, introduces opportunity, and celebrates possibility.

Aberdeen is home to knowledge seekers, change makers and boundary breakers. Those who disrupt the status quo without a second thought - those who'll make a lasting impact on the world.

Our brand speaks to them. Through big thinking, rousing copy and visuals that transport you to a whole new realm of possibility, we capture the imagination of our audiences. So it's important we hit the right notes when we're communicating with them - all the while showcasing the magnitude of opportunity at Aberdeen.

# Our commitment: Aberdeen 2040

True to our roots as a Scottish university, our programmes combine breadth and depth, and draw their strength from the quality of our research.

We believe in the interconnectedness of research and will create new interdisciplinary pathways for study as we address global challenges. Our students will grow in confidence and understanding, so that they can be change-makers across the globe.

Working across key strategic themes:

- Sustainability
- Inclusivity
- Interdisciplinarity
- International

To address five interdisciplinary challenges:

- Energy transition
- Health, nutrition and wellbeing
- Social inclusion and cultural diversity
- Data and artificial intelligence
- Environment and biodiversity

GO BEYOND BOUNDARIES

# Our story

## Who we are



# Our manifesto

Big questions, bigger ideas. Aberdeen is home to knowledge seekers, change makers and boundary breakers.

The world's greatest challenges cross disciplines and span continents. To solve them we need people who see things from different perspectives – who go beyond expectation. Beyond rigid thinking and traditional approaches. Beyond boundaries.

## Are you ready to address our biggest global challenges?

Adventure lives where you dare to explore. Start a journey towards inclusivity, internationality and sustainability with an interdisciplinary approach to learning. Collaboration leads to eruptions of innovation, new ideas to fix age-old issues.

## Do you see the power in community?

Our people break boundaries. Explore ideas and innovations that serve others as part of our ancient tradition of modern thinking. Interdisciplinary challenges require interdisciplinary mindsets – and our campus is a proving ground for problem solving.

## Want to go beyond the limits of your imagination?

A better future requires bright minds with even brighter solutions. Explore the depths of your potential at a university that's home to 525 years of discovery. Find your purpose as you break boundaries alongside fellow innovators and risk takers.

## How far will you go to seek truth?

Scotland's alternative city – exposed, adventurous, unafraid – a city that sparks creativity, a university that inspires revolutionary ideas. Since 1495, we've held space for debate, discussion and discourse, sparking lasting, generational change.

## Are you willing to take a leap into the unknown?

Innovation is just an idea away when you're surrounded by radical thinking. Join boundary breakers and changemakers to solve today's biggest issues, or break new ground in an area that excites you.

Lean on granite-strong foundations to build the framework of your future, using newfound knowledge as your north star. Whether you're joining us as a student, researcher, teacher or partner, dare to go beyond what you ever thought possible at Aberdeen.



# Our difference

What makes our brand unique? From our approach to learning to our impact on the world, see what helps us rise above others in our space.

The University of Aberdeen is a launchpad to enlightenment. We reach beyond boundaries and disciplines in the pursuit of truth. We create new knowledge to address global challenges by blending research with teaching, community with industry, and heritage with innovation.

Our community of diverse minds and strong wills in the beautiful North East of Scotland has been open to all for more than 500 years.

**We are proud to drive change in service of our community, our city, and our world.**



# Bringing Beyond Boundaries to **life**

Let's explore the fundamentals to bringing our difference, foundations and themes to life through content and campaigns.



# Our foundations

Where we've been feeds into where we're going – building a better future for everyone with a uniquely Aberdeen flair.

## Our heritage

More than 500 years ago, somebody stood here in Aberdeen and said *"I want to give you knowledge to go out and change the world."*

We've been doing that ever since.

## Our purpose

Open to all and dedicated to the pursuit of truth in the service of others.

## Our mission

To pursue truth, beyond boundaries, for all our futures.

# Our themes

We hang everything we do off this framework. It's inspiring, but at the same time grounding.

## Impact

There's a real hunger to address big challenges at UoA.

Our students, researchers and academics want to change society, change business, change thinking. That enthusiasm is priceless.

## Interdisciplinarity

The whole is greater than the sum of its parts. All the experts, in all the things, together in one place. Connected thinking. Joined up. Looking at challenges from all different angles. Which is how we'll change the world.

## Research-led

Our research and teaching are integrated in a way most universities don't deliver. It's exceptional.

## Ancient, but...

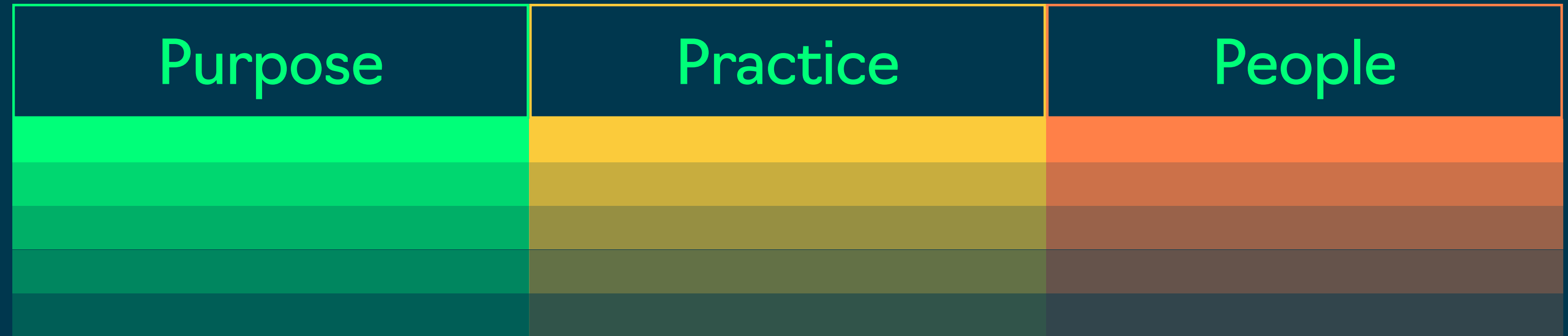
We have the opportunity to reposition what 'ancient' means. Our heritage of innovation is what gives you credibility and the permission to do radical things.

## Your time is now

Aberdeen will be at the centre of global energy transition and at the heart of the worldwide shift to preventative healthcare. The university is the fulcrum, interdisciplinary thinking is the lever... you're about to move the world.

# Our brand strategy

These are our brand pillars – the values and characteristics that make up our brand. They help us communicate our message to the world.



# Purpose

New knowledge  
to address global  
challenges



## Positioning

# We are driven, to seek truth and spark change.

Our students, researchers and academics want to  
change society, change business, change thinking.

That enthusiasm is priceless.

## Proof

Passion, activism  
and capability

Our students are fantastic.  
Engaged, passionate, and  
ambitious. They don't want  
to just get a degree, they  
want to change the world.

# Practice

Connected thinking,  
research-led and  
interdisciplinary



## Positioning

**We are connected.  
To each other, our city,  
industry, and the world.**

Our research is connected with teaching.

Our disciplines are connected with each other.

We embrace new perspectives.

It's the only way to address urgent global challenges

## Proof

Connected thinking,  
research-led teaching  
and interdisciplinarity

As a university we are so broad- we have an interdisciplinary advantage. We have medical students doing music modules. The Business and Law Schools collaborate. We have someone in Art History working with someone in Gynaecology!

# People

Diverse, supportive community of the smartest minds



## Positioning

# Our community of learning is open to all.

Our students have direct, collaborative, supportive relationships with academics who are leading their fields.

Our modular courses and innovative delivery can provide open access.

## Proof

Our community of learning is open to all

We are not at all elitist. We're open and more accessible than other ancient universities. Our university is an educational playground.

# Place

Friendly, accessible city with global feel and rural context



## Positioning

# Our unique home has character.

Aberdeen is a vibrant, friendly, city nestled between the mountains and the ocean. It's old and new, urban and rural.

And our campuses are special. Lively, accessible, and connected to both local and global industry.

## Proof

Friendly, accessible city with global feel and rural context

Thinking globally, we can't say 'come to the north'. The frame of reference changes. Our place becomes about what our position provides - connection and access.

# Platform

500-year heritage,  
credibility, industry  
connections



## Positioning

**We are your solid  
place to change  
the world from.**

Our heritage of innovation, breadth and depth of expertise, and close links with vital industries give us credibility and permission to be at the centre of radical, urgent global transitions in energy, healthcare, and more.

## Proof

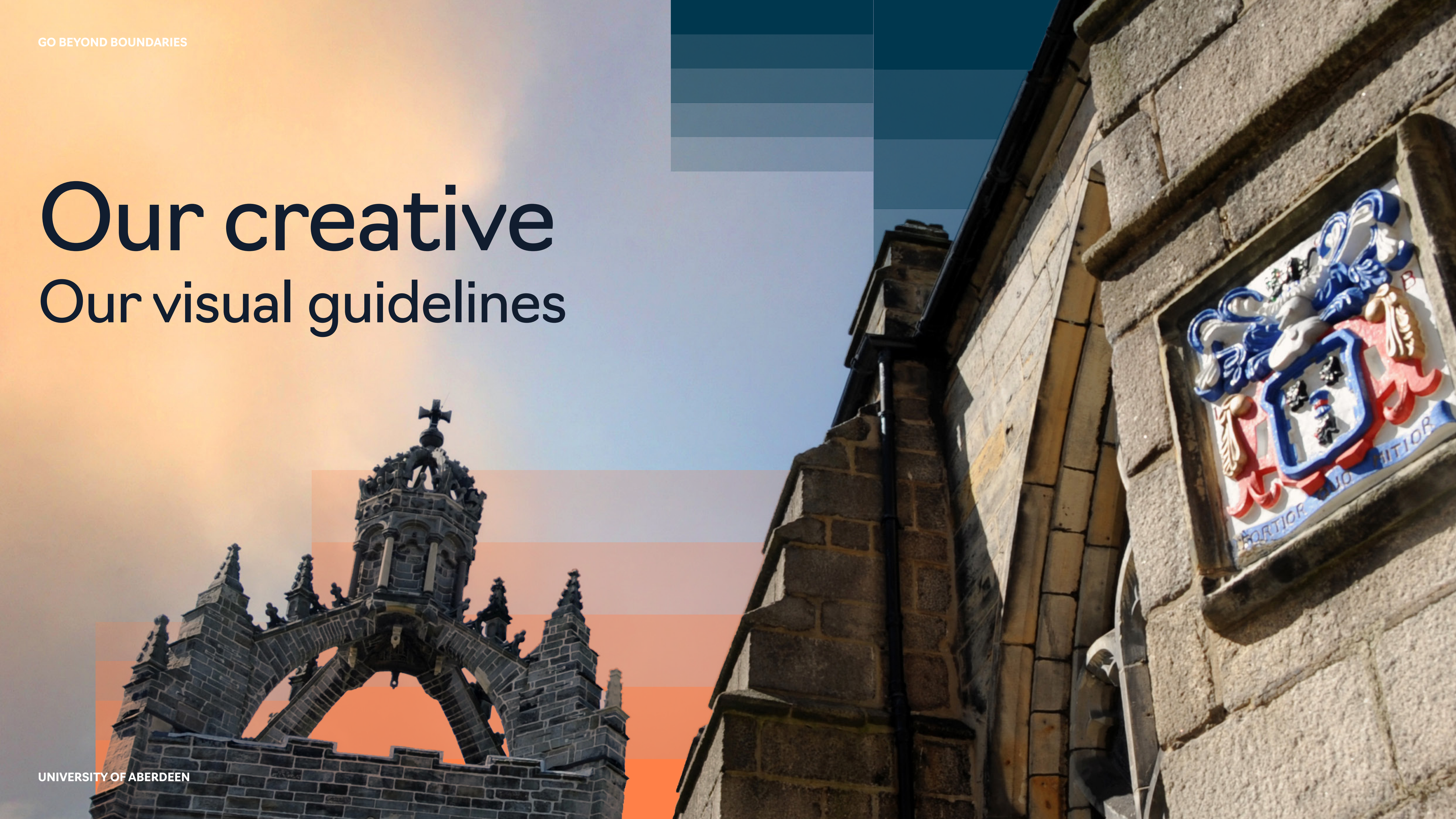
We are your solid place to  
change the world from

We are an ancient university with a modern outlook. We're standing on the shoulders of those who came before us. And those who come after us will continue that.

GO BEYOND BOUNDARIES

# Our creative Our visual guidelines

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN



# How to go beyond boundaries in our creative

What mood or emotion do we want to convey to our audience? That of awe, wonder and possibility? This is achieved through our brand messaging, style and imagery.

Ensuring our messaging and creative are consistent and strong will give our brand strength. This allows us to portray the depth of our character, flesh out our identity and show our audiences – from students to industry partners – who we are and why we're worthy of being their first choice.

This guide should be used as our north star for all things creative. You can find guidance on our brand palettes, accessibility, typography, logo usage and imagery. Whether you need a print banner for an event, social media advert or a call-out for industry partners, the Design team is here to help you create something unique and inspirational.

# Colour Palette

The colour palette has been carefully picked from the Aberdeen Sea, Sky and Surroundings.

Whilst it is recommended to follow the guidelines across the following pages, colours can be mixed in matched in accordance with accessibility standards.

The colours have been split into three categories:

## FOUNDATION

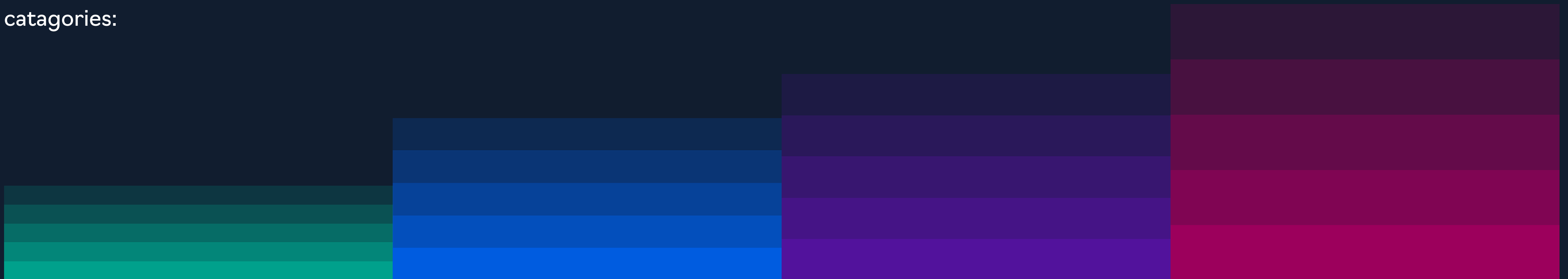
These colours are used as the base or background colours. They have been picked for legibility purposes. Good for large areas.

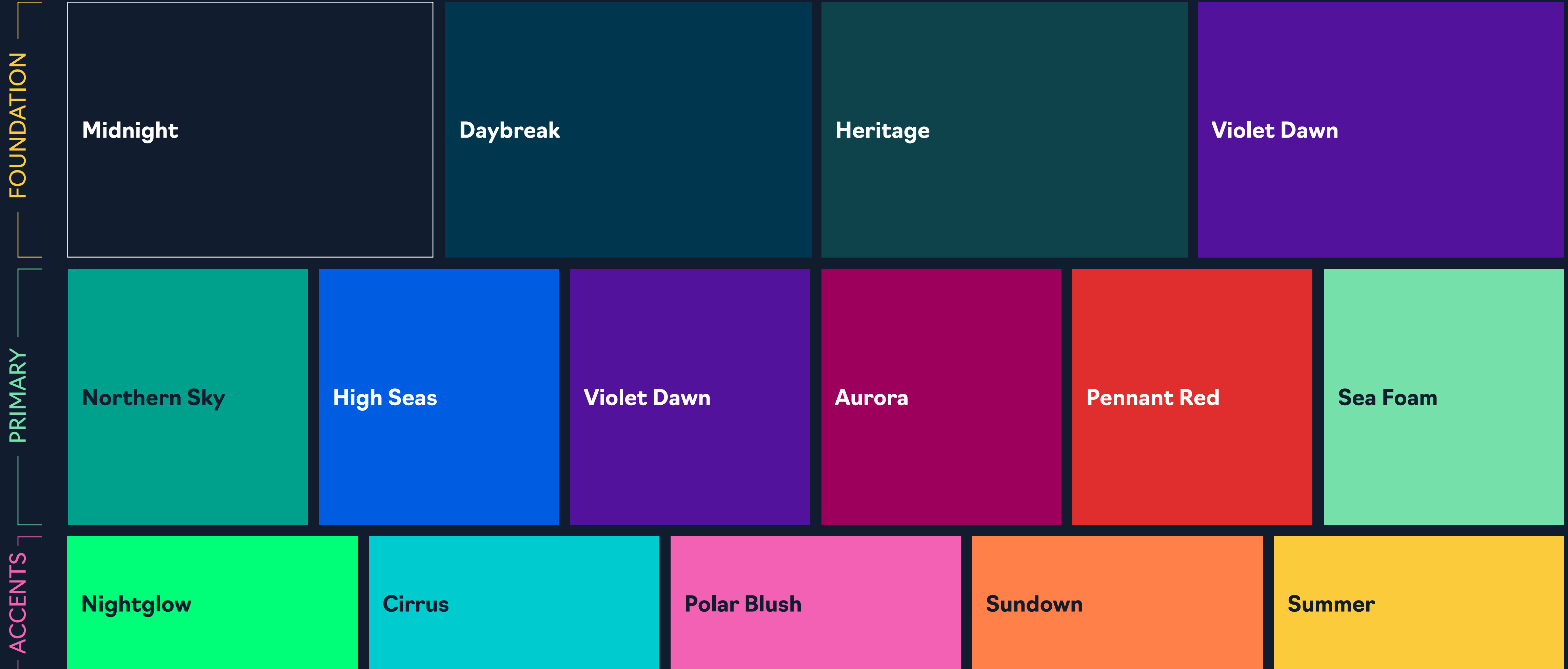
## PRIMARY

Primary colours are used on top of the foundation colour. Good for bigger splashes of colours

## ACCENTS

These are to be used for edge text and CTAs as they are bright and punchy. Good for smaller details.





## Accessibility

In order to adhere to accessibility standards, it is recommended to follow the diagram on this page for colour matching.

It is recommended to use one the four **foundation** colours as the background, you are free to mix and match text colour with the following appropriate swatches.

### Midnight

White

Northern Sky

Sea Foam

Nightglow

Cirrus

Polar Blush

Sundown

Summer

### Daybreak

White

Sea Foam

Nightglow

Cirrus

Sundown

Summer

### Heritage

White

Sea Foam

Nightglow

Cirrus

Summer

### Violet Dawn

White

Sea Foam

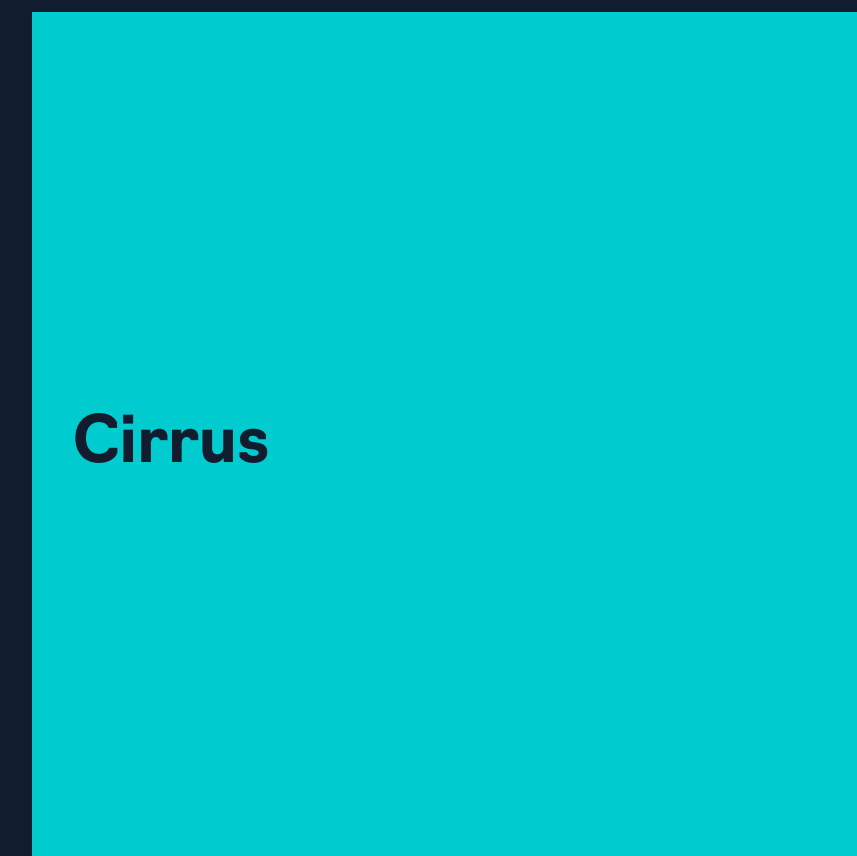
Nightglow

Cirrus

Summer

Colour theme 1:

# Northern Lights



Colour theme 2:

# Highland Mist

Daybreak

High Seas

Cirrus

Violet Dawn

Colour theme 3:

# Sunbloom

**Aurora**

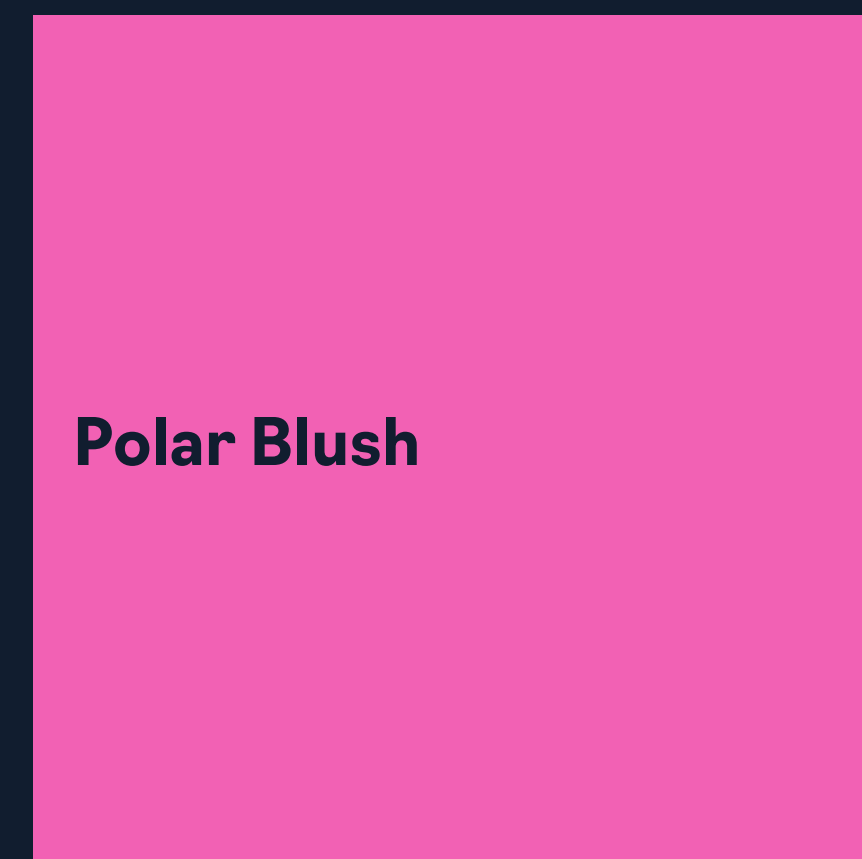
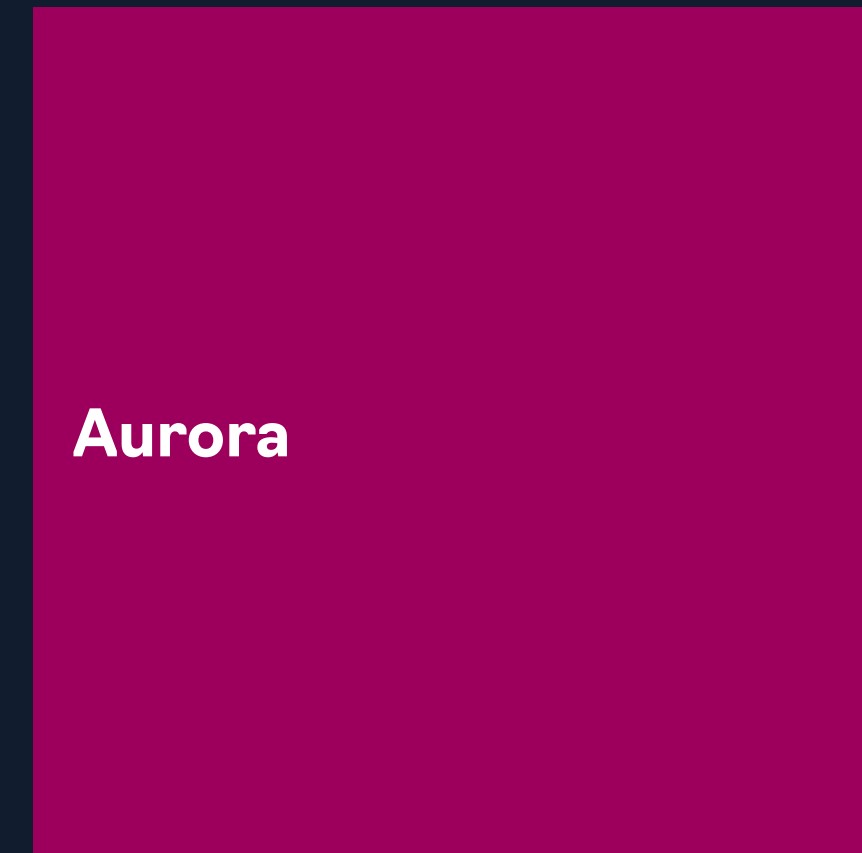
**Sundown**

**Polar Blush**

**Summer**

Colour theme 4:

# Highland Fling



# Typography: Design Font

Navigo:  
all weights



A font made with **navigation** in mind, Navigo is easy to read and is interesting at both body and heading sizes.

Navigo should be used exclusively for professional design work produced by the Design Team, Uniprint or a commissioned external design agency.

Use **bold** to create a gentle emphasis on key points

Heading 1 75pt

Heading 2 48pt

Heading 3 33pt

Body 24pt

When using much smaller sizes of the font in dense paragraphs, swap for a light version

# Typography: Everyday Font

## Arial: all weights

A versatile and accessible font that can be used when Navigo is not available.

Arial example:

**Beyond Boundaries**  
*Our North Star*

Navigo example:

**Beyond Boundaries**  
*Our North Star*

# Logo

The logotype consists of two component parts:

- The shield
- The namestyle (University of Aberdeen)

The two component parts **must** be presented together as displayed here.

The logo should be used as knockout white or black dependant on accessibility. The only time we use the full colour logo as standard is on stationery and assets such as letterheads.

The Primary logotype displayed here must be used

on all materials. Alternative logotypes may be provided where design restrictions are in place, this is assessed on a case by case basis by emailing [brandcomms@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:brandcomms@abdn.ac.uk)



# Logo: Approved sub-brands

The University brand includes three approved sub-brands:

- the Business School
- the Rowett Institute
- the Development Trust.

No other department or group is permitted to create a logo without prior approval from External Relations in extenuating circumstances.

When there is a requirements for the University to be presented as a partner organisation the primary logotype should be used.



# Logo Accessibility: Display and Sizing

Wherever our logo is used, it should always be legible and clear. To help with this, we've specified a minimum size.

The Primary version should never be less than 12mm in height.

A clearance zone should be in place to ensure the logo appears unobstructed and distinctly separate from other graphical elements. The basic rule is to use the width of the shield to create a square and make sure nothing comes within this distance of the entire logo.



# Logo Accessibility: Foundation

When using the **foundation** colours, use the knockout white logo variant to best meet accessibility requirements.

**Midnight**



**Daybreak**



**Heritage**



**Violet Dawn**



# Logo Accessibility: Primary

The foundation colours must always come first when choosing a background, but in instances where they aren't applicable, only use the **Primary** colours with the logo variants shown here.

Do not place the logo on an accent colour.

Northern Sky



High Seas



Violet Dawn



Aurora



Pennant Red



Sea Foam

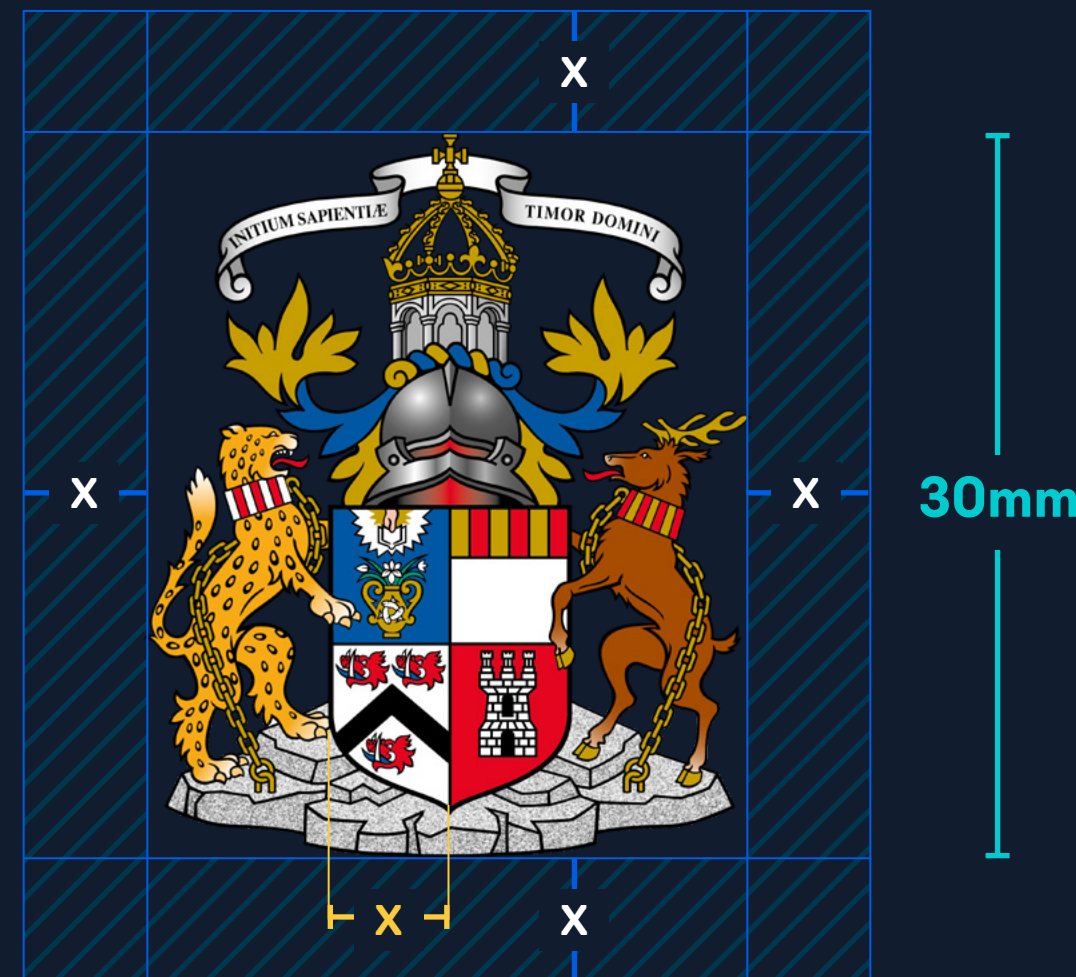


# The Armorial Bearings

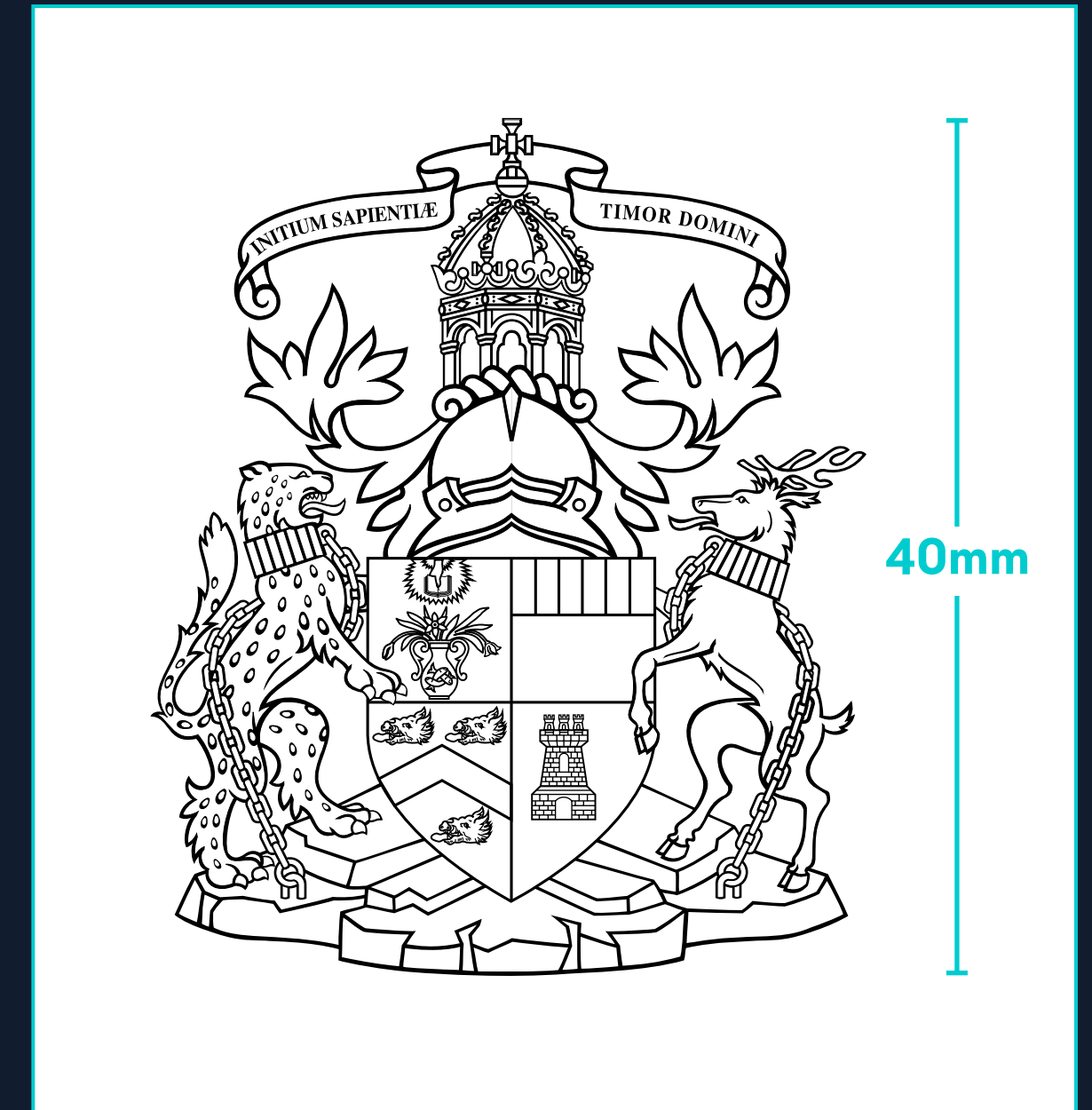
The Armorial Bearings is the University of Aberdeen's Coat of Arms. Although the Coat of Arms contains the shield it is not a logotype and may be used for ceremonial occasions **only**.

## Our Coat of Arms – the components

The Coat of Arms of the University of Aberdeen forms the kernel of our corporate identity. Recorded in 1888, the quarters of the shield contain references to Old Aberdeen and learning (top left); Earl Marischal Keith, founder of Marischal College (top right); and Bishop William Elphinstone, founder of King's College (bottom left). The final quarter, bottom right, symbolises the City of Aberdeen.



**Full colour version:**  
 Minimum Size and Clearspace



**Single Colour Version:**  
 Minimum Size

# The Armorial Bearings

The full achievement of the arms, shown opposite, incorporating shield, crest, motto and supporters, **is reserved for ceremonial occasions.**

The motto *Initium Sapientiae Timor Domini* (Fear of the Lord is the Beginning of Wisdom) is taken from Psalm 111:10. The crest, the leopard and hart supporters were specially granted by Lord Lyon in 1995 to mark the 500th anniversary of the foundation of the University. The supporters on either side of the shield are a heraldic honour of great distinction.

Any requests regarding the Armorial Bearings should be directed to [brandcomms@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:brandcomms@abdn.ac.uk)



**Full Achievement with namestyle:**

Minimum size and Clearspace

# Images

The Beyond Boundaries design concept incorporates fades around images to convey a sense of **beyond** and incorporate brand colour.

Image fades must be created only by the Design team or a commissioned external design agency.

To request a bespoke image please contact [design@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:design@abdn.ac.uk).





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