

The write stuff

Former History (MA Hons) student and now MSc History student, Ruby, takes a look at student journalism and creative writing opportunities at the University of Edinburgh.

Undertaking a degree in the School of History, Classics, and Archaeology means you won't be short of chances to hone your writing skills. Whether they take the form of a blogpost, an essay, or a translation, most of your assessments will be written work – plus, you've got your dissertation at the end of the four years! But if you fancy yourself as an art critic, investigative journalist, or political commentator, there are plenty of opportunities at the University of Edinburgh to take part in extracurricular writing. Below are just a few of the Societies you can get involved in – keep your eyes peeled for their events during Welcome Week.

“The Student” (studentnewspaper.org)



Perhaps the most obvious outlet for student writing is the University of Edinburgh's fortnightly newspaper, "The Student". It was founded in 1887 by Scottish author Robert Louis Stevenson ("Treasure Island", etc.), which makes it Europe's oldest student newspaper. As you might have guessed from its name, "The Student" is entirely produced by students. Whilst the paper is registered as a Student Society, with the Edinburgh University Student's Association (EUSA), it is totally independent from the University – meaning the stories they publish don't pull any punches!

"The Student" covers breaking news, but also has sections

dedicated to features, opinion pieces, reviews, sports, science, and lifestyle. Whether you've got opinions about events at the Scottish Parliament, the latest film releases, or the price of curly fries at Teviot Row House there's likely to be a space for you.

All articles written for "The Student" are published online and some make their way into print with physical copies being available for free across campus. Perfect for proudly sticking up on the fridge, or for posting home to your family.

Because The Student is not just a paper, but also society, they run plenty of social events alongside their writer's meetings. You can write two articles before you need to buy membership, but why wait and miss out on all the fun?

"Retrospect" (retrospectjournal.com)



"Retrospect Journal" is a student-led journal for the School of History, Classics, and Archaeology. Originally founded in 2006, as the journal of the Edinburgh University History

Society, it became an independent EUSA society in 2012, and now accepts submissions from across the three disciplines.

It's the perfect place to submit that essay you're really proud of, but they also accept everything from interviews, to reviews, to even short historical fiction pieces. Submissions are accepted throughout the semester for its website, alongside publishing a themed print edition twice a year. Copies of the journal – complete with beautiful illustrations – can be found in the Undergraduate Common Room or ordered online.

Much like "The Student", "Retrospect" is a great way to meet other students, especially those within the School. Members

can often be found at school-wide events, such as the William Robertson Cup (an annual staff versus students competition), alongside the History Society, Classics Society, and Archaeology Society.

You do need to buy a membership before you can be published in Retrospect , but all membership fees go right back into funding the journal – either maintaining the website or covering print costs.

“The Rattlecap” (therattlecap.com)



Founded in 2018, “The Rattlecap” describes itself as an “intersectional forum for discussion and change”, and a “thought-provoking, kind, and empowering space.” Their self-confessed “monthly-ish” issues are always centred on a theme, with previous editions including: “Connection”, “Isolation”, and “Recovery.”

Each month’s theme is always open to individual interpretation and submissions can take the form of current affairs reporting, opinion pieces, or creative writing and poetry. It also has a dedicated “History, Philosophy, & Education” section, if you’re interested in turning an essay or seminar presentation into a more concise, journalistic article. Articles are published online and always accompanied by a unique illustration.

Whilst your first submission is free, in order to have more than one article published you will need to pay for membership. Paying for membership also allows you attend its social events, which include everything from a book club, to

film screenings, to cooking and crafting sessions.

There are hundreds of societies at the University of Edinburgh, with new ones being founded each year. As a result, this blogpost has only managed to scratch the surface of all student-run publications available to take your submissions. Rest assured, whatever you write, it's likely you'll be able to find a home for it – even if it means taking a leaf out of Robert Louis Stevenson's book and founding your own paper!