

Department of International Relations PhD Program Information

Admissions Criteria

To gain admission to the PhD program you will need to have at least an upper second class honours degree or its equivalent, preferably in political science, international relations or a cognate discipline. In the US system this equates to a Grade Point Average of at least 3.5. However, as the Department is able to take only a small number of new PhD students each year, admission is very competitive and we rarely take students who do not have a First Class Honours degree or equivalent. We can provide further advice if you are uncertain about the status of your qualifications.

English Language Competence

The University requires international applicants whose first language is not English to provide evidence of English language competence. The Department of International Relations prefers the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), and requires an overall score of 6.5 with a score of no less than 6.0 in each component. IELTS may also be the preferred requirement for some international applicants when applying for an Australian visa. It is the applicant's responsibility to check visa requirements.

The Department also accepts Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) qualifications as follows: paper-based examination – a score of 570 with a Test of Written English score of 4.5; computer-based examination – a score of 230 with an Essay score of 4.5; internet-based examination – a score of 90, with a minimum of 20 in all four sections.

All results must be less than two years old.

Coursework

The Department prefers its PhD students to have completed some postgraduate coursework in International Relations. Students without an appropriate background may be required to undertake coursework within the Department's Graduate Studies in International Affairs program. From 2009, all new PhD students in the Department will be required to complete the ANU's Social Sciences Postgraduate Training Program. The training comprises a 4-module, 24-point coursework program covering issues of theory, research design and methods, and research communication and utilisation. Students who have completed the equivalent of one or more of these courses elsewhere may apply for an exemption from the corresponding ANU course.

Residency Requirements

The University requires that full-time candidates must attend the University for at least 18 months. The Department's expectation is that in normal circumstances students will be resident in Canberra throughout their PhD studies except when undertaking field research. Applicants should be aware that it is unusual for students to complete the PhD program in less than 42 months (that is, three and a half years) and some students will take longer.

Fees and Scholarships

PhD Fees

Fees are set by the University. Australian citizens and permanent residents, and New Zealand citizens, do not presently pay tuition fees for higher research degrees. At present they are also covered by exemptions from the Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS), although this is under review by the University.

All international students are required to pay a tuition fee. In 2009, the annual tuition fee is A\$20,400 – the annual fees usually increase each year. Up-to-date information on fees and charges for international students can be found at: www.anu.edu.au/sas/fees/ISF.pdf

All students will need funds for living costs.

PhD Scholarships

The Department does not have its own scholarship funding. However, the University and the Australian Government provide funding for scholarships to support fees (for international students) and stipend for living costs (for both international and Australian students).

To be eligible for consideration for scholarships offered by the ANU (most of which are funded by the Australian Government), international and Australian applicants require a First Class Honours degree (or graduate qualifications at a level deemed equivalent to an undergraduate First Class Honours degree). The ANU offers scholarships to cover tuition and living costs (stipend) for international students, and to cover living costs for Australian students. For example, international students may apply for an [International Postgraduate Research Scholarship](#) (IPRS), which pays tuition fees, and both international and Australian students may apply for an [ANU PhD Scholarship](#), which covers living costs. International students from particular participating countries may apply for the [Endeavour Postgraduate Award](#) which provides tuition fees and living costs, and Australian students may apply for an [Australian Postgraduate Award](#) (APA) which covers living costs.

The ANU College of Asia and the Pacific sometimes has College-specific scholarships available for PhD research. For more information, see <http://asiapacific.anu.edu.au/scholarships/>

Scholarships are highly competitive and applicants should investigate a range of funding opportunities, including any that might be available from their home country if they are applying from outside Australia. The [Endeavour Program](#), for example, has recently expanded funding opportunities for PhD students.

Closing Dates

The closing dates for scholarship applications are 31 August for international students, and 31 October for Australian and New Zealand students. A very small number of scholarships are sometimes available mid-year. The closing date for these intensely competitive scholarships is 31 May. Please note, however, that some scholarships vary in their application closing dates. Full details of the range of scholarships available can be found at www.anu.edu.au/graduate/scholarships

While the University accepts PhD applications for admission at any time of the year, applicants need to be aware that under current Australian Government and University rules,

once enrolled, PhD students will not be eligible to apply for many of the PhD scholarships on offer. Applicants should consult the Director of PhD Studies if they are contemplating an application independently of applying for a scholarship.

Application Procedures

The Department requires that a **well-conceived research proposal** must accompany all applications for admission and/or a scholarship. This should be 5–7 pages long (c2500–3500 words) (NB, please note that whilst the Postgraduate Research Program application form asks for a research proposal of not more than one page, the Department requires 5–7 pages). It should contain a clear statement of the central question you wish to address, a brief statement of why this is an interesting question, why it is new or different in relation to the existing literature of international relations, a brief statement of the methodology you propose to use, and finally, what you expect it to contribute to our understanding of international politics. Ideally this statement would include a select bibliography of key works. The proposal enables members of the Department to decide whether they can be confident about supervising your topic and achieving the best outcome for your individual needs.

You should consult the [Staff Profiles](#) on our website and contact the staff member most likely to be interested in supervising your project. You should also consult the Department's Director of PhD Studies who will be able to provide advice on whether you are likely to be competitive for admission and/or for scholarship. That person will be glad to comment on a draft proposal before you submit your application. Academic staff will provide you with preliminary comments on a draft proposal but may not be able to engage in the process of reading progressive drafts of proposals.

Application Forms

Application forms are available for downloading in PDF format from the University's webpage. Australian citizens, Australian permanent residents, and New Zealand citizens should complete the following form: www.anu.edu.au/sas/forms/sas25local.pdf. All other students, including New Zealand permanent residents, should complete the following form: www.anu.edu.au/sas/forms/sas25international.pdf.

When preparing application forms, please note that in Part B, Question 9, you should enter **International Relations**. Under School/Centre/Faculty, you should enter **Department of International Relations, RSPAS**. If applying online, go to http://students.anu.edu.au/apply_online.asp. To get started, ignore the first line; select 'RS of Pacific & Asian Studies' for 'Academic Group'; select 'Research' for 'Academic Career'; select 'Doctor of Philosophy' for 'Award Type'; press Search and select 9510XPHD (the program code for PhD research in the Department of International Relations at RSPAS).

It is the applicant's responsibility to make sure that referees send their letters of support directly to the University. The University has a strict policy concerning complete files. It is essential that each application is accompanied by a certified copy of any relevant academic transcript, references including the referee summary sheet, a proposal, and in the case of international students whose first language is not English, a copy of your IELTS/TOEFL results. Application forms that are incomplete cannot be considered.

While the University accepts applications for admission at any time of the year, applicants need to be aware that under current Australian Government and University rules, once enrolled, PhD students will not be eligible to apply for many of the PhD scholarships on offer. Applicants should consult the Director of PhD Studies if they are contemplating an application independently of applying for a scholarship.

Please note that all applications for admission to the PhD Program must be sent to the University's Student Records office (see below for mailing address). The Department is asked for a recommendation about whether the University should offer admission, but it does not itself administer application files or make the decision about whether to award scholarships. Ultimately the University makes that decision on the basis of an applicant's academic record and achievements, references, the quality of the research proposal and whether the Department is able to properly supervise the proposed topic.

Send Application Forms

All applications for admission to the Department's PhD Program **must** be sent to:

Student Records
The Australian National University
Pauline Griffin Building (#11)
Canberra ACT 0200
AUSTRALIA

Contact Us

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