



Application Guide for US Undergraduate Students  
2017-18

[www.abdn.ac.uk/international/usa](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/international/usa)

# The Aberdeen Degree

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- four year degree
  - broad based
  - flexible

Higher education in Scotland is distinguished from that of England and the rest of the United Kingdom by the duration and structure of degree programmes. At the University of Aberdeen, honours degree programmes take four years and are structured in a way that allow students to study a broad range of subjects during their first two years, before specialising in their third year of study.

We offer over 70 subjects (majors) at undergraduate level, spanning the Arts and Humanities, Business, Law, Science, Engineering and Medical Sciences.

Please refer to our website for a full list of options at <http://www.abdn.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/degree-programmes/>

## Degree Programmes

Subjects are grouped under a number of different Degree Programmes. While you are required to apply initially to a particular subject, the tradition at Aberdeen is to admit students to a Degree Programme such as for example, the Master of Arts or the Bachelor of Science, rather than to a particular subject. For example, a student accepted to study History would be admitted to the degree of Master of Arts, while a student accepted to study Biology would be accepted to the degree of Bachelor of Science.

The broad based, flexible, structure of the Aberdeen degree system means that while you will begin to studying your chosen subject in first year, you will have the opportunity to take classes from different subjects. Similarly, students can normally switch to another subject (major) during the course of their studies.

Each programme contains a certain number of compulsory courses (known as prescribed courses ), which all students on that degree programme must take. In addition, students must select other optional courses to make up their full course load for the year. The selection of optional courses is managed through the system known as Enhanced Study, which is designed to ensure that students optimise their choice of optional courses and take full advantage of the choice and flexibility offered by the Aberdeen degree system.

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☞ The Master of Arts is the name given to the four year undergraduate degree awarded in the Liberal Arts and Social Sciences by the four ancient universities of Scotland: Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Glasgow and St Andrews.

## Enhanced Study

There are three types of Enhanced Study options:

### **Sustained Study**

Sustained Study offer students the opportunity to use some of their optional credits to study another subject alongside their main subject throughout the first two years of their degree programme. This would be similar to a minor in a US college. Sustained Study involves a total of four courses, one each semester for your first two years. Please [refer to the website for a list of Sustained Study options available](#).

### **Sixth Century Courses**

Sixth Century courses are courses which have been specially designed to offer multi-disciplinary approaches to knowledge and enquiry and to encourage students to develop a deeper critical understanding of their discipline area, by setting the subject in a wider context. These courses are often based on the university's research specialisms and are examined through continuous assessment, rather than formal exams. As these multi-disciplinary courses do not belong to any one subject, they are listed together under "Sixth Century" in the [University Catalogue](#).

### **Discipline Breadth Courses**

Discipline Breadth Courses simply means choosing an optional course from a subject outside your main subject area. The course might be related to your core subject or entirely unrelated to it – the choice is yours. For example, a student studying History might choose a related course in Archaeology or an entirely unrelated course in Biology. You have the whole catalogue of courses for your year of study to choose from.

# Entry Requirements

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☞ Please note: Entry requirements can vary depending on the degree programme applied for. Entry is competitive, however, as a general guide, students should present the following minimum requirements to be considered for admission to the University of Aberdeen.

## Academic Requirements

### **Master of Arts (Arts/Business/Social Sciences)**

- a minimum High School GPA of 3.0

Plus one of the following standardised tests:

- SAT score of 1250 (post-March 2016), with 600 in Evidence-Based Reading and Writing, OR
- ACT composite score of 26, OR
- 1 SAT Subject Test score of 600, OR
- 1 AP Subject Test at grade 3

### **Bachelor of Science (including Medical Sciences)**

- a minimum High School GPA of 3.0

Plus one of the following standardised tests:

- SAT score of 1250 (post-March 2016), with 600 in Math, OR
- ACT composite score of 26
- Plus one of the following standardised subject tests:
- 1 SAT Subject Test with a score of 600 from either Math, Biology, Chemistry, or Physics, OR
- 1 AP Subject Test with a grade of 3 or above from either Math, Biology, Chemistry, Environmental Science, or Physics

### **Bachelor of Engineering**

- a minimum High School GPA of 3.0

Plus one of the following standardised tests:

- SAT score of 1250 (post-March 2016), with 600 in Math, OR
- ACT composite score of 26
- Plus one of the following standardised subject tests:
- 1 SAT Subject Test with a score of 600 from either Math, Biology, Chemistry, or Physics, OR
- 1 AP Subject Test with a grade of 3 from Math, Biology, Chemistry, Environmental Science, or Physics

### **Bachelor of Law (LLB)**

- a minimum High School GPA of 3.3

Plus one of the following standardised tests:

- SAT score of 1320 (post-March 2016), with 650 in Evidence-Based Reading and Writing, OR
- ACT composite score of 28, OR 2 SAT Subject tests with a score of 650, or
- 2 AP Subject Test at grade 4

### **Medicine**

Please refer the [School of Medicine and Dentistry website](#) for information on entry requirements and how to apply.

## Personal Statement

All applicants are required to submit a Personal Statement with their application. The Personal Statement is used by the University's Admissions Selectors to compare different applicants – therefore it is important that you use your Personal Statement to describe your ambitions, skills and experience that will make you suitable for the course (subject) you are applying to.

The Personal Statement used in British university admissions is different to the typical US college application essay, because we place much greater emphasis on your suitability for your chosen subject (major).

Please refer to the guidance provided by UCAS of writing an effective Personal Statement at [www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/getting-started/when-apply/writing-personal-statement](http://www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/getting-started/when-apply/writing-personal-statement)

## Reference

All applicants are also required to submit a reference with their application. Your reference provider should be someone who knows you academically, ideally a teacher or college counsellor, who can talk about your work ethic, interaction with other students and your suitability for higher education or a future career.

Please refer to the guidance provided by UCAS on submitting a reference at [www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/apply-and-track/how-get-reference](http://www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/apply-and-track/how-get-reference)

# How to Apply

## UCAS

 [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com)

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 Students from the USA applying for full undergraduate degree programmes at the University of Aberdeen can apply through one of either UCAS or the Common App. Please note that you may only use one method of application.

UCAS is a centralised application system, which allows you to apply to up to five different institutions/courses throughout the UK on a single application form. UCAS provides a helpful video guide to filling out the application form here.

International applicants applying via UCAS are encouraged to meet the UCAS deadline of 15 January (excluding Medicine), however the University of Aberdeen will accept international applications until 30 June.

The University of Aberdeen UCAS code is A20 University of Aberdeen

## Common App

 [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org)

The University of Aberdeen is also on the Common App. Please visit [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org) for details. The deadline for applications made via the Common App is 31 March, though late applications will be considered where possible up until the usual 30 June deadline.

## Supporting Documents

The University of Aberdeen does not generally require students to submit their school transcripts at the time of making their online application. Applicants are assessed initially on the information provided in their application, which is verified by their teacher or guidance counsellor.

As the majority of international applicants are assessed based on their standardised test scores or predicted grades, successful applicants will normally be instructed by the Admissions Office to submit their final official scores or grades at a later date, in order to confirm their admission.

### **SAT, AP and ACT Scores**

Students can have their test scores sent direct to the University of Aberdeen.

- Our institutional code for SAT and AP is 0818
- Our institutional code for ACT is 5364

### **Other Documents**

Other Documents including, your high school transcript can be submitted by post to:

Undergraduate Admissions  
University of Aberdeen  
Room 10 University Office  
Old Aberdeen  
AB24 3TU  
Scotland

If your school sends transcripts electronically, please email your documents to [ugadmissions@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:ugadmissions@abdn.ac.uk). Please remember to quote your Application ID Number on all documents.

### **Transfer Students**

The University of Aberdeen welcomes applications from students at overseas colleges or universities, who wish to transfer and complete their undergraduate degree. The process of transferring to a UK university is a little different compared to how the process works in the US, as our degree programmes follow a slightly different structure. When you apply to transfer to a UK university, you are in effect applying for entry to level 2 (2nd year) or level 3 (third year) of a specific degree programme, rather than simply applying to transfer x number of credits from your first university or college.

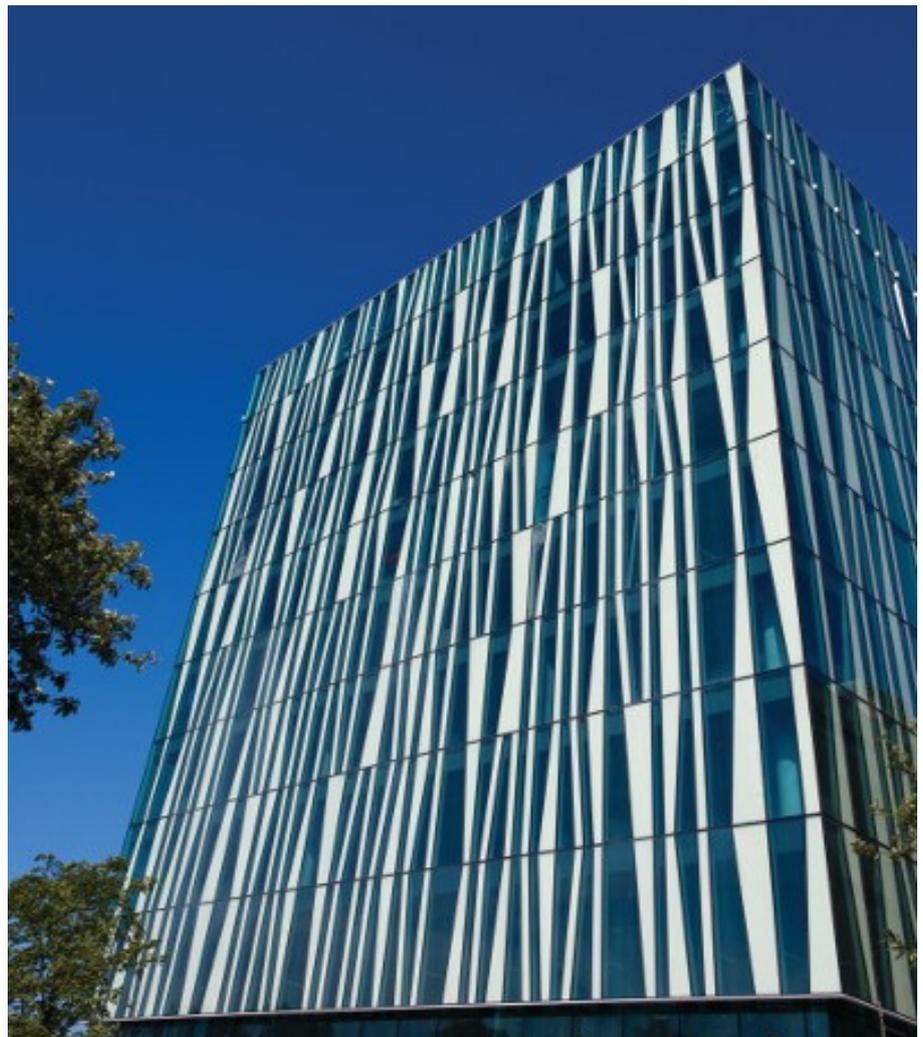
In order to transfer to the University of Aberdeen, i.e. gain advanced entry to year 2 or year 3 of a programme, it is important to have a clear plan of study and to understand how classes the you have taken compare to classes taken here. The first step therefore is to [refer to our list of degree programmes](#) and compare the classes taken by students here in their first year to those you have taken (or are due to take). The [course catalogue](#) also provides information on individual classes within each subject. If you have taken classes that are broadly similar those to level 1 (first year) in your chosen degree subject at Aberdeen, then you can apply to transfer into level 2 of that programme.

You should also demonstrate that you have an aptitude for your chosen programme, so ideally your grades should be around a B+/A- average. If you haven't taken sufficient credits in your chosen subject, or if those courses are not deemed to be of a similar level, then you may be offered admission to level 1 (i.e. freshman entry).

### **How to Apply to Transfer**

Transfer applicants apply through [UCAS](#). Your application will then be assessed by the relevant Admissions Selector, who will determine the stage of the degree programme here you can transfer into, based on your previous studies (e.g. Level 1 freshman, Level 2 sophomore, Level 3 junior etc.).

Please note, we only have one start date each year for undergraduate students, in September



# Your Offer of Admission

Applications are reviewed on a rolling basis throughout the year, therefore students can usually expect a decision within 4-6 weeks of submitting an application.

UK universities operate a system of Conditional and Unconditional offers. Unlike US universities, which will either admit, reject, or waitlist an applicant, universities in the UK will make an Unconditional Offer, a Conditional Offer or reject an applicant.

## Unconditional Offer

The University of Aberdeen will make an Unconditional Offer to an applicant who meets our academic requirements at the time of the offer being made. Receiving an Unconditional Offer means that your place is guaranteed. It is very important therefore that you submit all of your available test scores, transcripts etc. at the time of making your application, so that an Unconditional Offer can be made.

## Conditional Offer

The University may issue a Conditional Offer to an applicant who is considered to be on course to meeting our entry requirements, but who has not yet provided official evidence of meeting our entry requirements by the time the offer is made.

It is common practice for British universities to issue Conditional Offers, so you shouldn't feel disappointed if you receive one. It simply means that you are on track to meeting our requirements, but that we are waiting on you to submit certain evidence regarding your academic achievements before we can confirm your place. For example, a Conditional Offer might be made in cases where an applicant has not yet submitted their standardised test scores or where an applicant has indicated that they are waiting on the results of a forthcoming test or exam. Once you submit evidence that you have met the University's requirements your offer will be made Unconditional.

## Accepting your Offer of Admission

Applicants who apply through UCAS will be notified of the University's decision online, through their UCAS Track account. UCAS Applicants can only accept or decline their offer once they have received decisions on all of their UCAS applications. The choices are:

- Firm acceptance (first choice)
- Insurance acceptance (back-up choice)
- Decline

Applicants who apply through the Common App will be notified of the University's decision by email. Common App applicants can accept or decline their offer of admission by emailing the Admissions Office at the University of Aberdeen and returning the necessary forms and paperwork.



# FAQs

## **What is the difference between a ‘course’, ‘subject’, and ‘degree programme’?**

The terms ‘course’ and ‘subject’ mean the same thing and are the same as a ‘major’ at a US college. The University of Aberdeen offers over 70 single subjects spanning the Arts and Humanities, Business, Social Sciences, Law, Science, Engineering and Medical Sciences. [Please refer to our website for a full list of subjects \(majors\) offered.](#)

At the University of Aberdeen, subjects are grouped under a number of different degree programmes. Depending on the course/subject you are accepted to, you will be admitted to one of the following:

- Arts and Social Sciences (Master of Arts)
- Sciences (BSc, MChem, MGeol, MPhys, MSci)
- Engineering (B.Eng./M.Eng.)
- Law (LLB)
- Education
- Divinity and Theology (BD/BTH)
- Medicine and Dentistry (MBChB/BDS)
- Music (BMus)

## **Do I need to know my major when I apply?**

Applicants select a specific subject when applying to the University of Aberdeen, however the tradition at Aberdeen is to admit students to a Degree Programme rather than a specific subject.

## **Can I switch to another degree programme?**

Switching from one course/subject to another within the same Degree Programme is usually possible. Switching from one Degree Programme to another, for example from the Master of Arts to the Bachelor of Science is possible, though will require meeting the normal entry requirements and/or pre requisites for the particular programme.

## **What is the Master of Arts?**

The Master of Arts (MA) is the name of the four year undergraduate degree in the Liberal Arts, Business or Social Sciences by the Ancient

Universities of Scotland – namely the universities of Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Glasgow, and St Andrews. The use of the word Master for an undergraduate degree of the Ancient Universities is a historical quirk. The Scottish Master of Arts is equivalent to a four year BA or BS degree awarded by a US university. Graduate level degrees awarded by the Ancient Universities in the Liberal Arts are usually known as MLitt or MSc degrees.

### **What are the University's entry requirements?**

Entry requirements vary depending on the Degree Programme applied to. The University of Aberdeen assesses US applicants based on their high school record and performance in certain standardised test such as the SAT, ACT or APs. Please refer to our page 4-5 of this guide for further information.

### **How do I apply?**

Students from the USA applying for full undergraduate degree programmes at the University of Aberdeen can apply through one of either UCAS or the Common App. Please note that you may only use one method of application. Please refer to our page 6 for further information.

### **When should I apply?**

Undergraduate applicants are encouraged to apply in the Fall or early Spring of their senior year, for entry the following September. While **January 15th** is the usual deadline for home students, international students can apply up until June for entry in September. Please note that applications for Medicine must be received through UCAS by 15 October.

### **Where should I send my transcripts?**

Students can have their test scores sent direct to the University of Aberdeen. Our institutional code for SAT and AP is 0818. Our institutional code for ACT is 5364. Other documents, including your high school transcript can be submitted by post to:

Undergraduate Admissions  
University of Aberdeen  
Room 10 University Office  
Old Aberdeen  
AB24 3TU  
Scotland

### **What is the cost of attendance?**

There are different levels tuition fees, depending on your field of study. You should [refer to the University website](#) for information on fees.

For example, an international student admitted to the Master of Arts degree in September 2017 would pay £14,300 per year in tuition. In addition, we recommend an average of £1,110 per month (or £7,380 per academic year) for other additional costs including room and board, books, laundry, bills etc. This equals a total average cost of £21,680 per year.

### **What Financial Aid is available?**

The International Undergraduate Scholarship includes a full tuition fee waiver for the final (fourth) year of study for eligible programmes. [Eligible international students admitted to a four year degree programme pay tuition for only their first three years.](#)

Also, with the exception of the MBChB Medicine, Nursing, Certificate and Diploma programmes all other full and part-time programmes are eligible for Federal Direct, Parent Plus and Graduate PLUS loans. However, we are not authorised to certify eligibility for any grants. Please refer to our [US Federal Aid webpage](#) for further information or email [usaloans@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:usaloans@abdn.ac.uk)

### **Can I apply to attend the University of Aberdeen for a semester?**

If you are currently enrolled at a US college or university, you can apply to attend the University of Aberdeen for a semester or year as a visiting student. Our Study Abroad programme enables visiting students to earn credits at the University of Aberdeen, which may transfer back to their home institution. [Please refer to our website for further information on our Study Abroad programme including entry requirements and how to apply.](#)

### **I've been accepted. What are the next steps I must take to enrol?**

When you accept your offer, you will receive a Joining Pack. The Joining Pack includes information on booking your housing and registering and also includes your CAS number, which you will need to apply for your student visa. Joining Packs can only be issued when you have:

- [1] returned your completed Acceptance Form
- [2] returned your completed Financial Guarantee Form
- [3] you have submitted a copy of your passport.
- [4] submitted evidence that you met any conditions of your offer

(Conditional Offer holders only)

### **I've received a Conditional Offer. What does this mean?**

The University will issue a Conditional Offer to an applicant who has not yet confirmed that they meet all of our requirements. It is very common for British universities to issue Conditional Offers, so you shouldn't feel disappointed if you receive one. For US students, a Conditional Offer is normally be made where the applicant has not yet met the required SAT, ACT or AP exam results. In other words, you look as though you are 'on track' to getting admitted, so the place is yours, as long as you meet all of our requirements.

### **What should I do if I receive a Conditional Offer?**

A Conditional Offer will list the specific requirements that you need to meet before an Unconditional Offer can be made. If you receive a Conditional Offer, it is very important therefore that you submit your remaining scores or exam results as soon as possible, so that your offer can be updated to a full Unconditional Offer.

### **Can students live on campus?**

Yes, students can choose one of the university's Halls of Residence. Unlike the dorms at US colleges, our Halls of Residence offer individual rooms on a catered and self-catered basis. Most students opt for the self-catered option, which means you have the use of a kitchen, where you prepare your own meals.

Crombie-Johnston Halls, at the heart of the campus, accommodates approximately 400 first-year students in single study-bedrooms, on a catered/meals provided basis. The majority of our students live at Hillhead Student Village, which is a 20 minute walk from the centre of campus. All the accommodation at Hillhead is self-catering with a mixture of en-suite and standard rooms. A frequent bus service runs to the main campus and the city centre. You can compare halls and costs on the [accommodation website](#).

## Find out more

The US section of our website

[abdn.ac.uk/study/international/inmycountry/united-states/](http://abdn.ac.uk/study/international/inmycountry/united-states/)

Student Housing

[abdn.ac.uk/accommodation/](http://abdn.ac.uk/accommodation/)

Study Visa and Immigration Requirements

[abdn.ac.uk/study/international/visa-information-and-faqs-1471.php](http://abdn.ac.uk/study/international/visa-information-and-faqs-1471.php)

Tuition Fees, Living Costs, Scholarship and Funding

[abdn.ac.uk/study/international/finance.php](http://abdn.ac.uk/study/international/finance.php)

Facebook

[facebook.com/aberdeeninternational](https://facebook.com/aberdeeninternational)

Instagram

[instagram.com/study\\_in\\_aberdeen/](https://instagram.com/study_in_aberdeen/)

International Students Blog

[studyinaberdeen.wordpress.com/](http://studyinaberdeen.wordpress.com/)

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Disclaimer: While every reasonable effort has been made to ensure the content of this guide is accurate, the University of Aberdeen cannot give any warranty that this is the case. The University may change fees, rules and regulations at any time without notice.

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