

Here we are, graduating after four exciting years. First of all, I want you to take a moment and say out loud to yourself:
“Well done [insert name]!” (yes, I'm serious).

We can all be incredibly proud of ourselves for mastering this huge accomplishment! So much has happened in the past four years. It's been one of the most exciting journeys I've ever been on and I am truly grateful for each and everyone of you who has crossed my path and made this experience to such an adventure.

I feel extremely privileged that I have had the opportunity to study the subject of my interest, fulfill my dream of studying abroad, and learn from and alongside such wonderful and inspiring people.

While our education obviously plays a huge part of these last four years, living in Glasgow has taught me so much beyond the university experience. It has reminded me of who I am, allowed me to grow, and inspired me to explore what I want to give and take from this precious life.

Some of you may be surprised that I managed to stay with you all the way through. In first year, people kept asking me whether I actually studied in Glasgow because I was constantly out and about discovering my newfound home country. The enchanting nature of Scotland with its majestic highlands, vast landscape, ice-cold lochs and countless herds of sheep has enchanted me right from the start. Little surprise, that my love for nature inspired me to join the climate movement at the beginning of third year. Soon, many of us were joking that I might spontaneously drop out of university to become a full-time climate activist. I'd lie if I'd say that I did not consider it. But I am happy I got to stay with you all from the beginning to the end.

Above all, this time in Glasgow allowed me to find my self, discover my passions and live them. I created a wellbeing group for environmental activists which I currently continue to coordinate. Thereby, I believe that studying psychology has helped me to better approach people's mental challenges beyond my own empathetic understanding of them. Exploring such opportunities and taking responsibility allowed me to combine who I am and what I believe in with my devotion to promote positive mental wellbeing. That being said, it was not always easy. I encountered a lot of challenges on both personal and logistic levels. I was confronted with my own mental health struggles, too. But working through this has allowed me to grow and find greater inner alignment. I found my tribe of people who see me, the real me. Who make me feel truly loved and helped me to find comfort beyond my comfort zones.

Why am I telling you this?

Right now, your entire future lies ahead of you. There will be ups and downs, decisions to be made, times of uncertainty and times of great opportunity. But what I really hope for you is to find your own passions and pursue them. Embrace who you are and what you believe in. Bring what you love into your everyday life – maybe even into your profession. It is really not about what other people think you should be doing. It is up to you to create the life that fulfills you. Dare to live your dreams. You've got it all in you.

I thank you all for sharing this space with me, the memories we have created, and the lessons we have learned. May you find what ignites the fire in your heart and never stop pursuing your own happiness. Much love and light x

Cheyenne Laana

Some extra special thanks to:

Masa, you always filled the room with laughter. You are a little miss sunshine and I am grateful to have your positive energy in my life .

Carl, you are such a genuine and kind person. Your positive presence and open-mindedness always made me feel welcome and calm.

Ana, my grocery shopping-buddy in first year #MuranoTimes Thank you for always being there for me no matter what.

Cullum, you social bean! Always eager to support your course mates and definitely the biggest supporter of my constantly changing hair colors (I think we agree that pastel pink was the best!?)

Rhoda, your determination and willingness to help others is inspiring. And I deeply appreciate your moral support for my engagement in climate activism, that really means the world to me.

Ebba, I remember our seemingly endless Fridays with you and Aischa trying to get our head around the R homework.. thank you for keeping me somewhat sane! I will miss our long coffee chats filled with so much love and many laughter.

Aischa, my wonderful flatmate for the past two years. Here's to hoping for better insulation in our next flats! Thank you for being on my site ever since first year, for sharing your true self and allowing me to do the same. For the honesty and support through all the ups and downs. For keeping an eye on me and my wellbeing – and reminding me of my coursework deadlines when I've been utterly immersed in Extinction Rebellion work. You've been my rock, all this time. SO much love for you <3

Kimi, we only became friends in fourth year (it is never too late!) but you have become my soul companion ever since. You are such a being of light and you made my last year at university absolutely magical. Thank you for seeing me with all my facets. I cannot wait to have more deep conversations over decaf and vegan treats with you. Moon sisters forever.