



University of
St Andrews

Admission of postgraduate research students

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1.1	Updating reference to English Language Teaching Centre to International Education Institute	Approved	Emily Feamster, Academic Policy Officer, Principal's Office	01/08/19

Admissions

For general enquiries email: pgadmissions@st-andrews.ac.uk.

1.1 Procedures for application

Prospective students should consult the relevant school in the first instance to discuss their proposed area of research. Admission to the University for postgraduate study is organised centrally by the university admissions service. There are five possible start dates for postgraduate research students, although students are strongly encouraged to begin their studies in September. For general information on the University, or to arrange a visit, contact the Admissions Unit, St Katharine's West, The Scores, St Andrews, Fife, KY16 9AX or email pgrecruitment@st-andrews.ac.uk

The [postgraduate application](#) process is administered centrally by the University's Registry. An applicant should contact pgr.application@st-andrews.ac.uk to discuss any aspect of their application.

1.2 Principles of admission

Decisions regarding admission are based upon a recommendation by the Head(s) of the relevant School. Students may not be admitted to a centre or institute, although they may be associated with one from admission, but a student must be regarded as belonging to a single school and its regulations for the purposes of progress review, grading, appeals and any other process.

The following principles apply:

1. Admission procedures should be clear and consistently applied.
2. Admission decisions must involve the judgement of more than one member of the school's staff (at least one of whom must be research active) for postgraduate programmes.
3. Staff with experience of the research area or with experience of postgraduate research supervision should be involved in the selection process of candidates for postgraduate research degrees.
4. Interviews with candidates may be used as part of the admissions process, although other arrangements may be made to assess the suitability of candidates from abroad. Applicants should be clearly informed whether and when an interview and/or some other form of assessment may be required.
5. Admission to doctoral level programmes is normally on the basis of a first degree at 2(i) level or higher (or the overseas equivalent) in the relevant subject, or a relevant postgraduate qualification. However, where a prospective student lacks a suitable first degree, alternative mechanisms for assessing qualifications and preparedness, reflecting professional or other work experience, may be used. Increasingly the UK research councils in several disciplines require that funded students on doctoral programmes have first completed an approved masters programme that prepares the student for doctoral work.

6. Confidential references and the submission of relevant written work (where appropriate) should be used to assess the suitability of a candidate to undertake postgraduate study.
7. The prospective student must show that they have, or are likely to secure, the necessary financial support to undertake their studies.
8. All students whose first language is not English must satisfy both the UKVI's regulations for entry to the UK as an overseas student and the University's English language proficiency requirements. Language development can be provided by the University's International Education Institute and may be required by a school as a condition of admission.
9. Confidentiality must be maintained as appropriate throughout the admissions process.
10. All students applying for doctoral level programmes should be subject to a needs analysis with regard to skills and training that may need to be acquired in order to successfully pursue their studies. The result of this assessment may also influence admission decisions.
11. Students with special needs (particularly in relation to disabilities) should arrange for an assessment prior to taking up studies, although they may be assured that the implications of any disability will be considered only after a judgement has been made based upon academic merit. If the University has not been made fully aware of the requirements of a student with a disability prior to an offer of a place being made, it cannot guarantee that suitable resources will be available on the student's arrival in St Andrews - although of course, every reasonable attempt shall be made.

1.3 Recommendation to admit

The recommendation to admit should take account of the following factors:

1. Whether the applicant has appropriate qualifications and/or the relevant experience for the proposed programme of study or research.
2. Whether the proposed programme will involve study at a level appropriate to the degree for which the applicant wishes to register.
3. Whether it might reasonably be expected that the applicant's programme of study can be completed within the period designated for it.
4. Whether the appropriate resources (e.g. library, computing, laboratory, technical) will be available. For programmes involving industrial placements, whether suitable placement opportunities exist.
5. Whether proper supervision can be maintained throughout the research period (for postgraduate research degrees), including during any periods of research leave for the supervisor or time spent away from St Andrews by the student.
6. In cases when a student is being admitted to a programme that involves participation by more than one school, approval for admission must be obtained from all relevant Heads of School or according to protocols established with the PGR Pro Dean for the co-ordination of the programme.

7. In cases where a student is being admitted to a co-tutelle or collaborative PhD, an agreement signed by the relevant authorities in both universities must already be in place before the student first matriculates.

Version number	Purpose / changes	Document status	Author of changes, role and school / unit	Date
1.0	Converting policy previously held on a webpage to a stand-alone document.	Approved	Emily Feamster, Academic Policy Officer, Principal's Office	13/06/2019
1.1	Updating reference to English Language Teaching Centre to International Education Institute	Approved	Emily Feamster, Academic Policy Officer, Principal's Office	01/08/19