Social Anthropology

Degree options in the Faculty of Arts

MA (Single Honours degree)
Social Anthropology

MA (Joint Honours degrees)
Social Anthropology and one of:
- Ancient History
- Ancient History & Archaeology
- Arabic
- Art History
- Classical Studies
- Classics
- Comparative Literature
- Economics
- English
- Film Studies
- French
- Geography
- German

MA "with" degrees
Honours in which the majority of the course deals with the first-named subject:
- Economics with Social Anthropology
- Geography with Social Anthropology
- Social Anthropology with Geography

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: ABB (see specific subject footnotes above)
GCE A-Levels: AAB (see specific subject footnotes above)
International Baccalaureate Points: 35 (see specific subject footnotes above)

For full Faculty entrance requirements, see page 53.
For degrees combining more than one subject, the subject with the higher likely grades determines the grades you need. You will also need to meet any further subject-specific requirements as outlined on their pages.
For further country-specific qualifications and pre-degree foundation programmes see: www.st-andrews.ac.uk/study/international

Do I need previous knowledge of this subject? – No.

Subject enquiries
E: socanthadmin@st-andrews.ac.uk

Why study Social Anthropology here?

- In the UK’s National Student Survey 2016 our Department gained a student satisfaction rating of 98% for our teaching.
- 1000-level modules focus on topics of popular interest, such as economic development and the relationship between human society and its environment. Non-Western societies conceptualise these topics in a radically different manner from Western society.
- 2000-level modules provide a thorough grounding in the discipline and – unique to St Andrews – the opportunity to conduct an ‘ethnographic encounters’ fieldwork project.
- Honours modules allow for the exploration of a variety of important anthropological themes in depth.
- Teaching at all levels is informed by the research interests and accomplishments of lecturing staff.

Facilities and resources
The Department has grown over recent years and has built on its particular strengths in the study of societies of the Pacific, South America, the Caribbean, Europe and Africa. It has increased its visual anthropology teaching and has a very strong reputation for its work on the anthropology of the arts. Most recently, the Centre for Pacific Studies has been awarded major funding to assess the effects of climate change on island communities in Oceania. As a research-led teaching department all these developments will feed into your experience of learning and studying in the Department.

Current staff specialisations
There is a very strong interest in Amazonian and Andean anthropology in the Department, although other staff specialisations include the anthropology of West and East Africa and Melanesian anthropology, particularly Papua New Guinea. Visual anthropology is a significant new development here and staff have further regional interests in the Caribbean. We have a very strong presence in the anthropology of Europe.

The Department has three research centres: Centre for Amerindian, Latin American and Caribbean Studies, the Centre for Pacific Studies and the Centre for Cosmopolitan Studies, which has a well-established record of research and publication on cosmopolitan ideas and practices, sponsoring numerous conferences and other events.

What will I study?
Social anthropologists explore human social organisations and customs from a comparative cross-cultural perspective, we focus on the experience of groups and individuals in different socio-cultural settings. Social Anthropology at St Andrews deals with the full variety of human contexts, although a chief focus is still on societies beyond Europe and North America. The Department concentrates on the similarities and
Studying Social Anthropology at St Andrews has been a challenging and rewarding experience. The Department is full of skilled and friendly staff with an expertise in a wide range of subjects and regions. The knowledge and support I have received during my time here has helped me to discover what I’m truly passionate about and has given me the confidence to pursue it. I know that my time here will have fully prepared me for a successful and exciting career ahead."

Catherine (Union City, California, USA)

Social Anthropology element of your Honours degree
First year (2 x 20-credit modules required)
You are introduced to the variety of societies that anthropologists study and to some key theoretical approaches. The first module concentrates on the increasing relevance of anthropology to issues in the contemporary world whilst the second focuses on the cultural aspects of social life such as cosmology, ritual and language – including our own.

Second year (2 x 20 credit modules required)
You are presented with the variety of perspectives for the study of human social life, including the theories of Durkheim, Malinowski, Evans-Pritchard, Lévi-Strauss and Geertz, and to all the basic concepts necessary to pursue anthropological enquiry. One module concentrates on the history of the discipline, and another module – a St Andrews innovation – especially focuses on how to do anthropology and includes an opportunity for you to conduct your own ethnographic encounters’ mini-fieldwork projects.

Honours – third and fourth years
We look in detail at selected areas of social anthropology, and provide a combination of key disciplinary and optional modules in recognition of divergent student interests by this stage. You will take modules in anthropological theory and research methods in your Junior Honours year. These modules are particularly important as preparation for the dissertation which is completed in Senior Honours. You also choose modules of particular interest from a range of options offered each year, which explore societies in certain regions of the world, such as Latin America, The Pacific, Britain and West Africa or focus on specialist topics, such as Visual Anthropology, Language and Culture, Anthropology and History, Sex and Gender, and Indigenous Peoples and Resource Extraction.

Typical class sizes and teaching information
First year: lectures 300 - 350, tutorials 10 - 12
Second year: lectures 100, tutorials 10 - 12
Honours: class sizes are capped at 30, and are usually considerably smaller

In first and second years, classes meet four times per week in a programme of lectures, tutorials, workshops and the showing of ethnographic films. Tutorial groups meet once a week to discuss prepared reading. In all years assessment is through essays, project work and examinations, and makes use of a diversity of assessment methods such as take-home exams, student diaries and creative writing. In Honours instruction is predominantly through seminars which combine elements of lectures, films, presentations and discussions. You progress through a planned programme which draws on a variety of module options. A student doing Single Honours can expect to attend seminars, lectures and tutorials for at least six hours each week. An important component of Honours is the writing of a supervised dissertation where you can independently explore a theme of your own choice, which can include fieldwork in a selected community.

Typical methods of assessment
At all levels, at least 40% of the grade is based on coursework. The balance is made up of either further coursework or examinations, depending on the individual module.

Scholarships
Junior Honours students in Social Anthropology can apply for a Ladislav Holy Memorial Scholarship, around three of which are awarded each year. These contribute towards travel and subsistence costs relating to anthropological fieldwork in the summer vacation between the Junior and Senior Honours years.

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

In the academic year 2017-2018, Social Anthropology Honours students may participate in Study Abroad for either one or two semesters at University of Copenhagen and the University of Stockholm, both of which offer a range of courses taught in English.

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

Careers
A degree in Social Anthropology is important for any career where knowledge of other cultures is vital, such as in overseas development or in community relations work in Britain. Students with degrees in Social Anthropology have also proceeded to a wide range of careers, including the diplomatic service, social work, law and business. Any occupation that requires a sensitivity to different ways of life, or which demands the manipulation of theoretical ideas and detailed empirical data, benefits from the study of Social Anthropology.

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