

SCOTLAND CULTURAL IMMERSION PROGRAMME

CULTURE, HERITAGE & GOVERNANCE INSIGHTS



A premium international immersion programme providing practical insight into how culture, heritage, and governance are developed and applied

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Edinburgh Connect delivers a premium cultural immersion programme designed to provide organisations with insight into how systems, institutions, and environments are planned, developed, and delivered.

With experience supporting organisations and professionals across Saudi Arabia and the wider Middle East, Edinburgh Connect delivers programmes aligned to national development priorities.

Delivered in Scotland, one of the world's most established environments for governance, education, and national and sector development, the programme combines cultural context, institutional engagement, and applied learning within real-world settings.

Participants gain direct exposure to public sector environments, leadership contexts, and operational systems, building understanding of how strategy, governance, infrastructure, and service delivery are integrated and executed at scale.

Using Scotland as a live case study, the programme offers cross-sector relevance across public administration, infrastructure, culture, and economic development, supporting the application of international best practice within participants' own organisational and national context. This provides a structured and practical learning experience, offering perspective that can inform thinking within participants' own organisations and wider operating environment.



ALIGNMENT TO SAUDI VISION 2030

This programme is aligned with the strategic objectives of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030, particularly in relation to economic diversification, cultural development, infrastructure growth, and global positioning.

Participants gain exposure to how different sectors are planned and delivered in practice.

The programme supports key Vision 2030 priorities, including:

- Economic Diversification
- Cultural and Heritage Activation
- Infrastructure and Integrated Development
- Global Positioning and Competitiveness
- Leadership and Capability Development
- Integrated Planning and Development

The programme provides cross-sector relevance, offering insight that can inform thinking and application within participants' own organisational and national context.

This is not a study visit, but a structured leadership and capability experience, using Scotland as a live case study to provide practical exposure to how systems, institutions, and environments are planned and delivered.

Participants gain insight into how governance, infrastructure, culture, and service delivery operate in practice, with direct relevance to Saudi Arabia's evolving economic and institutional landscape.



WHY SCOTLAND? A GLOBAL BENCHMARK FOR DEVELOPMENT



Scotland combines strong governance, institutions, cultural heritage, and infrastructure, making it a globally respected environment.

As a live case study, Scotland demonstrates:

- How public institutions support long-term national development
- How universities contribute to talent, innovation, and global reputation
- How cultural assets are preserved and activated
- How urban and rural environments are integrated within planning
- How identity and environment support global positioning

Scotland provides a clear example of how governance, culture, infrastructure, and strategy operate together within a high-performing system. This provides a unique opportunity to experience an established environment first-hand, offering perspective not easily replicated through classroom-based learning.

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

DAY 1 – ARRIVAL & PROGRAMME INTRODUCTION

Focus: Orientation and Context

- **Arrival in Edinburgh**
Welcome upon arrival by the Edinburgh Connect team, with private airport transfer and support with accommodation check-in
- **Welcome dinner**
An introduction to Scottish culture, hospitality, and cuisine in a traditional setting
- **Programme introduction**
Overview of the programme itinerary and schedule

Experience Insight:

Arrival and introduction to the programme, including airport transfer, welcome dinner, and overview of the itinerary



DAY 2 – HERITAGE, SOCIETY & EDUCATION

Focus: Culture and Institutional Insight

- **Private guided tour of Edinburgh Castle**

One of Europe's most iconic historic landmarks, Edinburgh Castle has played a central role in Scotland's history for over 1,000 years and represents a powerful example of heritage preservation and visitor engagement

- **Private Old Town walking experience (Royal Mile)**

Exploration of Edinburgh's UNESCO World Heritage Old Town, showcasing medieval urban design, historic streets, and cultural storytelling that bring Scotland's history and identity to life

- **Private visit to the University of Edinburgh**

A globally ranked institution and one of the world's leading universities, providing insight into the UK higher education system, academic environments, and the role of universities in national development and global positioning, with the opportunity for an informal hosted discussion or Q&A session



Experience Insight:

Understanding how heritage, education, and global reputation contribute to national identity and long-term development



DAY 3 – GOVERNANCE, INSTITUTIONS & LEADERSHIP

Focus: Governance and Strategic Leadership

• Visit to the Scottish Parliament Building

The centre of Scotland's devolved government, providing insight into policy development, governance structures, and public sector leadership

• Private tour of Royal Yacht Britannia

The former official royal yacht of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, now recognised as one of the world's leading visitor attractions and a benchmark for heritage experience and visitor engagement

• Private leadership session with a UK-based industry expert

Insight aligned to group priorities (e.g. governance, infrastructure, destination development, leadership), followed by interactive discussion and Q&A

Experience Insight:

Exploring governance structures, leadership approaches, and real-world delivery within public sector environments

DAY 4 – URBAN DEVELOPMENT, LANDSCAPE & CULTURAL IDENTITY



Focus: Place-Making and Identity

- **Visit to Calton Hill**
A key landmark offering panoramic views of the city and illustrating Edinburgh's classical architectural identity and skyline
- **Private executive city tour exploring Edinburgh's urban planning and development**
Insight into how the city integrates historic districts with modern infrastructure, including exploration of Dean Village, alongside key landmarks such as Holyrood Palace, the official residence of the British monarch in Scotland, and Arthur's Seat, an extinct volcano offering panoramic views of the city and surrounding landscape
- **Visit to South Queensferry and the Forth Bridges**
A UNESCO-recognised engineering landmark, showcasing Scotland's strength in infrastructure and its integration into the visitor experience

Experience Insight:

Understanding how urban planning, infrastructure, and landscape are integrated within a high-performing system

DAY 5 – ST ANDREWS: GLOBAL POSITIONING & ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Focus: Reputation and International Competitiveness

- **Private guided experience in St Andrews**
Exploration of one of Scotland's most historic and prestigious towns, known globally for its academic excellence and coastal setting
- **Visit to the University of St Andrews**
Scotland's oldest university and one of the most prestigious globally, contributing significantly to the country's international academic standing and reputation
- **Exploration of the town, coastline, and the Old Course at St Andrews**
Recognised worldwide as the "Home of Golf," representing a globally recognised heritage asset and a key element of Scotland's international identity

Experience Insight:

Understanding how education, heritage, and global recognition contribute to international positioning



DAY 6 – THE SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS: CULTURE, LANDSCAPE & IDENTITY

Focus: Heritage, Environment and National Identity

- **Private Highlands experience through Scotland's most iconic landscapes**
A guided journey through key regions including Callander, Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park, Loch Lubnaig, and the village of Killin, providing exposure to Scotland's natural environment and rural context
- **Exploration of Scotland's natural environment and rural communities**
Insight into how landscape, environment, and rural communities contribute to national identity, economic positioning, and long-term sustainability
- **Cultural storytelling and heritage interpretation**
Understanding Highland history, clans, and traditions, and how these narratives contribute to Scotland's global positioning and perception

Experience Insight:

Understanding how landscape, identity, and cultural narratives contribute to national positioning and global perception



DAY 7 – DEPARTURE

Focus: Programme Conclusion

- **Private airport transfer and departure support**

Seamless transfer to the airport with coordinated logistics to ensure a smooth departure experience

- **Programme close and reflection**

Opportunity to reflect on key insights and experiences from the programme

Experience Insight:

Ensuring a smooth and well-managed conclusion, reinforcing a positive and lasting impression of the overall experience



OPTIONAL PROGRAMME EXTENSIONS

The programme can be tailored to specific organisational objectives, with additional elements to enhance cultural understanding, institutional insight, and sector relevance.

INSTITUTIONAL ENGAGEMENT & WORKSHOPS

- **Leadership sessions with UK-based industry experts**
Practical insight into governance, infrastructure, or sector development, delivered through interactive sessions aligned to organisational priorities
- **Additional university or academic sessions**
Extended exposure to UK higher education institutions, research environments, and academic leadership, with opportunities for interactive sessions and discussion
- **Organised visits and roundtable discussions**
Engagement with organisations, projects, or sector-specific environments, supported by facilitated discussions and workshops to explore real-world application and best practice



HARRY POTTER CULTURAL EXPERIENCE

- **Journey on the Jacobite Steam Train**
A heritage steam train travelling through the West Highlands, offering one of the most scenic rail experiences in the world
- **Crossing the Glenfinnan Viaduct**
An iconic railway structure set within the Highlands landscape, internationally recognised through its appearance in the Harry Potter movies
- **Private guided walking experience in Edinburgh**
Exploration of locations that inspired the series, including a visit to The Elephant House, where early parts of the books were written

PROGRAMME FEATURES

- Executive transport throughout the programme
- Private guided experiences
- University and institutional engagement
- Leadership session with a UK-based industry expert
- Dining in premium settings
- Dedicated programme coordination and on-the-ground support



APPROACH

The programme takes an immersive, experience-led approach, combining structured insight with real-world observation.

- **Contextual interpretation and guided insight**
Providing understanding across cultural, institutional, and operational environments
- **Institutional and leadership engagement**
Exposure to public sector environments, governance structures, and leadership contexts
- **Real-world observation of international best practice**
Learning through live environments, case studies, and operational systems
- **Structured reflection and discussion**
Enabling insight-sharing and application within participants' own organisational context

PROGRAMME IMPACT

Participants gain practical insight and broader perspective that can inform thinking within their own organisational and national context.

The programme supports:

- Application of international best practice within local contexts
- More informed decision-making through exposure to real-world environments
- Improved understanding of how systems, sectors, and services operate together
- Increased global perspective and awareness of international standards
- Stronger communication across different organisational and cultural contexts
- Greater awareness of how sectors contribute to development and positioning





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