

Good Brain, Bad Brain – Basics of the Brain

What is a MOOC?

A MOOC is a Massive Open Online Course - these are free, open, online courses designed to offer a taste of higher education to learners from across the UK and the world. The University of Birmingham is delivering new MOOCs in partnership with Futurelearn, the UK's first MOOCs provider established by the Open University.

Delivered by world-class academics from the University of Birmingham, the courses enable learners worldwide to sample high-quality academic content via a interactive web-based platform from a leading global University, increasing access to higher education for a whole new cohort of learners.

The courses have been developed by senior academic staff and their content is quality-assured in line with our other programmes. The courses do not offer credits towards admission to the University of Birmingham.

Good Brain, Bad Brain – Basics of the Brain

This course offers an introduction to the brain, looking at what it's made of, how these components are organised and how they function. This information is helping neuroscientists across the globe to understand how the brain is able to do everything from stopping you falling off your bike to making you feel sad that your football team lost their game.

Like all specialist areas, neuroscience uses jargon such that a word or short phrase can carry the meaning of perhaps a paragraph of description. So, the basics of the brain MOOC is designed to introduce you to this jargon and the key biological processes underpinning brain function. This means that, if you subsequently further your studies on the brain, you will be familiar and confident with the basics.

How to apply

Interested learners can sign up now to the [FutureLearn \(https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/good-brain-bad-brain-basics-2/\)](https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/good-brain-bad-brain-basics-2/) website to receive information about registering for the courses.

Interested in our other courses?

Find out more about our courses and research on our [College website. \(/university/colleges/mds/index.aspx\)](http://university/colleges/mds/index.aspx)

[Study here and find out why the University of Birmingham was awarded The Times and The Sunday Times University of the Year 2013-14 \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/news/latest/2013/09/20-sep-Birmingham-announced-as-University-of-the-Year.aspx\)](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/news/latest/2013/09/20-sep-Birmingham-announced-as-University-of-the-Year.aspx)

Contact

For any queries about this course or any technical issues you may experience with signing up to the course please email: feedback@futurelearn.com (<mailto:feedback@futurelearn.com>)

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Details

Course knowledge requirements

The course is aimed at anyone with an interest in finding out the fundamentals of what we know about how the human brain works and only assumes that you will have basic school-level biological knowledge. So, you might be doing your A levels and considering studying a neuroscience-related degree subject or you might be a computer-scientist interested in neural networks or in business and wondering how the workings of your employees brains influences the culture of your business or maybe you just find the brain plain fascinating.

Course duration and week by week content

- Week 1 – The cells of the brain and how they are organised
- Week 2 – How do neurones work and how can this be affected by drugs?
- Week 3 – How is function localised in the brain and what does this mean for normal as well as disrupted function?

Lead academic



A lifelong interest in biology resulted in Dr Alison Cooper reading for a degree in Natural Sciences. During this a developing interest in neuroscience led to a PhD in the laboratory of Alan Crossman in the neuroanatomy department at the University of Manchester. The behavioural pharmacology aspects of the PhD required Alison to acquire skills which, at the time, were going out of fashion, but which are now recognised to be deficient in the science base, particularly in relation to drug discovery. During her post-doctoral phase, Alison was required to undertake some teaching and, after finding that she thoroughly enjoyed it, sought out more teaching opportunities. This led to her being appointed as a teaching fellow at Birmingham which became a lectureship followed by promotion to senior lecturer on the basis of the extent and expertise required for her diverse teaching.

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