

## Unsuccessful postgraduate applicants – College of Science & Engineering

If your application to study at the University of Edinburgh has been unsuccessful we hope that these pages will help you understand the reasons why this decision has been reached.

The most common reasons for an unsuccessful decision are listed below. If you feel that none of these reasons apply to you, then please feel free to **write to us** (contact details on final page) and we will provide further detailed feedback.

### Most common grounds for rejection - postgraduate

#### 1. You thought that you were qualified but have been told that you were unqualified

i) All of our postgraduate degrees require a UK undergraduate honours degree with a minimum result of upper second class (2:1), or the international equivalent. To see the equivalent requirements for those with international qualifications see:

[www.ed.ac.uk/studying/international/country/introduction](http://www.ed.ac.uk/studying/international/country/introduction)

ii) Many postgraduate degrees require specific subjects within the undergraduate degree (or equivalent). Examples of degrees with specific requirements include those in areas such as Biological Sciences or Informatics. For guidance on subject requirements see the relevant programme entry in the Degree Finder:

[www.ed.ac.uk/studying/postgraduate/degrees](http://www.ed.ac.uk/studying/postgraduate/degrees)

iii) The highest qualifications that you hold or are currently undertaking may not be considered the equivalent of a UK bachelor degree. Guidance on international equivalences can be obtained from UK NARIC, the UK's National Agency responsible for providing information, advice and expert opinion on qualifications worldwide: [www.ecctis.co.uk/naric](http://www.ecctis.co.uk/naric). Please note that UK NARIC may charge for the use of this service.

#### 2. Competition for places is extremely high

Each application is considered in comparison to other applications received for the same degree programme. The level of competition will vary from one programme to another, dependent upon the number and quality of applications received. Where there is high competition for places and a large number of high-quality applications received, we are not always able to make offers to all candidates who meet the minimum entry requirements.

The whole application is taken into consideration in the selection process, including academic grades (already achieved or predicted), relevant experience and also motivation for the programme (demonstrated in the Personal Statement).

#### 3. We did not receive all of the information we requested from you in support of your application

Our decisions are based on the information you have provided in your application plus any supplementary information that we have asked for. If we do not receive a response to a request for further information in the time period specified, we cannot take your application further.

#### 4. Your personal statement did not meet our requirements

Many of our programmes, particularly those in the School of Geosciences, require a strong personal statement. This should clearly demonstrate motivation for the programme, show a good understanding of the programme's aims and objectives and outline how the programme will advance the applicant's specific career ambitions.

#### **4. We did not receive evidence of your English language ability**

If English is not your first language, you must provide proof of your English language skills – this is a minimum entry requirement. If we have requested this and you have not provided proof within the time period specified, we cannot take your application further. For guidance on English language requirements see: [www.ed.ac.uk/studying/international/english/postgraduate/introduction](http://www.ed.ac.uk/studying/international/english/postgraduate/introduction).

#### **Postgraduate research applications**

*In addition to the above 'general' grounds for rejection, there are some further grounds that are specific to postgraduate research applications:*

#### **5. Proposal outside of our research expertise**

If your research interests, as outlined in your research proposal, are outside of our research expertise, we will be unable to provide appropriate supervision.

#### **6. Proposal in area of expertise, but no supervisor available**

Although we may have expertise in your proposed area of research, it is often the case that the relevant academic/s do not have the capacity to supervise any more students. The time involved in supervision means that a supervisor can only take on a small number of research students at one time.

#### **7. Research proposal below required quality**

This may be for a variety of reasons, for example:

- Failure to adequately specify the research topic ('what you plan to research, why and how');
- The topic is not seen to develop or extend new thinking in the literature;
- The proposal fails to demonstrate the analytical importance of the research; or
- The proposed research is not deemed feasible, given the time and resources available.

Postgraduate admissions staff understand how disappointing it is when an application is unsuccessful, and we try to provide as much information as possible to help you understand the way in which your application has been considered. Our admissions policies are intended to make the selection process fair and transparent for all applicants. These policies are reviewed on a regular basis in order to make sure that they remain relevant and reliable.

If after reading this document you still do not understand why your application has been unsuccessful then please contact us in writing (email preferred). You should include your full name, University user name (UUN) and the title of the degree programme you've applied for.

#### **Postgraduate contacts**

##### **College of Science & Engineering, Postgraduate Office**

The University of Edinburgh, Murchison House, The King's Buildings, Edinburgh

##### **Taught masters**

Email: [sciengra@ed.ac.uk](mailto:sciengra@ed.ac.uk)

Web: [www.ed.ac.uk/science-engineering/studying/postgraduate/taught-postgraduate](http://www.ed.ac.uk/science-engineering/studying/postgraduate/taught-postgraduate)

### **Research / PhD**

Applications are handled by the relevant School. For individual School email addresses, please see the list of contacts online at: [www.ed.ac.uk/science-engineering/studying/postgraduate/prosp-research-postgrad/contacts](http://www.ed.ac.uk/science-engineering/studying/postgraduate/prosp-research-postgrad/contacts)