An ancient university with impact

Top 20 University in the UK

Guardian University League Table 2021
Learning Languages

Celtic & Anglo-Saxon Studies
Old Gaelic, Medieval Welsh, Old English, Modern Irish, Scottish Gaelic

We encourage you to study medieval and/or modern languages as part of your degree in Celtic & Anglo-Saxon Studies.
Why study languages?

The best way to understand a culture and its writings is by reading its literature and history in the original language, rather than in translation.

Language-learning helps you understand the structure of sentences, and to think critically about your own as well as the one you are learning!
Are ‘old’ languages difficult to learn?

We teach languages from a basic level – you are not expected to have any previous knowledge at all.

If you have done some language study before, that’s good too. It will help you more than you think, even if it seems like a long time ago!
Here are some examples...

Old Gaelic

‘Am gáeth i mmuir,
Am tonn trethan,
Am fuaim mara...

‘I am wind on the sea,
I am a wave of the storm,
I am the sound of the sea...’

By Amergin, the legendary first poet of Ireland
Medieval Welsh

‘Ac yn hynny, meithryn ederyn drydwen a wnaeth hitheu ar dal y noe gyt a hi, a dyscu ieith idi’

‘And then she reared a starling on the edge of her kneading-trough, and she taught it language’

From the Mabinogion tale ‘Branwen daughter of Llyr’
Old English

‘Peohtas her giaþ hēr on mīnum lande. Gāþ; flīemaþ þā Peohtas, and æfter þǣm wuniaþ hēr swā lange swā gē willaþ’

‘Picts are plundering here on my land. Go; drive out the Picts, and then stay here as long as you wish’

*Based on the ‘Anglo-Saxon Chronicle’*
Modern Irish

‘Is maith liom císte’  ‘I like cake (Cake is good with me)’

‘Go raibh maith agat’  ‘Thank you (May there be good at you)’
And that’s not all…

You can also get Celtic & Anglo-Saxon credits for studying relevant languages taught in other degree programmes at Aberdeen:

• Latin – based in Divinity
• Old Norse – based in History / Scandinavian Studies
• Scottish Gaelic – based in Gaelic
For further information

If you would like to find out more about our language courses, or you have specific questions about Celtic languages or Old English language please contact:

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