

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for HKU's MSc in the field of Space Science

(I) Admissions

Q: What are the entrance requirement of the MSc in the field of Space Science? Can I apply if I have an undergraduate degree not in Physics or Astronomy?

A: The requirement for the program is a good Bachelor degree in a relevant science and engineering discipline. Space science is a multidisciplinary field which involves applications of knowledge from many disciplines of science and engineering such as Physics, Astronomy, Chemistry, Earth and Atmospheric Science, Mathematics, Statistics, Computer Science, Materials and Engineering Science, etc. Therefore, we welcome and expect applicants with a wide range of academic backgrounds, NOT restricted to Physics or Astronomy.

Q: What are the application procedures?

A: The application to the MSc in the field of Space Science will be administered through the HKU Admissions Office. Please refer to the website (to be updated: <https://aal.hku.hk/tpg/programme-list-2122> or <https://aal.hku.hk/tpg/programme/master-science-field-space-science>) for details. You may also refer to the FAQ for general HKU Taught Postgraduate Admissions at <https://aal.hku.hk/tpg/faq>

Q: Do I need to email you a copy of the application materials?

A: There is no need to email us to confirm your on-line submission. Once you have received a confirmation number through email from the system, it means that your application has been received. Only documents uploaded to the online application system will be viewed. We will contact you individually if any problem arises (such as missing documents).

Q: When will you start to review the applications?

A: The application period for 2021-22 admission will begin on the 15th of March 2021. We will start to review the applications immediately after the application period begins, and will contact selected candidates for interviews, to be conducted online for the 2021-22 admission. You will be informed of the results of your application as soon as possible.

Q: I meet the above-mentioned entrance requirements. Does it mean that I would get an offer automatically if I apply for the program?

A: The competition for a place in the MSc in the field of Space Science is strong, therefore meeting the entrance requirements does not guarantee an admission offer. However, we consider all applications holistically. Thus, applicants with relevant academic background, working experience, and passion towards the intended field of study, will be favorably reviewed.

Q: Do I need to provide reference letters in support of my application?

A: Reference letters are not required, and you could choose whether to include reference letters in your supporting documents. If you wish to include reference letters as the supporting documents of your application, please follow one of the following methods:

- Ask your referee to send you the reference letter, so that you may upload the letter directly onto the online system on his/her behalf; or
- If the referee prefers to keep the reference letter confidential, please provide him/her with the upload link (e.g. <http://www.aal.hku.hk/tpg/login.html>) and your account information (username and password), and ask him/her to directly upload the reference letter onto the online system. Please note that neither you nor the referee would be able to view the content of any uploaded documents, but only the file name(s).

Reference letters submitted using other methods would not be reviewed during the selection process.

Q: Would my referee(s) receive email notifications to upload reference letters?

A: Please note that no email requests would be sent to your referees from the system requesting for reference letters. If you wish to include reference letters as the supporting documents of your applications, please follow the abovementioned methods.

(II) Academics

Q: When does the semester start and finish?

A: We will be following HKUs standard semester timetable. Semester 1 usually starts in early-September while Semester 2 usually starts in mid-January.

Q: What time do the classes meet?

A: Lectures are expected to be scheduled mostly in the late afternoons and evenings of weekdays, along with mornings and afternoons on Saturdays. There may be special learning sessions scheduled on weekdays and Sundays for some courses, and the schedule will be announced early in the semester.

Q: Are tutorials compulsory and how many will there be?

A: Tutorial is an important learning component for the courses as they provide opportunities for you to deepen your learning and to apply what you learn in lectures in practical settings. Each course coordinator will set their own tutorial requirements but as a guide, you may expect ~6 - 8 tutorials per course.

While attendance in tutorials is not compulsory, we believe it is in your best interest to fully engage in the lectures and tutorial for maximum learning experience.

(III) Covid-19 related issues

Q: Given the current situation with the Covid-19 pandemic, will the courses be offered face-to-face or online in 2021-22?

A: The default plan for the program remains to offer all the learning modules in a face-to-face manner. HKU will continually evaluate the situation to decide on the teaching and learning mode in academic year 2021-22.

Q: How will the courses be affected if teaching is moved online in 2021-22?

A: The program is fully ready to switch to online learning via the multifaceted learning platforms available at HKU (<https://elearning-resource.hku.hk/>)

(IV) Miscellaneous

Q: Are visits to Mainland China required?

A: There is no official learning activities that require travel to Mainland China. On the other hand, many of our internship opportunities (and local employment prospects) are in Mainland China. We do have a close relationship with Zhejiang University in Hangzhou and there will be opportunities to visit the Zhejiang University Microsatellites research group if travel conditions permit.

Q: Does the MSc in the field of Space Science qualify for the “Tertiary Student Finance Scheme” (TSFS) or the “Targeted Taught Postgraduate Programme Fellowship Scheme” (for local Hong Kong applicants) in 2021-22?

A: No, our program qualifies for neither of these schemes.