General Information for Potential Ph.D. Applicants in Mathematics and Statistics

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Thank you for your interest in our Ph.D. programme in Mathematics and Statistics. The following should provide you with all the necessary information regarding the application process and our selection procedures. However, if you should still have questions, please feel free to get in touch with us.

Please go to:

st-andrews.ac.uk/study/pg/apply/research/

for further information.

Academic entry requirements

The minimum requirement set by the University for admission as a Postgraduate Student is an upper second class honours degree from a UK University (or an equivalent international degree). Our School requires that the first degree of an applicant has to be in Mathematics, Statistics or a very closely related subject.

Please note that: satisfying the minimum entry requirements is generally NOT sufficient to gain admission to our Ph.D. programme. Selection is made on the basis of academic quality of the applicants and a good to very good first class Honours degree (or equivalent) is usually necessary to be selected.

English language requirements

The University of St Andrews welcomes postgraduate students from many countries. To enter the University of St Andrews as a postgraduate student you must be able to provide evidence that you meet our minimum English language requirements. Your evidence should be one of the following:

• a first or an upper second-class UK Bachelor’s degree in an appropriate subject OR an overseas qualification of an equivalent standard from a recognised higher education institution
• proof that you are from a majority English-speaking country
• a valid English language test from this list:
  – IELTS Academic (International English Language Testing System - Academic version)
  – PTE Academic (Pearson Test of English - Academic version)
  – CPE (Certificate of Proficiency in English)
  – CAE (Cambridge English: Advanced)
  – TOEFL iBT (Test of English as a Foreign Language - internet-based test)
  – Trinity ISE (Trinity Integrated Skills in English)

Students are generally expected to have a score of IELTS 6.5 - 7.0 or equivalent. Students who require to develop their English language and academic literacy may benefit from our pre-sessional or presearch courses and may be required to attend as a condition of their offer.

See https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/elt/entry/postgraduate/ for further details.
Research areas and Ph.D. topics

We offer PhD places only in areas in which we have active research groups. Currently these are (in alphabetical order):

- Algebra and Combinatorics
- Analysis
- History of Mathematics
- Mathematical Biology
- Solar and Magnetospheric Theory
- Statistical Ecology
- Statistical Inference
- Vortex Dynamics

Before you apply, you should ensure that at least one of the research areas listed above matches your own interests. Please look at the websites of our research groups using the links provided above and/or by consulting our University’s [Prospectus for Research Postgraduate Programmes](#).

Application Procedure

To be considered for a Ph.D. place you will have to make a formal application via the University of St Andrews [online application form](#). Please read the instructions and the [checklist for applicants](#) carefully before you apply. You should clearly state the research group you are applying for, and who you would like to supervise your studies.

Our School does not have a formal deadline for Ph.D. applications, but we strongly encourage all candidates to submit their applications by the end of January in the year they want to begin their studies.

Funding and scholarships

Our School can only offer financial support to a limited number of Ph.D. students each year. The majority of funding available for Ph.D. studentships is from the UK Research Councils (currently EPSRC and STFC). This is supplemented by a smaller amount from the other sources.

Financial support by UK Research Council studentships is subject to eligibility conditions (UK/EU citizenship and UK residency). There is no such restriction for the other funding the School has available.

The University of St Andrews has a collaborative agreement with The China Scholarship Council to develop research collaborations between the UK and Chinese universities/research institutions. Funding is available through The China Scholarship Council University of St Andrews Scholarships (PhD Programmes) to full and joint PhD students in Mathematics.

Selection of applicants

The main criterion for being selected for a Ph.D. place in St Andrews is academic excellence. It is therefore very important that we receive your complete application, including references, as early as possible.

We first select applicants for Ph.D. places without considering funding. Being offered a Ph.D. place does not always imply an offer of funding.

From those candidates who have been offered a Ph.D. place, we then select the academically best qualified applicants for financial support. Financial support is subject to availability of funds and eligibility; see [Funding and scholarships](#).

The first meeting to decide about Ph.D. funding is held in late January or early February, and subsequent meetings are held approximately monthly until the funding is exhausted.
Checklist for applicants

A complete application requires the following:

- application form;
- CV;
- two academic references;
- evidence of qualification (including English translation if applicable);
- a cover letter;
- evidence of English language proficiency (if applicable; note that this cannot be waived by the School due to UKVI regulations)

Note that our School will usually not contact your referees; they will be automatically contacted during the online application procedure. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that references are provided.

Useful links

- Postgraduate Admissions: [st-andrews.ac.uk/study/pg/](st-andrews.ac.uk/study/pg/)
- Postgraduate Research Prospectus: [st-andrews.ac.uk/study/pg/prospectus/research/](st-andrews.ac.uk/study/pg/prospectus/research/)
- How to apply: [st-andrews.ac.uk/study/pg/apply/research/](st-andrews.ac.uk/study/pg/apply/research/)
- Online application form: [st-andrews.ac.uk/pgr/home.htm](st-andrews.ac.uk/pgr/home.htm)