



## Weekly Divinity Newsletter: Undergraduate

Greetings!

I hope that you are keeping well. Here is this week's newsletter!

### Moving forward:

#### Course options 2020-2021:

There are fantastic courses on offer for next academic session! Details for next academic year's courses are available here: <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/sdhp/divinity-religious-studies/courses-20-21-1969.php>

Please do take a look, as there are some details about the courses as well as helpful links about each subject too.



#### Key dates for the dairy:

##### MyCurriculum opens for course enrolments:

Level 1 – 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2020

Level 2 – 10<sup>th</sup> September 2020

Level 3 – 14<sup>th</sup> September 2020

Level 4 – 16<sup>th</sup> September 2020

##### MyTimetable opens:

14<sup>th</sup> September 2020

(King's College: photograph by Amy Bender)



## Induction Events:

### Divinity: Theology and Religion Virtual Welcome and Induction Week

#### Tuesday September 22<sup>nd</sup> 2020:

**@ 4pm -5pm: Welcome to the Department of Divinity Orientation**

*The orientation will include a welcome to the department and guidance from Academic Support, Student Support, Careers Service and Theology and Religious Studies Society*

**@ 7pm –8pm: Being Divine**

*This session will offer an introduction to the sub-disciplines in Divinity and course options.*

#### Wednesday September 23<sup>rd</sup> 2020:

**@ 10am –11am: Top Tips for Academic Development**

*This session will offer top tips for academic development and academic skills.*

**@ 3pm –4pm: Being Divine (Repeat session)**

*This session will offer an introduction to the sub-disciplines in Divinity and course options*

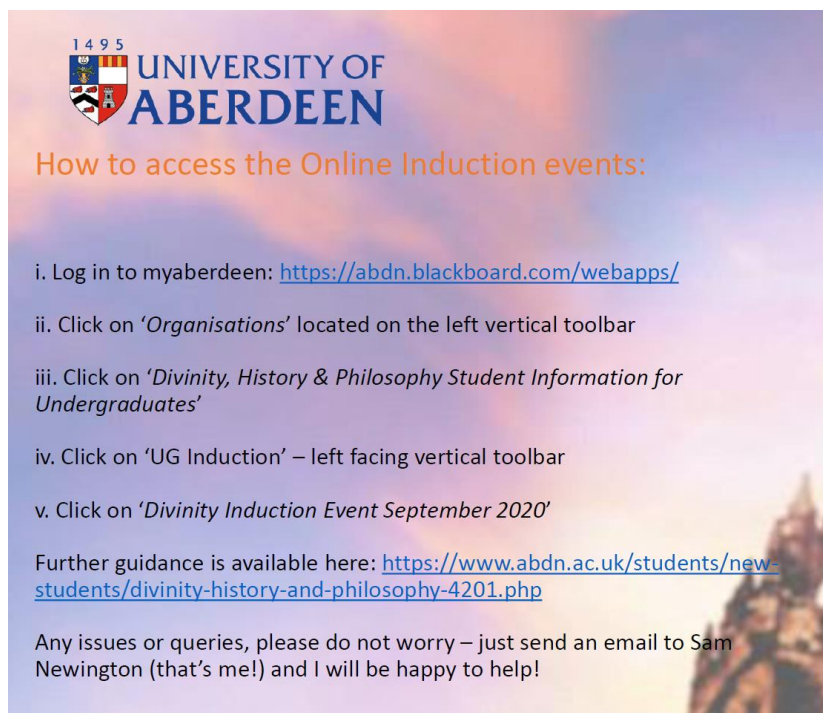
#### Thursday September 24<sup>th</sup> 2020:


**@ 10am –11am: Welcome to the Department of Divinity Orientation  
(Repeat session)**

*The orientation will include a welcome to the department and guidance from Academic Support, Student Support Careers and Theology and Religious Studies Society*

**@ 7pm-8pm: Top Tips for Academic Development (Repeat session)**

*This session will offer top tips for academic development and academic skills*



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How to access the Online Induction events:

- i. Log in to myaberdeen: <https://abdn.blackboard.com/webapps/>
- ii. Click on 'Organisations' located on the left vertical toolbar
- iii. Click on 'Divinity, History & Philosophy Student Information for Undergraduates'
- iv. Click on 'UG Induction' – left facing vertical toolbar
- v. Click on 'Divinity Induction Event September 2020'

Further guidance is available here: <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/students/new-students/divinity-history-and-philosophy-4201.php>

Any issues or queries, please do not worry – just send an email to Sam Newington (that's me!) and I will be happy to help!



## TRSS – Message from the Society:

### TRSS News and updates:

If you are interested in becoming a member or finding out more about TRSS and the events we organise, here is the link to our Facebook group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2272399396416039/>

If you do not have Facebook and are interested in joining TRSS, you can email us at: [TRSSABDN@outlook.com](mailto:TRSSABDN@outlook.com)

## Summer News:

### *A trip to Vindolanda by Lorna Boyd:*

*I've been fortunate enough to live within reach of Hadrian's wall & various other pieces of evidence to answer the cry "What's did the Romans ever do for us" for over a decade now. In March 2010 as part of the celebrations for the 1600th anniversary of the end of Roman Rule in Britain the length of the wall was lit by beacons. The number of us who went to take a look meant that there was a parallel line of car lights travelling on another legacy of military might - the road built to move troops at General Wade's instruction. "Progress" meant that we probably travelled more slowly than a Roman Army on the march.*

*The earlier stages of lockdown meant that I was travelling around the area via*



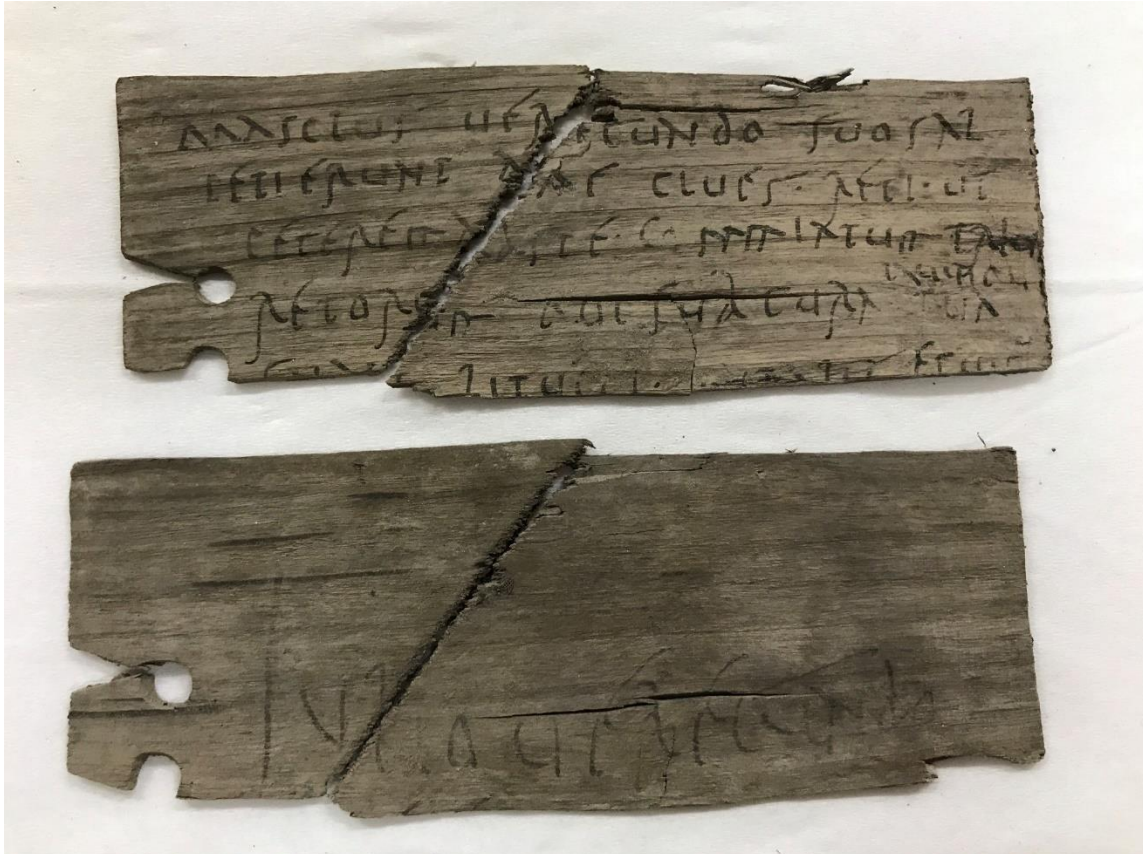
*zoom/twitter/Facebook and the local papers. One of them provided updates with the team who were minding Vindolanda during lockdown, apparently to the envy of some of their colleagues who had been furloughed & so were not allowed to do any*

*work on the site. Especially those from the family who were fortunate enough to be chosen to act as site wardens.*

*The day I managed to get tickets to visit was somewhat dull, but that probably kept the numbers lower so we were able to socially distance easily. It's a large site anyway & seemed to have grown considerably since our last visit.*



*Unfortunately, COVID also meant that they haven't been able to carry out excavations as usual over the summer & the project is a year behind where they had hoped to be by now. A small bowl had been discovered the day before & we were lucky that the man who'd unearthed it was there to show us exactly where the bowl was found & fill in some of the history and development of the site. Lockdown also meant that one item, which had been thought to be a leather scrap could well be a toy mouse. (Have a look at their website for the pictures).*



(Masclus Writing Tablet conserved. Photo Credit: The Vindolanda Trust)

*The museum is over at the other side of the site from the entrance - thankfully it also houses a cafe with the requisite coffee & cakes required on any proper day out. Having fortified ourselves, we headed into the museum itself to look at a selection of some of the items they've discovered & the area set aside to explain the story of the wooden tablets they found there. When the first tablet was discovered the archaeologists took it down to Durham to speak to one of the experts on the Roman period. Unfortunately, this meant that the tablet had been removed from the anaerobic atmosphere which had preserved it & the writing become illegible; a mistake they've been able to learn from.*

*While there are altars etc on the site carved from stone & intended to be seen by anyone passing, the tablets are rather more domestic, private correspondence covering important*



*matters like arranging a birthday party.*

*I prefer the site to Housesteads, for one thing it's a more level site and there are reconstructions of how the wall may have looked at various times, though it lacks the impact of the multi-seat toilet at Housesteads. There are also diggers on the site to explain some of the history of the site.*

*While lockdown is still in force there is plenty to read about the site and its history on the website; even Sudoku games if you fancy trying to solve those using Roman numerals. The descriptive markers cross the site have changed from the old-fashioned ones which only gave you the name/function of an area to multi-lingual ones which provide context & opportunities to practice Latin translation "in the field".*

*It was sad to see Vindolanda in the summer without the usual teams of volunteer diggers - for anyone who fancies getting their hands dirty in anaerobic Northumberland mud, it is possible to volunteer to work as a digger in a normal year, though it's very popular & those who'd applied but weren't able to dig this year will probably take priority for next year.*

For further information about a recent early Christian church chalice finding at Hadrian's Wall, click here: <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/aug/29/hadrians-wall-dig-reveals-oldest-christian-graffiti-on-chalice>

## Support:

There is a range of support on offer here at the Department of Divinity and University of Aberdeen:

Divinity Support and queries: Dr Sam Newington ([s.newington@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:s.newington@abdn.ac.uk))

Chaplaincy: <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/chaplaincy/>

Student Support: <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/students/>

Coronavirus FAQ: <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/working-here/coronavirus/faqs-9773.php>

AUSA: <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/students/support/>

As ever should you have any queries or have any newsletter suggestions, please never hesitate to contact me.



All the very best and take care,  
Sam (Dr Newington)