



University of St Andrews

2016-17 Further Particulars of Offer

This document gives information on the University of St Andrews educational experience by providing statements of clarification on the St Andrews approach to providing degree and module information; curriculum review, teaching and learning; and fee setting.

These particulars are valid for offers in 2016-2017.

Degree and Module Information Statement

Information about the University's curriculum (modules and degree programmes) can be found in several places on the University's website depending on the level of detail you are looking for. The Undergraduate Course Catalogue published at <https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/coursecatalogue/ug/> is the primary source of information if you want to learn about the modules that may be available to you in the academic year and the combination of modules that are required to progress from year to year on your chosen degree programme.

Modules

In the Course Catalogue you will find information about all of the modules that are available in the current academic year. These modules are published in numerical order by the administering academic School. The modules are divided between 1000 & 2000 level modules (sub-Honours) and Honours Level modules. There may be constraints on a module such as a pre-requisite that will restrict the actual modules available to you depending on the degree programme you are studying. The Course Catalogue is updated and published online each year and is available as a pdf file. Hard copies are available for consultation in the University Library. It may be necessary to update the Course Catalogue after it is published and these updates are published on the same webpage at the very top of the Catalogue listings under the heading "Stop Press".

Degree programmes (also called courses)

The University offers a wide variety of degree programmes in many different academic subject areas. The list of currently available degree programmes that you may study are listed in the online Course Catalogue at <https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/media/publications/coursecatalogue/undergraduate/latest/Degree%20List%202015-16%20final.pdf>. Each degree programme requires certain combinations of modules to be taken in each academic year of study in order for you to progress from year to year on your way to your final examinations and ultimately graduation. These requirements are published in a similar way to the modules, ie under each academic School they are listed in alphabetical order by degree type (Single Honours, Joint Honours, Major/minor, Triple) and academic subject. The University's advising process will help ensure that you are on track to meet the requirements that are necessary to finish your degree programme.

You can review these two parts of the catalogue manually online or using one of the printed copies of the Catalogue that are available in the Library.

Senate Regulations

The University Senate oversees the awarding of degrees to students upon successful completion of a programme of study and the regulations that govern the requirements for success are laid out in the Senate Regulations available as a online in a pdf file at <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/students/rules/ugsenateregulations/> or in printed copies in the University Library. The Regulations are published annually in advance of the beginning of the academic year. Changes to the Senate Regulations may be necessary from time to time but these are uncommon and are always published online as a pdf titled "Summary of changes". In most cases you are unlikely to need to refer to the Senate Regulations as your Advisers of Study and the University's advising system will guide you in relation to your approved pathway of study.

Curriculum Revision

The main aims of the curriculum at the University of St Andrews are to foster flexible, independent thinkers who have both subject-related and generic skills in readiness for work or further study. The curriculum portfolio is developed on research-led teaching, guided by cutting edge researchers and delivered by outstanding teachers from around the world. Embedded in the core curriculum are principles of research methodology, ethics and responsibility as well as insight into global and cultural issues. The University teaches not only skills and flexible thinking, but a belief in the ability to use these beyond graduation.

The University provides an exceptional breadth and opportunity of choice, with a large range of subjects that can lead to joint degrees – you will be encouraged to try new disciplines while following your own established academic interests. The University will ensure that relevant information and advice is available when students are deciding to make such choices: to complement the key information contained in the Course Catalogue, each student has a dedicated advisor of studies who are available for consultation in a process overseen by Pro Deans who can also provide expert guidance to students.

In order to achieve this, and to ensure that its teaching incorporates the research and related interests of its staff, the University reviews its curriculum portfolio on a regular basis including programmes and modules. Changes are made with due consideration to minimising impact, safeguarding academic standards and assuring the quality of the learning experience. These may include any of the following:

- Changes to the timetable, location, number of classes and method of delivery of modules and programmes of study, provided such alterations are minimal.
- Reasonable variations to the content and syllabus of modules and programmes of study (including in relation to Placements or Study Abroad) to ensure that teaching is research-led, current and relevant.
- Suspension, discontinuation or combining of modules or programmes of study (for example, because a key member of staff is unwell or leaves the University).
- Changes to ordinances, regulations, policies and procedures which the University reasonably considers necessary (for example, in the light of changes in the law or the requirements of the University's regulators, or for the benefit of its students and staff).
- Not providing programmes of study or modules or combining them with others if the University reasonably considers this to be necessary (for example because too few students are admitted to them to provide the required learning experience).

As part of any such changes the University will:

- Endeavour to minimise impact for current students and applicants by communicating at the earliest opportunity, offering reasonable alternative options or cancellation with no detriment and timing the changes sensitively;
- Introduce major changes normally in such a way that these come into force at the beginning of the following academic year (if fundamental to the programme, major changes will normally come into force with effect from the next cohort of students);
- Apply changes to policies, regulations and procedures with no detriment to current students;
- Be cognisant of students on Leave of Absence and ensure that any changes to the curriculum are communicated clearly and suitable pathway options are available on return to study;
- Ensure that the portfolio of modules available for students to choose from delivers the published learning aims and outcomes of the programme for which students are enrolled.

Learning and Teaching at St Andrews

Our approach to Learning and Teaching is a little like the University itself: a mix of very traditional and very new. In every subject, we take care to cover all the bases, on the one hand familiarising our students with the knowledge and theories that are essential to understanding of the discipline; and on the other, giving you a chance wherever possible to develop practical uses for the expertise you acquire. From this starting-point, we expect our students increasingly to design their own studies, by selecting options and undertaking research-based activities that they devise by themselves, with support from academic staff.

All teaching and learning is organized through one of the University's schools, which have a Director of Teaching who oversees the delivery and development of teaching and learning. These all work with the coordinators of individual modules and with programme or year coordinators (where appropriate) to ensure that teaching and learning provision is carefully planned and delivered, and that new developments and changes are channelled for approval to the appropriate committees. Directors of Teaching, programme, year and module coordinators are all established members of academic staff – such as teaching fellows, professors and lecturers.

Students put together their programme of studies by selecting a combination of compulsory and optional modules from our Course Catalogue. The Catalogue describes each module and gives information about the learning, teaching and assessment methods used.

We know that every student has a slightly different way of learning so, while we make use of some tried-and-tested methods that we believe should be part of any good university education, we also have a wide variety of complementary approaches that will enrich your experience and ensure there is an approach that suits.

Lectures and seminars / tutorials

Most subjects use lectures, especially in the first two years, referred to as sub-honours. Students can use their first two years to discover their own specific strengths before finalising their Degree intentions at Honours level. Lectures are a good way to ensure everyone in the class receives the same key information, and they help students develop note-taking and summarising skills. The material covered in lectures is generally followed up in smaller seminar groups (15-20 or so students) or tutorials (5-10 or so), where there might be a structured open discussion, a general debate, a presentation by students, or a series of questions, exercises or examples to be worked through with the tutor. Owing to the relatively small undergraduate student body in comparison to some universities, St Andrews is in the enviable position of offering small group teaching in many subjects.

Laboratories

In addition to lectures and seminars or tutorials, some subjects require laboratory sessions. These take place in custom-designed labs, where students carry out practical tasks, following a programme of work devised by their lecturers and directed by experts during the session. Labs allow you to put theoretical knowledge into practice, perfect your skills and develop into competent, well-trained and highly-skilled specialists. Lab sessions are not just for science: Economics, Modern Languages and others use them too.

Other learning and teaching activities

One to one

Some academic Schools also offer 'surgery' hours, where students can drop in to speak with a tutor about a particular module. Our welcoming environment and relatively small size allow students to approach individual tutors for assistance in this way or via email.

Learning in the field

Many subjects include compulsory or optional fieldwork from an early stage. Students may investigate a site of particular scientific, historical, artistic or cultural interest; or they may carry out experiments or surveys by observing or interviewing the occupants of a particular location.

Learning from each other

Not all learning takes place in the physical presence of the tutor, of course. We also arrange student-led tutorials (real or virtual) in which students drive the discussion. And although we are an ancient university, our state-of-the-art facilities support learning through blogs, chat-rooms, podcasts, project forums, wikis and other forms of collaborative and independent learning.

Extracurricular Activities

Extra-curricular lectures and seminars in every School are open to students. Some student societies are linked to academic Departments and are an excellent way to expand understanding and appreciation of the subject. Societies organise talks, social events and other informal activities to support learning.

Internships and work experience are available in some areas as part of the degree programme, whether simulated or real: Medicine, for example, places emphasis on simulated doctor-patient consultations, while teaching abroad placements are routinely available in Modern Languages With Integrated Year Abroad. Competitive extra-curricular summer research internships, supported by the University, are available in all subjects to supplement scheduled learning and teaching.

In the final year, a flagship module, distinctive to St Andrews, allows selected students to obtain credits for teaching their subject of study in local schools, under the joint supervision of a teacher and a university academic. The Careers Centre supports students arranging their own vacation internships for work experience.

Further personal and professional development opportunities are available, for example through the St Andrews Award, administered by the Careers Centre; and the Certificate in Professional Skills run by the Centre for Academic, Professional and Organisational Development.

Individual and group work

As students progress through their programme, they are expected to undertake work in groups or pairs. This is a good way of sharing work in order to learn more about the subject; but learning to be part of a team is also a key skill for employment and life in a community.

At the same time, one of our chief aims at St Andrews is to enable students to become increasingly self-reliant, not only in the intellectual questions they ask and answers they give, but also in the way they manage their time, organise their work and achieve the high standards of professionalism prized by employers. Students are therefore expected to conduct much of their work alone, and the Honours project or dissertation in particular is the culmination of independent thinking and personal development: in this, a student selects a topic, defines a question, conducts the research necessary to explore it thoroughly and according to the norms of their discipline, and writes up the results of their enquiries. All this is done with readily available support and guidance from academic staff – but the burden of work, and the ultimate achievement, is entirely the student's own. Thus we support a gradual departure from a typical school or college environment where structures and schedules prevail, to a more scholarly approach where interaction is focused on support for autonomous learning, exchanging ideas and stimulating thinking.

Workload, preparation and follow-up for learning and teaching

Like other universities, we expect full-time students to put in a full week's work on their studies, split between scheduled classes and private study. As a guide, each credit earned should be the result of about 10 hours' work, so a full year's credit load (120 credits) represents 1,200 hours of concentration and hard work.

To get the most out of your studies, you need to prepare carefully for every class you attend, and to follow it up afterwards, whatever its nature. You may be asked to look carefully at specific material; in addition, you should independently use learning resources like the Library to 'read around' the subject, fill gaps in your knowledge and understanding, check the reliability of information you have discovered and feel confident that you have grasped what is being taught.

To help in this, further module information is available, clearly showing the programme of study and assessment involved. Bibliographies of extra reading are provided at the start; further recommendations may be given during class, depending on what comes up. Many tutors post material on the web; others may conduct short 'refresher' tests during the class itself to check that everyone has reached the necessary level of understanding.

Some subjects require a high percentage of scheduled learning hours, for example because a student can only make progress by attending a laboratory, or carrying out supervised fieldwork. In other subject areas, a large amount of individual reading or practice is the only way to ensure adequate learning. In both cases, students must quickly develop time management skills to enable efficient use of the full-time study week.

Fee Setting

The University is committed to providing clear and timely information about tuition fees in order to assist applicants and students in making informed decisions.

This protocol covers all cohorts of student (undergraduate and postgraduate) and all modes of attendance on degree programmes. The purpose of this protocol is to outline:

- The principles by which the University sets tuition fees and the framework it adopts for forthcoming academic years;
- The annual fee-setting process and the University's approach to fee variation;
- The information that will be available to applicants and students.

Approach and guiding principles

1. To enable students to plan for the cost of a university education, the University provides applicants with information on tuition fees and other known mandatory charges for the full duration of a degree programme before an offer is made.
2. The University reviews its fees and charges annually and communicates this information to all students. The University's fee setting process leads to the publication of a list of approved fees for all cohorts by the end of October for the coming academic year and indicative tuition fees for the following three academic years: <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/students/money/tuitionfees/feetable/>.
3. Tuition fees for some cohorts of student are regulated by external bodies to the University; in such cases the University follows guidelines published by these external bodies¹.
4. Where fees change for registered students during the course of a degree programme the published fee cap will be applied. For students who are caught between systems or fee increases due to leave, the University will apply a policy of no detriment.
5. In addition to information on the web, the University provides and publishes information on tuition fee rates and policies at the point of offer. Specifically, the University guarantees that:
 - Information is available about approved and indicative tuition fees for the full duration of a degree programme.
 - Information is available on fee status assessment procedures: <https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/study/ug/policy/fee-status-policy/>.
 - Information is available on known charges for compulsory elements of the degree programme (e.g. an assessed field trip).
 - Information about fee implications relating to changes of circumstances (e.g. Leave of Absence, Extensions) is available to students prior to requesting a change and made clear before accepting a change.

¹ Undergraduate tuition fees for Scottish and EU domiciled students are set by the Scottish Government. Undergraduate tuition fees for students from the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man are set by the Islands Authorities, Research Postgraduate fees for Home students are set by Research Councils.