Postgraduate admissions policy for taught and research students

The University of St Andrews is committed to fair, transparent and consistent admissions practices. This policy relates directly to, and builds upon, the University of St Andrews’ Disability equality scheme, Equality and Diversity Inclusion and Principles of data protection.

Admissions decisions

All places at the University are subject to availability. Selection for the offer of a place will include consideration of some or all of the following information as part of the candidate’s application. The information required can differ between Schools.

- academic qualifications (actual or predicted) appropriate for the proposed course
- academic references
- a sample of written work (where appropriate)
- evidence of appropriate levels of English language ability
- a CV and relevant experience for the proposed programme of study or research (where appropriate)
- an ATAS certificate (where appropriate)
- a research proposal (for research degrees, where required by the School)

Consideration will also be given to the following:

- whether the proposed programme of study can reasonably be completed within the designated timeframe
- whether there are appropriate resources and supervision available

Confidentiality will be appropriately maintained throughout the admissions process.

Decisions regarding admission are based upon a recommendation by the Head of the relevant School. Decisions will be:

- consistent
- based on the judgment of appropriately trained and experienced members of staff
- communicated to the applicant in an appropriate and timely manner
- clear and unambiguous
Entry qualifications

The University of St Andrews is not obliged to make an offer of a place to any candidate, even if he/she has gained published grades for entry. No applicant will be guaranteed admission on the basis of examination grades alone.

- Candidates will usually have, or be expected to obtain, an undergraduate degree at upper second-class level or higher (or the overseas equivalent) in the relevant subject, or a relevant postgraduate qualification.
- Where a candidate lacks a suitable first degree, alternative mechanisms for assessing qualifications and preparedness, reflecting professional or other work experience, may be used.
- Interviews with candidates may be used as part of the admissions process. Applicants will be clearly informed whether and when an interview is required.
- All students whose first language is not English must satisfy both the UKBA’s regulations for entry to the UK as an overseas student and the University’s English language proficiency requirements. Pre-sessional courses run by English Language Teaching are designed to develop students’ language and study skills before the start of their degree programme. Attendance should be a condition of admission whenever language proficiency is not assured. These courses will also provide an enhanced awareness of academic culture and scholarship skills required for successful engagement with programmes at the University.
- Before the start of a co-tutelle or collaborative PhD, an agreement signed by the relevant authorities in both Universities must already be in place.

Financial support

The prospective student must be able to show that s/he has, or is likely to secure, the necessary financial support to undertake his/her studies.

Equal opportunities

The University handles applications within the framework of the University’s Equal Opportunities Policy, and does not discriminate directly or indirectly on the basis of:

1. Relationship to a member of staff of the University or an alumnus
2. Gender
3. Marital or parental status
4. Social class
5. Ethnic origin
6. Country of origin
7. Religion
8. Sexual orientation
9. Age
10. Disability or special need as set out in the University’s Disabilities Statement

Applicants with disabilities

The University of St Andrews welcomes applications from students with disabilities or special needs and is committed to giving academic opportunities to all appropriately qualified applicants, irrespective of disability, wherever practical. Applications from students with disabilities are subject to the same academic selection process as all applications, and will be assessed using our normal admissions practices and policies. Where applicants have stated a disability on their application form, this information is passed to our Disabilities Team, independently from the application process, to make an initial assessment and follow up where appropriate. Specific support arrangements will be considered by the Disabilities Team outwith the application process.

Disclosure of criminal convictions

Applications from students who have declared a criminal conviction are subject to the same academic selection process as all applications, and will be assessed using our normal admissions practices and policies. The declaration of a conviction will be followed up independently from the application process. Where a relevant criminal conviction is identified the application will be passed to the Director of Student Services to undertake any further investigation before a final decision is made.

Fraudulent applications

The University of St Andrews will not admit students on the basis of fraudulent or plagiarised applications. Where an application is identified as being potentially fraudulent or plagiarised the application will be subject to an investigation into the suspected plagiarism or fraud. If the application is found to be fraudulent or contains plagiarised material, the University reserves the right to reject the application on this basis. If it is established that the application is not fraudulent or plagiarised the application will then be considered using the same academic selection process as all applications, and will be assessed using our normal admissions practices and policies.
Feedback to applicants

The University of St Andrews is committed to providing informative and constructive feedback. If applicants apply directly in writing for personal feedback we will provide this within a reasonable time frame. The University is able to provide feedback to a nominated third party if written consent allowing us to do so has been given to us by the applicant.

Complaints

If an applicant wishes to make a complaint or appeal against an admissions decision this should be addressed in writing to Julie Ramsay, Director of Admissions, in the first instance.

Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed annually and, where appropriate, in light of any changes in legislation and University regulations.