Psychology and Psychological Research MSci

Frequently asked questions

How is an MSci different from an MRes?

Structurally:
An MRes is a full twelve month (October to September with graduation in December) postgraduate Masters course requiring 180 credits. You first complete your BSc and then apply separately for an MRes, so that you end up with both a BSc and an MRes. An MSci is an integrated undergraduate Masters course, with Year 4 following the conventional undergraduate academic year (October to June with graduation in July) and requiring 120 credits. You end up with a single MSci degree.

Financially:
For the MSci, you should automatically receive the same level of support from your Local Education Authority throughout all four years. If you are applying through UCAS admissions, you simply tell your Local Education Authority that you will be attending a four-year course. If you are transferring from the BSc to the MSci, you should be able to extend your current financial arrangement for the BSc for another year without a problem.

For the MRes, your LEA will not provide support and you need to seek help elsewhere - for example from a Research Council such as the ESRC. Competition for this type of support is fierce but, if you are successful, you may receive funding not only for your fees but also a contribution towards your living expenses.

Academically:
The MSci is more practically oriented than the MRes in Clinical Psychology and the Year 4 MSci work placement is unique, providing an opportunity to acquire day-to-day experience in educational, clinical or forensic psychology research.

How are MSci degrees classified?
The degree classification is the same as for a BSc (1st, 2:1, 2:2, 3rd). For the MSci, the second year counts 20%, the third year 40% and the fourth year 40% towards the overall mark used for degree classification.

Can I apply to transfer from the Combined Honours BSc to an MSci?
No. Only Single Honours BSc Psychology students are eligible to transfer.

Is it better to apply to an MSci through a UCAS application rather than through a transfer from the BSc Psychology?
There are two advantages to entering MSci through UCAS. First, you will have a guaranteed MSci place
from the outset, whereas the number of places available for transfer from BSc depends on how many places have already been filled by UCAS admissions. Second, you will be allocated to a tutor group with other MSci students, so your tutor can help you guide your career development in the first three years.

What should I do if I am interested in both the MSci and BSc?
Just apply to the MSci. If your application is not accepted for the MSci but meets the criteria for the BSc, we will automatically make you a BSc offer.

Is the application procedure different for the MSci?
Yes, slightly. In the MSci Psychological Research, you may be required to come to the University for an interview.

Is it possible to study part-time in year 4 of the MSci?
No, a part-time option is not currently offered.

How do Research Placements and MSci Projects differ from third year projects?
In MSci research placements, you contribute to an existing project in a particular laboratory and thus learn new research skills (e.g. eye tracking, brain imaging, neuropsychological testing) and gain experience of how cutting-edge science is carried out. MSci projects, on the other hand, are in many ways similar to third year projects and the main difference is that in the MSci the goal is to carry out research potentially publishable in a peer-reviewed international journal.

Are there any other MSci programmes for psychology in the UK?
No - the University of Birmingham is the first to offer MSci programmes dedicated to psychology. We are uniquely placed to offer these opportunities because of our experience (we are the only UK university with postgraduate courses training chartered clinical, forensic and educational psychologists) and because we can offer top quality research experience (psychology was ranked 3rd out of 76 UK psychology departments in the Research Assessment Exercise 2008).