

University of the Highlands and Islands Students Celebrate Success in International Code Challenge

A group of University of the Highlands and Islands students are celebrating their success in an international coding competition.

Students from the university's applied software development BSc (Hons) degree won first place in two of the three categories in the [Call for Code Spot Challenge](#) hosted by IBM, beating off competition from over 900 students from 100 universities across the world.

The week-long, online challenge invited student teams to come up with software solutions to three climate change issues: water sustainability, energy sustainability and disaster resiliency.

The University of the Highlands and Islands entered three teams and took first and second place in the energy category and first place in the disaster resilience category. The students in the energy category designed an app and a browser extension which provide sustainability information about products people might be looking to buy online. The disaster resilience solution was an idea for a crowdsourcing app which would help to provide support for communities affected by tragedies such as floods, attacks or earthquakes.

Commenting on the success, Douglas Barr, programme leader for the university's applied software development degree, said: "We are extremely proud of our students' achievements in this international competition. Our applied software development degree started earlier this year, so the students are only a few weeks into their course. They were competing with students from across year groups at over 100 universities from across the world.

"We designed our applied software degree to encourage students to collaborate in virtual teams, working together to solve problems, much like modern software development companies do. The competition also took this approach and I'm delighted that our new students, who are spread from Shetland to Italy, are already showing fantastic collaboration and problem-solving skills."

Davis Ansons (21) from Inverness was one of the students who took part in the challenge. He said: "I found the competition incredibly exciting and challenging. We were up against a significant number of teams from around the world, many of which already had years of experience under their belt. I am incredibly proud of myself and the class for the results we have achieved and, in the short 10 weeks that the course has been running, we have already proved a lot about our abilities to generate and implement ideas. Personally, I feel this can be attributed to the course structure, which has provided us with lots of collaborative and technical experience due to its hands-on approach. I plan on using the prize money to purchase some tech that will enable me to explore more areas of interest during my degree."

"It is wonderful to see the students on the applied software development BSc (Hons) course embracing IBM technology and to see their commitment to learning is already paying off, having won two of the three categories from the Call for Code University Spot Challenge. From completing badges in IBM design thinking, which helped the students produce a solution with the end user front of mind, to gaining hands-on experience of IBM products and IBM Cloud services through the IBM academic initiative in their course work, the solutions are

inspiring, address real environmental issues and can be scaled to create a better society," said Dr Petrena Prince, IBM Global University Programs Europe Leader.

"It is amazing to think these students are only ten weeks into their course and so exciting to see what they will be able to achieve in the future as they continue to learn on IBM technologies."

The winning teams will each receive \$1500 prize money to share between the members, while the team which came second will receive \$1000.

To find out more about the university's applied software development BSc (Hons) visit www.uhi.ac.uk

You can find out more about 'Call for Code University Spot Challenge - Europe, Middle East and Africa: Students versus climate change' [here](#).

For information about the IBM academic initiative, visit www.ibm.com/academic

For more information, contact communications@uhi.ac.uk

www.uhi.ac.uk

Twitter: @UHIPressOffice

IBM Press Contact:

Emma Bennett

UKI External Communications

Phone: 07976 839109

Email: emma.bennett@uk.ibm.com

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