Arabic

See also History – Middle East Studies page 108
See also Modern Languages page 130

‘With Integrated Year Abroad’ degrees are only available where the WIYA is taken in another language.

Degree options in the Faculty of Arts

MA (Joint Honours degrees)
Arabic and one of:

- Art History
- Classics
- Comparative Literature
- Economics
- English
- Film Studies
- French
- Geography
- German
- Hebrew
- International Relations
- Italian
- Latin
- Comparative Literature
- Modern Languages
- Middle East Studies
- Mediaeval Studies

MA (Honours degrees) in:

- Arabic and two of French, German, Italian, Persian, Russian, Spanish
- Arabic and (one of French, German, Italian, Russian, Spanish) and Comparative Literature
- Modern Languages (Arabic and (one of French, German, Italian, Persian, Russian, Spanish)) and one of Ancient History, English, International Relations, Latin, Management
- Modern Languages (Arabic and (one of French, Italian, Persian, Russian, Spanish)) and Classical Studies
- Modern Languages (Arabic and Persian and Middle East Studies)

Likely grades considered for an offer

We consider all aspects of every application, including context, equivalent qualifications and the Personal Statement and offers may be higher or lower than the grades stated here.

SQA Highers: AAAB
GCE A-Levels: AAB
International Baccalaureate Points: 36

For full Faculty entrance requirements, see page 53.

Do I need knowledge of this subject?

- No.

Subject enquiries

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Why study Arabic here?

- The Department of Arabic and Persian also offers Persian language classes at all levels. See page 134.
- Arabic can be taken in combination with a wide variety of other subjects, including two other languages, or one other language and a third subject.
- Undergraduate societies – the Middle East Society, the Islamic Society and the Middle Eastern Film Group.
- Access to events in the Institute of Middle East, Central Asia and Caucasus Studies, the Institute of Iranian Studies and those organised by Middle Eastern Studies within the School of History.
- An annual prize is awarded to the best student in first and second year Arabic.
- The ground-breaking research project Language – Philology – Culture, Arab Cultural Semantics in Transition is running in the Department until 2018. The Department has leading scholars in both modern and classical Arabic literature, whose research and literary translation work is widely recognised.

Available With Integrated Year Abroad – see Modern Languages.
“Studying Arabic in St Andrews has been hugely rewarding, the language itself is just as fascinating and rich as the world of countries and cultures that it opens up. Having already done a year’s work placement in France as a Joint Honours Arabic and French student, I was delighted to be able to also study abroad for a semester in Morocco to experience the culture first hand and develop my speaking skills.”

Hannah (Trowbridge, Wiltshire, England)

What will I study?

The topics covered in the modules include the language of the Arabic media, and classical and modern Arabic language and literature. The building of a high level of competence in language skills is a priority in all modules, and you will be expected to write using correct spelling, grammar and punctuation in both Arabic and English. After completing the first two years, you will be able to read, write and converse in basic Modern Standard Arabic.

Why is this approach important?
The Arab world is currently going through a period of radical changes, which will continue to have widespread repercussions for decades to come. The region includes many different countries extending ‘from the Ocean to the Gulf’, as Arabs traditionally refer to it. Modern Standard Arabic is arguably the strongest link uniting countries as diverse as Iraq and Morocco. It is the official language of the twenty-two members of the Arab League and one of the six official languages of the UN. Perhaps more important than all this is the fact that Arabic has been for many centuries the language of thriving literatures (from pre-Islamic poetry to the contemporary novel) and rich and diverse cultures, and it is, of course, the language of Islam.

You can progress to Joint Honours in Arabic from the sub-honours modules in Arabic with a wide range of other subjects, including Persian, Middle East Studies, Modern History, Mediaeval History, International Relations, Modern European Languages, English, Mathematics.

Arabic element of your Honours degree

First year (2 x 20-credit modules required)

Arabic for Beginners 1 and 2

These modules will enable you to read, write and converse in simple Modern Standard Arabic. The Arabic alphabet, writing system, and basic Arabic grammar are covered. A selection of non-literary modern Arabic texts will be used in class as the basis of language teaching, classroom drills, tests and written assignments and oral class work.

Second year (2 x 20-credit modules required)

Intermediate Arabic 1 and 2

These modules will enable you to read and write Modern Standard Arabic to intermediate level with the aid of a dictionary, and to speak in standard Arabic on appropriate topics with a limited vocabulary. Oral work and written class work will be based on a series of texts selected for their relevance to the understanding of contemporary issues and culture.

Introduction to Classical Arab Culture

This is an optional module open to any student. It is particularly relevant for any student interested in Arabic or intending to graduate in Arabic and other subject(s).

Introduction to Middle Eastern History

This is an optional module open to students who have taken at least three Arabic modules and it is particularly relevant for any student interested in Arabic or intending to graduate in Arabic and other subject(s).

Honours – third and fourth years

(Normally 8 x 15 credit modules over two years)

At Honours, in addition to core language modules, you can choose from a range of modern and classical topics. It is also possible to study for a semester in an Arab country as part of your degree, although Arabic study abroad programmes are subject to modification, depending on the security situation in the relevant country.

Topics which can currently be studied in a Joint Honours Arabic degree include: Media Arabic, Advanced Arabic Language, Novellas, Short Stories, Classical Arabic Poetry, Key Texts in Classical Literature and Culture.

Typical class sizes and teaching information

First year: lectures 40 - 80, tutorials 10 - 15
Second year: lectures 20 - 40, tutorials 10 - 15
Honours: classes 5 - 20, tutorials 5 - 15

Tutors advise you closely on the preparation of written work and give individual assessments of your performance. Classes in Arabic language will include small group intensive classroom teaching in which students actively participate. Most Honours classes are organised as seminars for which you prepare literary and non-literary texts in English and Arabic for translation, analysis and discussion.

Typical methods of assessment

Assessed work may include advanced language exercises, discursive essays in English, oral presentations in Arabic and an Honours dissertation.

Study abroad

As a student of Arabic, you may apply to spend a semester in an Arab country. Because of the variable security situation in the Arab world, study abroad options are reviewed annually and students are kept informed of any changes or cancellations of individual programmes as early as possible. For options available during your intended period of study, as well as information about eligibility, the application and selection process, and costs involved, please see: www.st-andrews.ac.uk/studyabroad

You may also apply to the University’s St Andrews Abroad programme. See page 22.

Careers

Graduates in Arabic go on to a wide range of careers for which an arts degree is a recognised qualification. Graduates of the Department have become academics in international institutions, civil servants in government departments (notably the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the US State Department), human rights lawyers, journalists and employees in non-governmental organisations and international companies.

See also page 46 for details of the University’s Careers Centre.