

RWM yn sefydlu partneriaeth gyda'r BGS

Mae Arolwg Daearegol Prydain (British Geological Survey), sef asiantaeth geowyddoniaeth cenedlaethol y DU ac un o arolygon daearegol mwyaf blaengar y byd, ac RWM am gydweithio i ddarparu arbenigedd, ymchwil a gwybodaeth er mwyn cefnogi rhaglen gwaredu daearegol y DU.

Heddiw, cyhoeddodd y ddau sefydliad sy'n rhan o Lywodraeth y DU gytundeb pum mlynedd yn nodi'r fframwaith ar gyfer cydweithio ar lefel strategol, technegol a gweithredol. Bydd y fframwaith yn allweddol i'n helpu ni i ddeall ac asesu'r creigiau sydd o dan yr arwyneb a'u haddasrwydd ar gyfer Cyfleuster Gwaredu Daearegol yn y DU wrth i ni symud drwy'r broses o ganfod safle addas a chymuned sy'n fodlon cynnig lleoliad.

Mae'r Cyfleuster Gwaredu Daearegol yn rhwydwaith o gladdgelloedd a thwneli sydd wedi'u hadeiladu i lefel beirianegol i mewn i'r creigiau, cannoedd o fetrau dan y ddaear. Mae wedi'i gynllunio i waredu gwastraff ymbelydrol uwch ei actifedd yn ddiogel ac am byth.

Mae'r Memorandwm Cyd-ddealltwriaeth yn nodi ffyrdd o weithio rhwng RWM a BGS, ac mae'n disgrifio'r egwyddorion allweddol a'r meysydd ar gyfer cydweithio, gan gynnwys cynllunio strategol, nodweddu safleoedd, ymgysylltu â rhanddeiliaid, ymchwil, hyfforddiant, cyfathrebu, a chyfnewid gwybodaeth.

PDF, 212KB, 7 pages

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Bydd y bartneriaeth hon rhwng y ddau sefydliad annibynnol yn golygu y bydd gwaith ymchwil gymhwysol o'r radd flaenaf ym maes geowyddorau amgylcheddol yn y DU yn cyfrannu at gyflawni Cyfleuster Gwaredu Daearegol.

Dywedodd Karen Wheeler, Prif Weithredwr RWM,

"Delivering a Geological Disposal Facility to permanently deal with UK's higher-activity radioactive waste is the right thing to do. BGS will play a key role in ensuring we receive expert impartial advice as we work on this vital national programme. Their expertise in UK geoscience is unparalleled and crucially they will help us fully understand the rocks below the surface and their suitability for a GDF."

Dywedodd Dr. Karen Hanghøj, Cyfarwyddwr Arolwg Daearegol Prydain,

"The agreement with RWM will help to maintain BGS's impartiality whilst enabling us to provide the high-quality and objective geoscientific knowledge

and expertise required for the delivery of a UK Geological Disposal Facility. BGS research will help to progress the UK's understanding about the rocks below its surface, and their suitability for hosting a GDF, as the importance of finding environmentally sound solutions for the issue of radioactive waste disposal grows. It's also important that communities and their representatives understand how geoscience plays a role in the process of evaluating sites for suitability, and this will form part of our work."

Defence Academy launches new Masters programme in Defence Innovation

This September, the Defence Academy of the United Kingdom will launch their first Masters of Science (MSc) in Defence Innovation in partnership with King's College, London.

As the latest step to modernise Joint Professional Military Education, the MSc looks to build a repository of skills and experience in using hypothesis-and-test rationale to solve real-world defence challenges.

Focusing on problem-led learning, the MSc in Defence Innovation is the culmination of an innovation pathway first piloted in January 2019 with 12 graduate-level students on the Defence Academy's Advance Command and Staff Course (ACSC) and in partnership with the Common Mission Project's new 'Hacking for MOD' programme.

Already the innovation pathway has demonstrated success. The 2019 pilot programme has worked on several challenges for defence, including successfully addressing an obstacle for the Royal Air Force (RAF) Air Operations Controllers using build-measure-learn-validate methodology, resulting in a significant cost-savings for defence.

Now fully accredited through King's College, London as a 10-month MSc in Defence Innovation, in September, up to 24 ACSC students will take an alternative approach to develop skillsets adept at innovation and problem-solving at pace. At its heart are the 'Hacking for MOD' principals promoting experimentation, iterative design and user feedback over the traditional problem-solving approach.

'Hacking for MOD' is a UK Ministry of Defence-sponsored programme and conceptualises Silicon Valley's Lean Start-up Methodology along similar lines to the successful 'Hacking for Defense' programme delivered by the Common Mission Project US in partnership with the United States Department of Defense's National Security Innovation Network (NSIN).

Major General Andrew Roe, CEO Defence Academy and Commandant Joint Services Command and Staff College (JSCSC), said:

Modern warfare is changing rapidly and this requires new ways of thinking and problem solving. Our leaders of today and the future must be able to process quickly, react intelligently and innovate to remain ahead of emerging technologies and threats. 'Hacking for MOD' and the MSc in Defence Innovation will give our students the tools to think critically and respond to fast-paced challenges.

Lieutenant Colonel Frank Reeves, student on the 'Hacking for MOD' pilot, said:

This experience sparked an appetite for innovation and has changed my approach to problem-solving by providing a proven set of practical tools which I can now use with confidence to translate ideas into stuff of value for defence.

Student Loans Interest Rates and Repayment Threshold Announcement

The Department for Education (DfE) today (11 August 2020) confirmed the annual updates to the Interest Rates and Thresholds of Income Contingent Student Loans and Mortgage Style Student Loans, as set out in the relevant regulations and terms and conditions of the loans.

Income Contingent Student Loans

Undergraduate loans

Income Contingent Student Loans for pre-2012 (Plan 1) loans

From 1 September 2020 until 31 August 2021, the **maximum** interest rate that can be set for the existing Income Contingent Repayment Loans will be 2.6%. However, the low interest cap will be triggered, and therefore the rate to be charged from 1 September 2020 will be **1.1%**.

Please monitor this website regularly as the rates may change during the academic year.

From 6 April 2021, the repayment threshold for pre-2012 (Plan 1) loans will rise to £19,895.

Income Contingent Student Loans for post-2012 (Plan 2) loans

From 1 September 2020 until 31 August 2021 one or more interest rates may apply to you:

Your circumstances	Interest rate
Whilst studying and until the April after leaving the course	RPI + 3% (5.6%)
If you come into repayment from April 2021	Variable interest, dependent upon income RPI (2.6%), where income is £27,295 or less, rising on a sliding scale up to RPI + 3% (5.6%), where income is £49,130 or more
If you lose touch with SLC or do not send them the information they require	RPI + 3% (5.6%), irrespective of income, until SLC have the information they require

The repayment threshold for post-2012 (plan 2) loans will rise to £27,295 from 6 April 2021 to 5 April 2022.

Postgraduate Loans

From 1 September 2020 until 31 August 2021, the interest rate for borrowers in England taking out a Postgraduate Master's or a Doctoral loan will be 5.6% (RPI + 3%).

The repayment threshold for Postgraduate loans continues to be £21,000.

Mortgage Style Loans

From 1 September 2020 until 31 August 2021, the interest rate for mortgage style loans will be 2.6%.

The deferment threshold for mortgage style loans will be £30,646.

Any queries from borrowers who have mortgage style loans should be addressed to their loan administrator.

New UK-India med-tech programme to fight COVID-19

World news story

Innovative Indian med-tech start-ups are invited to apply by 31 August to be a part of the new ₹5.6 million manufacturing support programme.



The UK government and Andhra Pradesh MedTech Zone (AMTZ) have joined forces to plug the gap between the demand and supply of ventilators and essential medical equipment to fight the COVID-19 pandemic.

Selected start-ups will be hosted at AMTZ's MediValley incubation centre, receiving financial, technical and infrastructure support necessary to make their equipment market-ready. The programme is part of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed recently between the UK government and AMTZ. The MoU aims to boost med-tech collaboration between the two countries by creating direct research and development linkages between UK companies and AMTZ's manufacturing and testing facilities, and to the wider Indian healthcare market.

Sir Philip Barton, British High Commissioner to India, said:

COVID-19 affects every human being on the planet and respects no border. The need for collaboration on science and innovation between nations has never been more important. The UK is already India's second biggest research partner, with joint research expected to be worth £400 million by 2021. Last month, we announced five new projects to tackle anti-microbial resistance.

I am delighted that this new med-tech programme takes our partnership even further. I look forward to seeing the life-saving solutions we can pioneer by bringing the best scientific minds from the UK and India together as a force for good in the world.

Dr. Jitendar Sharma, Managing Director and CEO, AMTZ said:

AMTZ is happy to sign a memorandum of understanding with the British High Commission for encouraging innovations in medical devices, particularly on those products that are necessary for fight against the global pandemic of COVID.

Through this partnership, British High Commission and AMTZ aims to encourage a number of innovators and provide them with technical, technological, financial, entrepreneurial and strategic hand

holding enabling them to leapfrog from idea to innovation and from a start-up to an established enterprise. This is with an aim to serve the global innovation community.

Further information

1. The call for applications is open to all Indian start-ups, MSMEs and innovators. This includes those at prototype, development, pilot, validation, early traction, and scaling stages. The application form is available [here](#) and further details can be found on the AMTZ website and British High Commission's social media pages. The deadline for applications is 31 August, 2020.
2. Selected start-ups will be based in AIC-MediValley at AMTZ and they will have access to the state-of-the art infrastructure support, technical guidance from experienced mentors, domestic and international sourcing support, manufacturing scale-up support for successful start-ups, collaboration opportunities with the UK and Indian med-tech companies.
3. The MoU for the manufacturing support programme between the UK Government and AMTZ was signed on 31 July, 2020 under the UK-India Tech Partnership programme, which was established in 2018 to bring together the best tech minds from both countries to deliver high-skilled jobs and economic growth as well as to collectively tackle some of the world's biggest challenges.
4. AMTZ is an enterprise under the Government of Andhra Pradesh dedicated for medical device manufacturing. It has reserved 100,000 square feet rent-free manufacturing space for start-ups to facilitate quick commercialisation of successful solutions. It has been contracted by the Government of India for the manufacture of ventilators and other essential medical equipment such as masks, PPE, testing kits, etc. MediValley is the incubation and innovation arm of AMTZ, funded by NITI Aayog, as Atal Incubation Council.

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Government urges universities to hold places

Universities have been urged by government to be flexible in their admissions ahead of A level results day this week.

In a letter to all Vice-Chancellors, the Universities Minister has asked institutions to hold places for students appealing their grades until they receive the outcome of the appeal, where possible. The Minister has also said universities should take into account a range of evidence when admitting students to courses.

Michelle Donelan has made clear that the exam boards are committed to doing all that is possible to resolve appeals for affected candidates by 7 September – the deadline for applicants to meet academic offer conditions.

In the letter, the Universities Minister has also confirmed that the Government will exempt certain students who successfully go through the appeals process from counting towards student number controls held by individual institutions.

This exemption will apply to those whose grades are successfully appealed, increased to meet the conditions of a university offer, and their place confirmed because of this, ensuring they are able to move onto their chosen route.

Universities Minister Michelle Donelan said:

Nobody should have to put their future on hold because of this virus. That is why I am urging universities to be as flexible as possible in their admissions and to hold places for those whose grades are being appealed.

Our ambition for students this year is no different to any other year and it is in everybody's interest to see them progress.

Education Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

I'm confident the system Ofqual has put in place is fundamentally a fair one, that will award the vast majority of students a calculated grade that genuinely reflects the grade they would have achieved. Provisional data published by Ofqual suggests that the

number of As and A*s being awarded will increase compared to last year and moderation has ensured students from all backgrounds have been treated fairly.

We know that, without exams, even the best system is not perfect. That is why I welcome the fact that Ofqual has introduced a robust appeals system, so every single student can be treated fairly – and today we are asking universities to play their part to ensure every young person can progress to the destination they deserve.

Read in full here – [Minister Donelan Summer Admissions letter](#) (PDF, 126KB, 2 pages)