



SCHOOLS NEWSLETTER

October 2018

“ Broader Experiences, Broader Minds ... ”

This is the powerful title of a study recently published by Dr Simon Beames, of the Moray House School of Education, Edinburgh University, which researches the life-long value of out-of-classroom learning experiences (OOCLE's) provided by Gordonstoun's unique curriculum. Gordonstoun being the boarding school in the far north of Scotland established by Outward Bound founder Kurt Hahn.

There have been decades of debate about the value of OOCLE's designed to 'build character', with some academics questioning their long-term effectiveness since there are no school-based studies which follow the progress of the participants over time. That is until now.

Dr Beames' unique study was designed to deeply understand the lasting influences of out-of-classroom experiences, which have been part of Gordonstoun's broader curriculum for more than 80 years. Through a combination of an online survey and focus group interviews with alumni, parents, current students and staff he concludes that *"the long-term influences of these challenging experiences were overwhelmingly positive"*. He states that **94%** of respondents said that out-of-classroom learning experiences, such as expeditions, sailing and community service had an overwhelmingly positive influence on their personal growth, while **74%** said it had a positive influence on their career path.

Former pupils said that out-of-classroom experiences:

- Built confidence and resilience
- Instilled a sense of responsibility
- Broke down social and cultural barriers
- Built vital skills, such as managing a team
- Were a 'growing up experience'



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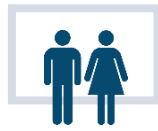
Overall, Dr Beames concludes that *"students seemed to gain an enduring "give it a go" attitude that could be taken with them, and which helped them face challenges in later life."*

The sentiment of this report is echoed by **Roy Blatchford CBE, former Inspector of Schools in England** in his book "Success is a Journey". In the chapter entitled "The Power of Learning Outdoors" he congratulates teachers who are undaunted by the health and safety culture that now permeates outdoor trips, and says that *"society should encourage [these trips] at every turn" as "the citizens of tomorrow need to experience risk and even danger today"*. In a world where children, particularly in the Middle East, increasingly live and are educated in urban settings, he hopes that confident schools *"assert with pupils and parents the power of learning outdoors"* and give them the freedom *"to explore the world around them."*

In recent years, the importance of building resilient, confident and responsible young adults has fallen off the educational radar, in favour of league tables and exam grades. However, a school or pupil's success should not be judged solely on its academic results. Mirroring the Hahnian legacy shared with Gordonstoun, key life skills have always been at the heart of an Outward Bound course. Whilst we have always had an innate belief in the relevance of what we do, it is always wonderful to have educationalists such as Dr Beames and Sir Roy adding further voices to the growing chorus of support for out-of-classroom learning experiences.



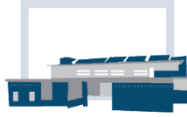
106
COURSES



2,076
PARTICIPANTS



43%
STAFF GROWTH



FIRST TRAINING
CENTRE OPENED

Inspirational Outward Bound Oman Instructor reaches new high

OBO instructor Anisa Al Raisi has long stood out as an exceptional Omani female through her pursuit of high adrenaline leisure activities. She loves nothing better than spending her free time climbing, kite boarding and surfing. In April this year her fame reached a whole new level when she became the first Omani to reach the geographic North Pole as part of the all-female Euro-Arabian team led by polar explorer Felicity Aston MBE. On her return she said that *"I can now use my experience to inspire young people to believe that they, like me, are more capable of overcoming fears and self-doubt to achieve great things in their lives"*. We are delighted to have someone of this caliber among our team of instructors.

On 22 October Anisa will be joined here in Muscat by fellow explorer, Major Natalie Taylor, who in January 2018 was part of the first all-female expedition to cross Antarctica on foot, to deliver an inspiring lecture entitled *"Two Women, Two Poles & Two Cultures"*. If any readers would like to attend please email: admin@outwardboundoman.com



A new member of the OB family in the region – OB UAE

In case word hasn't spread, a new dot has been added to the Outward Bound global location map – in the UAE. Based out of Ras Al Khaimah they offer corporate training and courses/expeditions for schools using the beautiful mountains and desert of the UAE.

For more information please contact them by email at enquiries@outwardbound.ae or by phone on +971 (07) 236 3747

Important resources & opportunity for Geography teachers

A year ago we announced the start of our exciting Discovering Oman and Desert Study Pack projects. Projects which, over a number of years, will result in Oman being embedded into the UK's geography curriculum. Last year eight Key Stage 2/3 teachers from the UK and Oman came together in Oman for a field trip. Over the course of a week they gathered data that would form the basis of some engaging lesson plans. We are delighted to announce that these plans were finally launched last week by the Royal Geographical Society in London and are now available for teachers to download from the RGS's website.....and in due course OBO's too. At the same event, the newly updated Desert Study Pack (a detailed geographic study of the Wahiba Sands) was unveiled by Nigel Winsor, the RGS's former deputy director who led the original expedition back in 1984-7.

With phase one of Discovering Oman launched, attention now turns to developing resources for GCSE and A-level teachers. The advert below has been placed in various UK geography publications, but recognizing possible regional interest in this opportunity we are willing to extend the deadline for applications until end Oct 2018.

The lesson plans, study pack and field trip are all exciting, new, free, resources and opportunities for geography teachers, so please help us spread the word to your colleagues in the humanities.

CALLING INNOVATIVE AND INSPIRATIONAL GEOGRAPHY TEACHERS

Discovering Oman

WIN A FREE GEOGRAPHY FIELDWORK WEEK IN OMAN

With soaring sand dunes, spectacular mountains that reach up to 10,000 feet into the sky, frankincense covered uplands, a coastline that stretches for more than 1,800 miles, modern cities, warm hospitality and a rich culture and heritage that goes back some 5,000 years - Oman is a geographical paradise.

In 2018, Oman opened its first purpose-built centre for outdoor learning in the Sharqiya sands, the same desert that in the 1980s saw the Royal Geographical Society undertake the most intensive study of any arid environment.

For full details on how to enter, please visit the 'Current Opportunities' page at:

<https://rsgs.org/>

Closing date for entries is October 5th 2018

Discovering Oman

The Discovering Oman project aims to create a series of innovative, curriculum linked, on-line resources for use by teachers in the UK and Oman.

Building on the success of the KS2 /KS3 field visit in winter 2017/18, in early 2019 there will be a second, fully funded, week-long fieldwork visit to Oman for four innovative secondary geography teachers, with the aim of gathering data to create a series of engaging, curriculum linked lesson plans with a focus on GCSE/KS4/National Level 4 and 5.



PROJECT PARTNERS

