A St Andrews PhD

Dr Clare Peddie
ProDean Taught Postgraduates

pgtprodean@st-andrews.ac.uk
A St Andrews PhD – event funded by QAA Scotland - Enhancement Themes

• Topics that all Scottish universities focus on at the same time, to make the quality of teaching and learning experience even better.
• Until 2017 the theme is Student Transitions
• Directed by Vice-Principals from the Scottish higher education sector (SHEEC) and coordinated by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education Scotland (QAAS).
• A little bit of money........
So welcome to an afternoon of thinking about your future

• Supporting your transition
  – Give information on further study opportunities
  – Opportunity to meet with PhD students
  – Reflect on how your current studies develop you to prepare for research
Now Is a PhD for me? And the transition from PGT-PGR PGT Pro-Dean
1325 Where to look for funding: a demonstration of Fund Karen Laing
1340 Comfort break
1350 What we’re looking for in an application Prof Jason Konig
1415 The application experience and the PhD interview Dr Ben Carter
1435 The PhD experience 1st, 2nd and 3rd year PGR representatives
1455 What are DTCs? An introduction to SGSAH Jude Henderson, SGSAH
1540 School discussions in Bell Pettigrew and refreshment break: A chance to question current PhDs
1600 Where do PhDs go? Dr Ben Carter, Careers
1600 A PhD alumni’s experience
1610 Q&A panel discussion
1645 Wine reception
Thinking about a PhD?

• I want to be an academic
• Because my dissertation supervisor says I would be a brilliant PhD student!
• Because it is expected of me (family, friends, peers)
• Because I am really interested in the topic and want to spend the next 3+ years researching and writing about it
• Because it will enhance my employability
• Because I can’t think what else to do and besides it is fun/comfy/friendly here at St Andrews and I don’t want to leave
Is a PhD for me?

• Are you motivated enough to undertake a PhD?
• Are you patient enough to do a PhD?
• Genius is hard work / intelligence – can you work hard for 3-4 years on one question?
• Are your dependents (if you have them) fully supportive?
• Do your research goals marry well with those of your potential supervisor?
• Is your potential supervisor a good fit for you (track record and research excellence)?
• Is the PhD intellectually challenging enough?
• Will doing a PhD enhance the type of career you want to pursue?
• Do you have the necessary funds to pay for your studies?
• Do you have the necessary qualifications?
Some random advice

• Consider taking a break
• Opportunity to expand your knowledge and skills
• Your area of research for your Masters need not dictate your PhD
• Do your research
• Ask about training and opportunity to teach?
Transition

• Some Schools permit/encourage a smooth transition from Masters to PhD or MPhil

• Local School variation

• One arm of the Transition work at St Andrews is to develop clear and transparent information for students and staff on the process – work in progress
Student Transition at St Andrews

- Principles of transition
  - No double counting of time or work
  - Progression dependent on performance
- PGDip – 120 credits taught modules – 2 semesters
- MLitt – 120 credits taught modules + 60 credit dissertation – 2 semesters plus summer
- MPhil – 120 credit taught modules plus long dissertation – 2 semesters plus one year
- PhD – 3 or 4 years
- Building blocks
Contact a supervisor – discuss a project

Apply to the University for admission
Make it known to the School that you want to be considered for funding

Search for funding opportunities
Find out how other students are funded; ask supervisor; search online (University, Research Council and Charities)
A SAMPLE E-MAIL FOR A POTENTIAL SUPERVISOR

Dear Professor Smith, salutation is title and last name... and the title should be the one they use (Professor or Dr - NEVER Mrs!)

I read your recent publication in the journal [xxxx] about [xxxx] and I was particularly interested in [the methodology you have developed]. Give a specific reference and show you have read it by picking out a key point.

I am a final year undergraduate working on a similar topic with [name of current supervisor] at the University of [name]. I will complete my degree next summer and I am expected to graduate in the top 5% of my class (I won the class prize last year). Keep details short but talk yourself up with a specific highlight.

Although my supervisor suggested I stay for a PhD, she cannot provide funding. Indicates that your supervisor thinks highly of you. Also shows that you need funding, but without asking directly whether Prof Smith has money.

In addition, I would really like to work with you! Move back from money to Prof Smith’s ego. Exclamation marks are generally to be avoided, but here it has the effect of lightening the compliment and conveying enthusiasm.

Do you plan to take on students next year? Asking a direct question makes a reply far more likely. This one also allows for the person not to feel bad about sending a negative response (‘sorry, I have too many students’)

I have attached a copy of a poster I presented at the student Christmas conference. It is good to show something, but try to avoid an attachment. E.g., paste into the body of an e-mail or make yourself a word-press page with pictures of you and, e.g., a poster or other written work.

I would be grateful for your advice on how to proceed.

Sincerely, Andy use your preferred name

Andy Student give your full name
University of the West...
full contact details, including web address, Skype if you use it, Linkedin if you use it etc.)
• Looking back
• PhD was the opportunity to spend 3 years totally dedicated and focused on something I was completely passionate about
• Hugely rewarding and the springboard to my career
• Never again in life will you have this luxury
• Life gets in the way and more complicated!
I will be around for questions later

• To take you through one of your first steps
• Finding Funding.............Karen Laing
The First-Year Perspective

Fiona Dakin
School of Modern Languages
1. Contact potential supervisors

2. Stay in contact

3. Apply to universities

4. Begin to apply for funding

5. Revise funding applications

6. Re-revisit funding applications

7. Revise applications…

8. Submit!

9. Wait…

10. Rejoice!

10. Look into other options
Once you’re in...
A St Andrews PhD
Applications and Interviews

Dr. Ben Carter
Careers Adviser, Research
WARNING!

01 Dec 2015, London!

15 January 2016: PhD applications deadline for Divinity & International Relations

TARGETpostgrad Study & Funding Fair - Scotland
Events from TARGETjobs and TARGETpostgrad
Thursday, 19 November 2015 from 11:00 to 15:00 (CMT)
Glasgow, United Kingdom
WARNING!

Resources to be aware of:

- Other PG study videos here (signup required).
- Search for “Postgrad”
WARNING!

Resources to be aware of:

University of St Andrews
Why a PhD?

A St Andrews PhD application

Interviews, and how to avoid them
Why take on a PhD?
Reasons for applying

Figure 1 What are the 3 main reasons you are considering postgraduate study? Tick 3 answers

- Because I’m passionate about the subject: 68%
- To get a better job: 62%
- To earn more money in the long run: 44%
- Because I need to for my chosen profession: 42%
- To get a job in academia: 27%
- Because I’ll struggle to get a job this year: 21%
- To stay in the region for another year: 8%
Application process FAQ
“Is my St Andrews Master’s an advantage?”

Why yes, yes it is indeed.

- Access to supervisors, and their brains
- “Lots of conversations over the year might lead to an application.”

- Recent Graduate Discount
“Is the PhD application the same as my Master’s?”

No. In fact, **NO!**

- Supervisor rapport is more important:
  - “Expected; Strongly encouraged; Required”
- Research Proposal
“Do I have the same funding options?”

That’ll be a No.

More funding options, but none of them guaranteed!
“Do I have the same funding options?”
“Do I have the same funding options?”

Bursaries and Scholarships

I will be applying for a scholarship through the University of St Andrews

☐ Yes  ☐ No

Please enter details of the scholarship such as the award scheme or code

I will be applying for a bursary or scholarship not administered through the University of St Andrews

☐ Yes  ☐ No
“Do I have the same funding options?”

Scottish Graduate School for Arts & Humanities AHRC-funded PhD Studentship Competition 2016

The Scottish Graduate School for Arts and Humanities is Scotland’s consortium for AHRC postgraduate funding.

Students who want to apply for SGSAH funding for the PhD must first have an application for PhD study accepted by one of the Scottish universities, and must then be selected as one of the applicants that university wishes to support. Applicants will normally hold a Masters qualification at the commencement of their doctoral study.

The deadline for SGSAH submission is in February. Anyone who wants to be considered for selection will need to have applied to the School of Classics by 8 January 2016, so that we have time to look through the applications carefully and work with the applicants we have chosen to support. Ideally we would be keen to hear from prospective applicants before then, by November or December—the more time you have to discuss your proposal...
“Do I have the same funding options?”

Scholarships for research postgraduate programmes

St Andrews is committed to attracting the very best students, regardless of financial circumstances. Bursaries and scholarships are designed to provide assistance to help students support themselves during their time at university and also aim to reward academic excellence.

The following is an overview of research postgraduate scholarships currently on offer. Please select where you normally live from the list below.

- UK/EU
- Rest of the world

Research council funding
“Do I have the same funding options?”
“Should I change my Personal Statement / CV?”

Yes. Yes! OH YES!

- You have more to offer now (or will have soon)
- More is expected of you
- You have a new project to work towards
Personal Statements

- Why this field? [Avoid “From a young age…”]
- Why us? [Be specific!]
- Why you?

- What will it mean for your career?
- How will you fund yourself?
- Reference relevant sources

Should focus on your academic suitability, with any other relevant experience, awards etc mentioned.
Academic Interviews
Interview

Please select one of the following options

- I am unable to visit or attend interview
- I can attend interview or visit St Andrews
- I am available for Skype or phone interview

For postgraduate study at St Andrews and what in your educational background makes you a particularly suitable candidate for graduate study in your chosen programme

* Upload Statement

Browse... No file selected.

* Upload CV

Browse... No file selected.

Continue »
Preparation  
Practice  
Presence
“What will they ask me?”

- Why this?
- Why us?
- Why you?
- Oh, and a bunch of technical questions
- Can you direct your own research?
- Have you done the reading?
- What will you do next?
- “Do you have any questions for us?”
6 St Mary’s Place, KY16 9UY

Opposite the Student Association

24 on the Campus Map

www.st-andrews.ac.uk/careers
A St Andrews PhD
Where do PhDs go?

Dr. Ben Carter
Careers Adviser, Research
WARNING!

Resources to be aware of:
WARNING!

Resources to be aware of:
WARNING!

Resources to be aware of:

- Conducting your research
- Do I want an academic career?
- Alternatives to academia
- Meta-academic careers
- Support and career development
- Contract research staff

PhD researchers

The years you spend working toward your PhD should provide a great many opportunities to develop your CV along the way. This section of our website offers you guidance on how to approach these opportunities, what's available in the way of career support and development, and how to consider what comes next once you've written up your thesis.

It can help to think of your PhD studies as your first graduate job. Keep good office hours, present yourself professionally and keep in mind what you might do once you graduate. If you allow your PhD to be just an extension of your student days, you're setting yourself up to fail. Our Students pages will provide you with a wealth of careers advice, but some of the key areas specific to your PhD can be found in this section.

St Leonard's College

As a research postgraduate, you are part of the university's St Leonard's College, the central institution for all students enrolled on postgraduate study courses. The St Leonard's website contains additional links and information on the staff and administration behind the college.

Quick links
- Career Planning for PhDs: ebook from the good people at Jobs.ac.uk
- An Academic Career talks through the peaks and pitfalls of working in academia
- Surviving a PhD – Top 10 Tips: Dr Alex Hope's very sensible thoughts on the subject
- The Thesis Whisperer: an insightful veteran's blog on the rollercoaster of PhD
Where next?

What about academia?

Meta-academic careers
What do PhD graduates do?
Theatre Director  Publishing editor

Business development executive  Tutor

Theologian  ARTIST

Author  lecturer

Freelance writer

Postdoctoral researcher

Graphic Design assistant

Community engagement
What do researchers do?

Early career progression of doctoral graduates

2013

Career Paths of AHRC funded PhD Students

Final Report

Researcher career stories

Over 150 career stories from researchers:

Careers stories are personal narratives focused on the experiences and decisions that the story tellers found significant. They offer inspiration and insight into the lives and career decisions of the story tellers.

Career stories on film

Hear researchers talking about their career history and choices

Entrepreneurial researchers

See how researchers have used skills gained during doctoral training to develop careers as entrepreneurs

Mature researchers

A large proportion of researchers complete doctoral studies after gaining significant work experience.
What about academia?
PhD Graduates (100 %)

~ Time
PhD Graduates (100%)

Non-academic roles

~ Time

53%

47%

30%
PhD Graduates (100 %)

Non-academic roles

Early Career Research

Non-university research (industry, government etc.)

PhD Graduates (100 %)

53%

47%

30%

17%
Non-academic roles

Non-university research (industry, government etc.)

53%

47%

30%

3.5%

26.5%

17%

PhD Graduates (100 %)

Early Career Research

Permanent Research Staff

“The Scientific Century”, Royal Society 2010
Meta-academic roles

Leveraging your academic experience
Meta-Academic Careers

“Academic-related” career options:

- Academic publishing
- Funding bodies
  - [www.topcareer.jobs]
- Learned Societies

![Image of a piggy bank with a graduation cap and a calculator]

![Image of an open book with a laptop and a mouse]
Meta-Academic Careers

“Academic-related” career options:

- Academic support
  - [jobs.ac.uk, Professional/Managerial/Support]
- Knowledge Exchange
  - [AURIL]
  - [ktp.innovateuk.org]
- Intellectual Property
Meta-Academic Careers

“Academic-related” career options:

- Consultancy
  - consultancyregister.com

- Teaching
  - TeachFirst
  - researchersinschools.org

- Think Tanks
The illustrated guide to a Ph.D.

Matt Might
matt.might.net
Keep pushing
6 St Mary’s Place, KY16 9UY

Opposite the Student Association

24 on the Campus Map

www.st-andrews.ac.uk/careers