Owen Priestley

Junior Weather Forecaster

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Meteorology graduate from the University of Reading with summer placement experience at the Met Office. Produced 25 experimental 5 day forecasts with a mean absolute error of 1.2°C for maximum temperature. Skilled in synoptic chart analysis, NWP model interpretation (ECMWF IFS, Met Office UKV, GFS), and Python scripting for meteorological data extraction and visualisation.

Experience

Jun 2024 – Aug 2024

Summer Placement Student, Public Weather Service, Met Office, Exeter

10 week placement in the Public Weather Service team, assisting operational meteorologists with daily forecasting and severe weather event response.

- Produced **25 experimental 5 day forecasts** evaluated against observations, achieving a MAE of 1.2°C for max temperature
- Analysed NWP model output from **ECMWF IFS, UKV, and GFS** to support daily forecast briefings
- Assisted with 3 severe weather warnings by preparing synoptic summaries and **radar/satellite composite charts**
- Built a Python dashboard using Cartopy and Matplotlib to visualise **ensemble spread for precipitation forecasts**, used by 4 forecasters during the placement

Oct 2023 – Jun 2025

Student Weather Observer, University of Reading Atmospheric Observatory, Reading

Volunteer weather observer at the university's climate station, one of the longest running in the UK (records since 1908).

- Recorded daily observations (temperature, humidity, pressure, precipitation, cloud cover) for **180+ observation days**
- Maintained instrument calibration for **12 meteorological instruments** including a Campbell-Stokes sunshine recorder

Education

Sep 2022 – Jun 2025

BSc (Hons) in Meteorology, University of Reading, Reading

First Class Honours. Modules include synoptic meteorology, atmospheric dynamics, climate physics, numerical weather prediction, and remote sensing. Dissertation on Foehn warming events in the Scottish Highlands.

Skills

Synoptic Chart Analysis, NWP Model Interpretation (ECMWF IFS, UKV, GFS), Python (Cartopy, MetPy, Matplotlib, xarray), MATLAB, Satellite & Radar Image Analysis, Surface and Upper Air Observations, NAME Atmospheric Dispersion Model, IRIS (Met Office Python library), Microsoft Excel & Data Validation, Scientific Report Writing

Certifications

Jan 2023

Royal Meteorological Society (Student Fellow, FRMetS pathway), Royal Meteorological Society

Languages

English (native)

Projects

Oct 2024 – Apr 2025

Dissertation: Foehn Warming Events in the Scottish Highlands (2016-2024)

Analysed 8 years of MIDAS station data to identify and characterise Foehn warming events across 5 Highland stations.

- Processed **2.9 million hourly records** and identified **340 Foehn events** using a multi-criteria detection algorithm
- Found a statistically significant trend of **+0.4°C per decade** in peak Foehn warming intensity ($p = 0.03$)
- Created an interactive Python visualisation tool for exploring event characteristics, presented at the **RMetS Student Conference 2025**

References

Dr. Peter Clark, Senior Operational Meteorologist, Met Office, peter.clark@metoffice.gov.uk, +44 7700 900 773

Prof. Sue Gray, Professor of Meteorology, University of Reading, s.gray@reading.ac.uk, +44 7700 900 841

Extra Curricular Activity

Sep 2024 – Jun 2025

Chair, University of Reading Meteorology Society

Led a committee of 6 to organise weekly weather discussions, 4 guest lectures from Met Office scientists, and the annual forecast competition (entered by 75 students).