Undergraduate admissions policy

This policy refers to the admission of undergraduate students who apply to enter on a graduating route and intend to complete their undergraduate studies at the University of St Andrews.

Principles of admissions

The University is committed to providing a fair admissions system that selects students demonstrating outstanding achievement and academic potential, irrespective of their background. The University of St Andrews is not obliged to make an offer of a place to any candidate, even if he/she has gained the published grades for entry. All applications are carefully read by Admissions Officers and as places are limited, multiple factors are taken into account when making decisions. Therefore no applicant will be guaranteed admission on the basis of examination grades alone.

We are committed to the key principles of:

- Use of accurate and appropriate pre-entry information
- Transparency
- Fairness
- Minimising barriers to entry
- Selecting on merit, potential and diversity
- Professionalism
- Use of assessment methods that are reliable and valid

Principles of student recruitment activities

The University of St Andrews is committed to providing a professional service to all stakeholders to ensure that they have the right information to allow them to make an informed choice about their higher education options. All members of staff engaged in student recruitment will meet this commitment by abiding by the following principles:

- Provide potential applicants and advisors with the best possible information, advice and guidance to assist them in making the most appropriate decisions for their future.
- Ensure that information or advice provided is accurate, complete and up to date.
- Provide a professional, accessible and helpful service to all enquirers.
The University will provide training to ensure the above principles are adhered to by all members of staff that are engaged in student recruitment activities.

**Information for applicants and enquirers**

The University of St Andrews is committed to the provision of accurate and appropriate pre-entry information, transparent admissions procedures and support to prospective students.

We publish admissions criteria in relevant recruitment literature and on our website.

We make every effort to ensure that the information we provide is accurate at the time of publication. All information that is subject to change after publication, such as course content, selection criteria, University processes and financial matters, is available and kept up-to-date on our website according to our responsibilities under the Consumer Markets Authority.

**Selection process**

The University of St Andrews receives a large number of excellent applications each year. Regrettably we cannot offer places to all applicants who have the minimum entry qualifications that we require.

The University of St Andrews operates a co-ordinated admissions process. Academic decision making and criteria setting which is carried out by Academic Schools is at the heart of the selection and decision making processes.

Where places are limited, we offer places to those eligible applicants who best meet our selection criteria, and who are judged to have the most potential to benefit from their chosen course and to contribute to the University.

Selection for an offer of a place will include consideration of the following information as part of the candidate’s application:

- Academic qualifications, both already gained and/or predicted
- Evidence supporting predicted grades
- The context in which qualifications have, or will be, achieved
- Personal statement
- Academic references
Where appropriate, performance at interview
Where appropriate, relevant work or other experience
Where appropriate, English language ability

Other requirements for selection

For applicants to Medicine the University requires a Disclosure Scotland check as their studies will necessitate interaction with children and/or vulnerable adults. We also require applicants to demonstrate medical fitness to practise, in order to comply with the requirements of relevant professional bodies.

The University may from time to time review other selection requirements as appropriate. Should this be the case the additional requirements will be made available to applicants via the normal publication and communication channels.

Dates for applicant consideration

UK/EU applications

The University of St Andrews admits applicants within the UCAS admissions framework, and complies with their policy of equal consideration to all applications received at UCAS by their published deadline of 15 January. Applicants for part time study will be accepted until 31 July. For those wishing to apply for full time study from part time study, applications must be made through UCAS and must be received by the 15 January deadline.

International applications

Overseas applicants applying through UCAS will be considered until the published deadline of 30 June. Due to the competition for places it is in the applicant’s best interest to apply well in advance of this deadline.

Overseas applicants applying directly or via the Common Application should note that the deadline is 1 May.

Entry qualifications for admission

The University of St Andrews welcomes applications from students achieving excellence in a wide range of qualifications. However, when considering an application for individual courses we reserve the right to judge the relevance and acceptability of any qualification or individual
subject. Where any qualifications or subjects are more or less favoured, this will be made clear within the published selection criteria against individual courses.

**Applicants with non-UK qualifications**

The University of St Andrews admits students from all over the world and we welcome applications from students whose previous education has not included UK qualifications. We have experience in considering a wide range of international qualifications against our entry requirements. All applications will be assessed against the standard selection criteria of the course to which the application is made.

**Non-standard educational routes**

For those applicants who have followed a non-standard educational route there will be a requirement to demonstrate that the academic entry requirements as specified for the course have been met. We will also require a reference which should be written by somebody who knows the applicant well enough, in an official capacity, to write about the applicant’s suitability for higher education.

**Applicants who are returning to education**

The University of St Andrews encourages applications from applicants returning to education after employment or other experience. We recognise that standard selection measures and procedures may not enable the applicant to demonstrate fully their suitability for the chosen course. Where appropriate, we will seek and consider alternative evidence in order to give equivalent consideration. Where the Admissions Officers deem this alternative evidence to meet entry criteria fully, the applicant will not be required to meet the standard academic entry requirements.

**Examination diets and resits**

The University will normally consider only those results that have been achieved at the first sitting and in a single diet of examinations. Grades achieved across more than one diet, or through resits, will only be considered where there are mitigating circumstances. Please refer to the section on ‘Applicants who have submitted mitigating circumstances’.

**Applications for deferred entry**

Applications for deferred entry will be considered on an individual basis;
however applicants should be aware that only a very small number of deferred offers are made each year. As the individual Academic Schools controls the number of deferred offers made for their programmes, applicants should check with the Academic School or Department before making an application.

Application for entry points other than year one and recognition of prior learning (RPL)

The University of St Andrews welcomes applications for direct entry into second year from suitably qualified applicants for certain subjects. Details of the relevant entry criteria are published in the prospectus.

Candidates wishing to present claims for RPL, in support of applications to entry points other than Year One, will be required to provide the University with relevant certifiable documentation evidencing their claim. All such claims should be made as part of the admissions process and ideally at the point of application. More information on Recognition of Prior Learning information is available online.

Applicants with disabilities

The University of St Andrews welcomes applications from students with disabilities or special needs. The University of St Andrews 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.

Applicants who have submitted mitigating circumstances

The University of St Andrews will not normally offer applicants a place if they have not attained or are not predicted to attain the minimum entry requirements. The only exception to this may be in the case of mitigating circumstances. Mitigating circumstances are events that have significantly affected the applicant’s progress or results; they may include, but are not limited to, personal or family illness, other family circumstances, significant
problems with school facilities or an unusual curriculum followed by the applicant’s school or college. We recommend that information on mitigating circumstances that have affected or are likely to affect academic performance be included in the referee’s report. We do not usually take into account information that is supplied after a decision has been made on an application.

**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 by Director of Student Services to ascertain appropriate levels of support required.

**Fraudulent or plagiarised 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.

**Assessment of tuition fees**

Tuition fees are based on the applicant’s fee status, mode of attendance and degree programme. All applicants are required to self-assess their residential category as part of their application. In most cases the provisional residential category will enable the University to make the final decision on the fee status of an applicant. If the University considers an applicant’s fee status to be unclear from the information provided in the application, the applicant will be asked for further information. It is the applicant’s responsibility to provide any additional information required in a timely and accurate manner. Final decisions on applications cannot be made until the fee status is set. Any incorrect or incomplete information may delay decision making and may affect the opportunity for securing a place.
View the fee status policy.

Applicants offered a place

All applicants who are offered a place at the University will be sent a welcome letter outlining the conditions of their offer, and an information booklet. The offer is based on the information provided by the applicant. Should any of the details used as the basis of the offer change, for example the fee status, the University will re-evaluate the offer and reserves the right to withdraw any offer.

Applicants receiving an offer through UCAS - either conditional or unconditional - will be able to view the University’s decision online using UCAS Track. All other applicants will receive timely communication by email and post as appropriate.

If an applicant who has received a conditional offer fulfils the conditions of the offer as specified, or if the University accepts an applicant on the basis of satisfactory academic performance, then an unconditional offer will be issued.

Applicants who have applied directly or through the Common Application will be notified of a decision via email to their nominated email account. Applicants receiving an offer of a place will also be sent an official offer letter and information booklet.

Acceptance of an offer constitutes acceptance of the conditions outlined in the offer.

Deadlines for satisfying offer conditions

All conditions of offers must be met by 31 August of the application cycle in which the application has been submitted.

Examination re-marks and appeals

Applicants who have applied for a re-mark or appeal with an awarding body should notify the University immediately. Whilst we will make every effort to reconsider applicants whose grades are amended as the result of a successful re-mark, it may not always be possible to hold an offer open pending the outcome of an appeal. In the event that a re-mark is successful in some cases it may be necessary to defer the offer to the following year of entry.
Applicants made an offer for an alternative programme

The University may decide that it is unable to offer a place on the original programme to which an applicant has applied, but is able to make an offer for an alternative degree programme. In this situation the University will communicate this information to the applicant, either in writing or through UCAS Track. The applicant must then confirm that they wish to accept the offer for the alternative programme.

Applicants not offered a place

Re-applications

If an application was not successful, the applicant may apply again in the following academic cycle. The new application will be considered against the standard course entry criteria for that year of entry.

Feedback

The University of St Andrews is committed to providing feedback to applicants who have not been offered a place. All applicants who applied through UCAS are given feedback via UCAS Track. If applicants wish to request additional feedback, they should do so within 14 days of receiving the decision and contact Admissions in writing, by email or letter. Feedback is provided within a reasonable time frame to enable applicants to reflect on their progress through the application process. Feedback does not constitute a reconsideration of an application or a challenge to the University’s decision on an application. The University is only able to provide feedback to the applicant except where written consent has been given to allow us to communicate with a nominated third party. Feedback is given in writing at the discretion of Admissions staff. To request feedback you should contact Admissions.

Appeals: Applicants may raise a complaint, but do not have the right of appeal against a decision on whether or not they should be offered a place at the University.

Complaints: A complaint is defined as a specific concern in connection with any procedural error, irregularity or mal-administration relating to the admissions procedures or policies. The University will normally review admissions decisions where a complaint has been received. Applicants who experience a problem with the admissions process should write to the Director of Admissions.
Applicants will not be discriminated against in any way if they request feedback or make a complaint.

**Communication between applicants and admissions staff**

The University of St Andrews has a legal obligation to comply with all relevant [Data Protection](#) legislation.

The University expects all interaction between applicants and its admissions staff to be conducted with courtesy and respect. We do not tolerate inappropriate behaviour. Hostile, aggressive or otherwise inappropriate behaviour by applicants, or their representatives, to University staff, will be viewed seriously and may prejudice the further consideration of the application, appeal or complaint. Applicants will usually be warned by the University when their conduct is such that action is being considered, but in exceptional cases, e.g. a threat to a member of staff, then no warning need be given before action is taken.

**Monitoring and review**

The Undergraduate Admissions policy will be reviewed annually reflecting any changes in legislation and University regulations. Concerns regarding this policy should be addressed to the [Director of Admissions](#).