Social Anthropology asks the fundamental question ‘what is it to be human?’ In order to answer this, you will examine the diverse ways in which humans establish and live social lives in the contemporary world.

- Ranked top in Scotland and in the top four UK Anthropology departments in the Complete University Guide 2018.
- A beautiful place that is also highly cosmopolitan: students come to study Social Anthropology from many cultures and from every part of the globe.
- Staff expertise covers all regions of the world in depth and in breadth.
- Anthrosoc, our student society, has an active Facebook group page covering events.
- Many of our students enter postgraduate study at many prestigious universities worldwide or go on to work for major international organisations.

What will I study?
Social Anthropology at St Andrews teaches you to take a comparative and global view of human individuality, society and culture and to look at the world from other people’s perspectives.

The Department has strongly established research on Latin America and the Caribbean, the Pacific, Africa, Europe, and Asia. We have championed innovative ethnographic and theoretical scholarship with regard to the relationship between anthropology and history, philosophy and cosmopolitan studies.

We are committed to facilitating and recognising student excellence. Alongside our passion for the highest quality of research-led teaching we award a number of prizes annually to students in each year of their degree for their outstanding academic performances. Our staff have received three University Teaching Awards and staff have been shortlisted for these awards in every one of the last three years.

First year
The first year will ground you in the anthropological approach toward ethnographic comparison and analysis showing you the increasing relevance of anthropology in understanding the contemporary world. You will learn through case studies from across the globe including in-depth ethnographies from the lives of Pygmies in Africa, Gitanos in Spain, Quechua speakers in the Andes as well as research from Britain, Northern Europe and elsewhere.

Second year
You will gain a comprehensive foundation in the history of social anthropological theory and an introduction to ethnography as a research method and practice. In the first semester we explore the changing theories that have informed social anthropology from the mid-nineteenth century up to the present from ‘totemism’ to ‘cosmopolitics’.

In the second semester you will learn to construct your own ethnographic project, choose your own field site and write up your analysis.

Entry requirements
We consider all aspects of every application, including context, equivalent qualifications and the Personal Statement. Offers may be higher or lower than the grades stated here. See also page 169.

SQA Highers: AABB
GCE A-Levels: AAB
International Baccalaureate Points: 35

“Studying Social Anthropology at St Andrews has been a challenging and rewarding experience. The Department is full of skilled and friendly staff with an expertise in a wide range of subjects and regions. The knowledge and support I have received during my time here has helped me to discover what I’m truly passionate about and has given me the confidence to pursue it. I know that my time here will have fully prepared me for a successful and exciting career ahead.”

Catherine (California, USA)
Social Anthropology

www.st-andrews.ac.uk/subjects/social-anthropology
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Honours (third and fourth) years
You will choose a portfolio of specialist courses combining regional and theoretical focuses. You may take specialist courses on West Africa, Papua New Guinea or the Andes, for example. Theoretical courses at this level explore themes such as the relations between perception and imagination in our knowledge of society, the anthropology of climate change, sex and gender, or contemporary forms of religious experience. You will also have the opportunity for practice-based study; you may learn to curate a museum display, decode indigenous artefacts, or create your own field site as an ethnographic participant-observer.

If you intend to do ethnographic research for your dissertation you will take a methods course that will orient your project aims. Issues of ethics and risk are also explored.

Study abroad
Social Anthropology students participate in the University-wide St Andrews Abroad programme. You may also have the opportunity to participate in our School Abroad exchange programme. For information about study abroad options, please see: www.st-andrews.ac.uk/study-abroad

Careers
A degree in Social Anthropology is important for any career where knowledge of other cultures is vital, such as in overseas development or in community relations work.

Graduates with a degree in Social Anthropology have proceeded to a wide range of careers, including the diplomatic service, social work, law and business, work for Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs), in teaching and in journalism.

The insight of an anthropologist is valued in any occupation that requires a sensitivity to different ways of life and thought, or which demands the manipulation of theoretical ideas in regard to the context of complicated human needs. A full understanding of ‘the human element’ in technological processes is increasingly in demand.

Some of our recent graduate careers include: BBC documentary producer, Google associate account strategist, director of future leaders at Entrepreneurial Scotland, legislative aide at the US House of Representatives.

Social Anthropology offers specialist Masters and PhD courses. Specialisms include Amerindian Studies, Art and Perception and Pacific Studies. Many students go on to study at prestigious universities elsewhere.

“I chose Social Anthropology as a part of my degree as it is the study of what it is to be human. What makes the anthropological study at St Andrews special are the staff. It is a fantastic experience to study with them. Their research, for instance, covers literary, linguistic, or feminist (to list just a few) anthropologies.”

Damian (Kolobrzeg, Poland)