

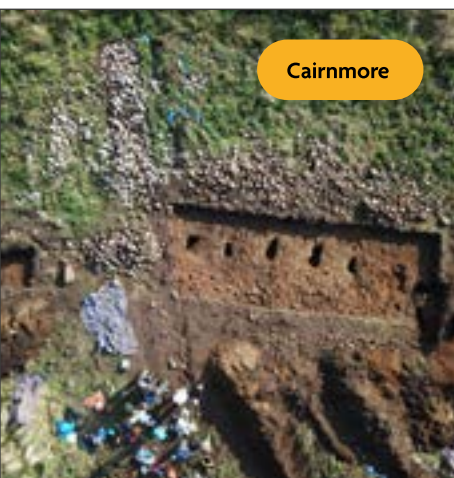
ARCHAEOLOGY SUMMER SCHOOL 2024

Duration: 3 weeks
23RD JUNE – 13TH JULY

Credits: 15 UOA CREDITS
3-4 US CREDIT HOURS

Price per student
£4,000.00

Application deadline March 31st 2024



Join us for the opportunity to excavate in an incredibly important early medieval landscape, at a site that may have been a central place of the early kings of Pictland and that is key to understanding the development of the ‘Picts’.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMME

Over a period of three weeks, you will participate in an archaeological excavation in North-east Scotland, learning the key skills in excavation, survey and recording practice. The course is intended for those with no prior experience of archaeological excavation, however, we gladly welcome those who have previous experience and are looking to broaden their skill set. Training in the skills needed to plan, undertake, and report on an archaeological excavation will be provided, helping you to build the foundations for your future education and career in archaeology, but we will try to tailor experiences to the individual participant wherever possible. Upon the culmination of the course, you will have:

- a good understanding of the aims, methodology and results of an archaeological excavation.
- an ability to participate in research excavation and understand the logistics involved.
- acquired key practical skills in archaeological excavation, survey (including geophysical, standing-building and/or walk-over), recording methods and post excavation analysis.
- established how to describe and critically evaluate stratigraphic relationships of archaeological features and deposits.

- applied knowledge of the conventions regarding archaeological field records, including context sheets, plan drawings, section drawings, artefact drawings, artefact and feature photography, Harris matrices, and a site report.

FIELDWORK AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

This summer school is a field-based programme where you will be undertaking an archaeological excavation. As such, this will involve physically demanding activity that includes shovelling and moving of buckets of soil, with a lot of time spent bending over on your knees while trowelling. That said, we will try to accommodate those who are physically less able as best we can, by rotating students to other tasks like geophysical or topographical surveys and on-site sample processing.

SCOTTISH OUTDOORS & EQUIPMENT

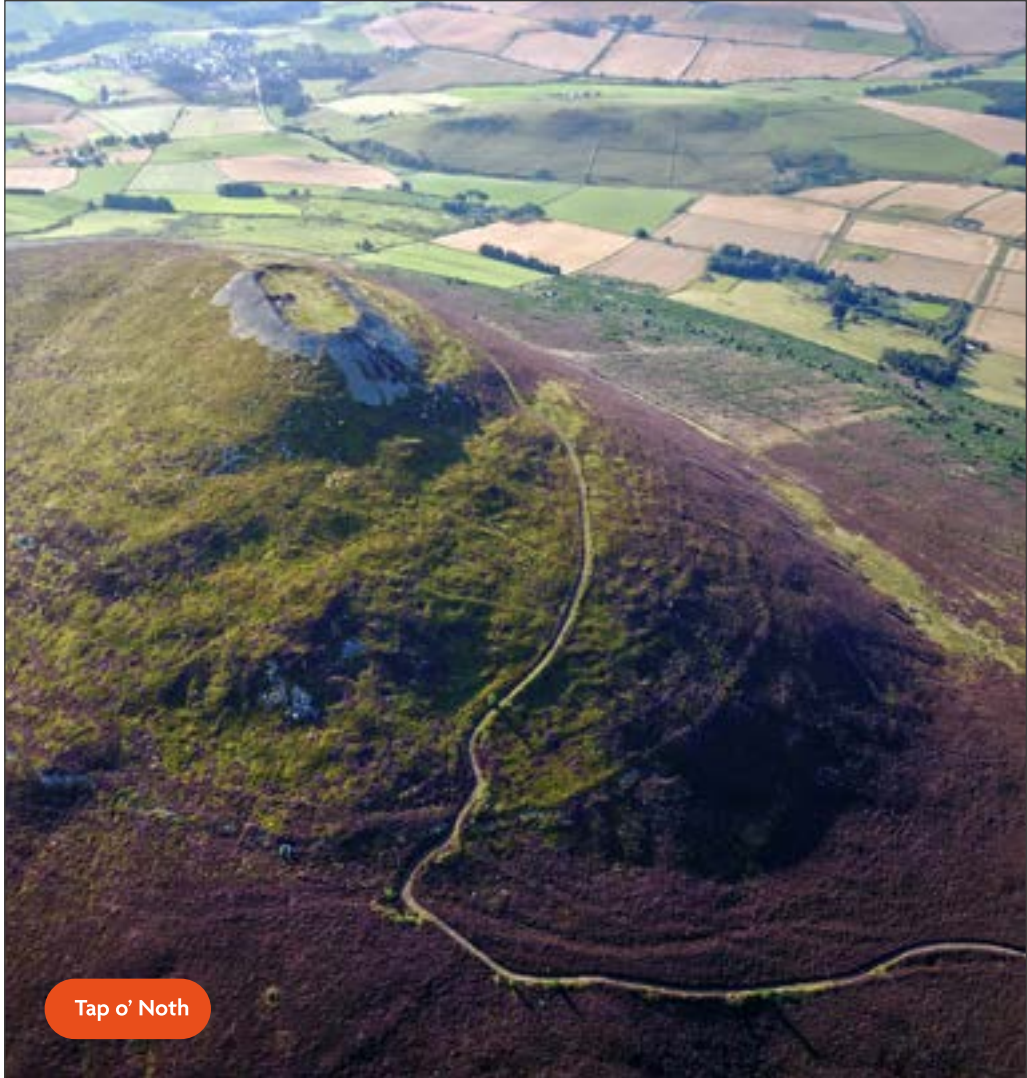
You will be working in the picturesque Scottish outdoors. While known for its beauty, it is also known for its changeable weather, and you should be ready to work in a variety of different weather conditions! You will need to bring clothes suitable for both hot and cold conditions, rainproof jacket and trousers, and a good pair of work boots. We will provide all of the necessary equipment you will need to undertake your excavation, including a trowel.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE / PROJECT

This summer school feeds into the on-going research of the school coordinators, Dr James O'Driscoll and Professor Gordon Noble of the Department of Archaeology at the University of Aberdeen, who are investigating the so-called 'Dark Ages' of Northern Britain and how interactions between Roman and native communities led to the development of the early medieval Picts. The origins of the Picts and their precursors are poorly understood, despite playing a pivotal role in the emergence of the medieval kingdom of Scotland, but their captivating carved stones are some of the most eye-catching and enigmatic monuments of early medieval Europe.

Over the course of the next ten years, this project aims to shed light on this period of Scottish history. We will investigate both Roman and native sites of this period, including some of the abandoned camps and forts left by the invading Roman army, and the hillforts used by the Iron Age and early medieval communities to repel them.

The 2024 field school will take place in the Rhynie valley at the edge of the Scottish Highlands, where over a decade of investigation has uncovered an incredibly significant and unique elite centre of residence, ritual and kingship dating back to AD 300–650. Within this landscape, we have uncovered the largest Pictish settlement ever discovered, at a site known as Tap o'Noth. Our 2024 excavation takes place at a nearby hillfort known as Cairnmore, where previous excavations have revealed a complex stone walled fort with evidence for two buildings – one large internal building inside the fort which may have been the house of an elite, and another outside the fort which may have been used for storage or processing of foodstuff. Our objective this year is to excavate more of the stone walls and massive postholes that make up the defences of the fort, and to investigate a largely untouched area of the site that has produced tentative evidence for metalworking.



Tap o' Noth

SELF-CATERED ACCOMMODATION

You and your classmates will be housed together either on the Old Aberdeen Campus, or the Hillhead Student Village which is a 15-minute walk from the centre of campus. Accommodation is comprised of single study bedrooms, including bedlinen and towels, with kitchen and living facilities shared between you and your field mates. The kitchen is stocked with all necessary utensils, there are several supermarkets within easy walking distance, and you can also take advantage of several food delivery services which operate in Aberdeen.

EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Alongside your academic content, the programme will also include a range of extracurricular activities to give you a taste of what the Northeast of Scotland has to offer. This will include smaller events, such as city/art tours, as well as broader excursions, exploring the local history at places like Dunnottar Castle. For more information on planned activities, please consult the programme timetable on our website.



TO FIND OUT MORE:

 goabroad.incoming@abdn.ac.uk

 www.abdn.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/archaeology-summer-school.php