

Dr Alison Cooper

Senior Lecturer

Neurobiology

Contact details

Telephone **+44 (0) 121 414 4510** (tel: **+44 121 414 4510**)

Email a.j.cooper@bham.ac.uk (mailto: a.j.cooper@bham.ac.uk)

School of Clinical and Experimental Medicine
College of Medical and Dental Sciences
University of Birmingham
Edgbaston
Birmingham
B15 2TT
UK



About

Alison Cooper's current role has a significant teaching focus; this includes everything from face to face student contact through to approval of new programmes delivered by the college. Alison's main strategic roles centre on the BMedSc undergraduate science programme and relate to issues concerned with student recruitment and development through the course. This is coupled to a significant role in student welfare. Alison's teaching and learning expertise is also put to use through her activities with the university-wide centre for learning and development which oversees the education-focussed qualifications offered to staff at all levels; this includes input into course design, delivery assessment and administration through examination boards.

Research activities are constrained by time availability to a long-standing collaboration investigating the neuropharmacology of feeding behaviour. In addition Alison has a strong interest in the practical aspects of education research, in particular applying the principles of the neurobiological basis of learning to the educational setting.

Qualifications

- Postgraduate certificate in learning and teaching in higher education (University of Birmingham)
- PhD University of Manchester
- MA University of Cambridge
- Fellow of the Higher education academy

Biography

A lifelong interest in biology resulted in 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 laboratory had a reputation for work elucidating the neuroanatomical and neurochemical basis of basal ganglia an dysfunction, particularly in relation to movement. 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. Subsequent post doctoral positions continued with the basal ganglia focus and included work on behavioural pharmacology but with a shift in focus to the motivational functions believed to be mediated by these structures. This was followed by a period looking at the electrophysiological properties of neurones of the basal ganglia correlated with their neurochemistry. During the post doctoral phase, Alison was required to undertake some teaching and, to her initial surprise, enjoyed this and actively 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 and administrative role.

Teaching

- MBChB (5 and 4 year courses)
- BDS (years 1 and 3/4)
- BMedSci (years 1,2,3)
- Chemistry with pharmacology
- BSc (bioscience)
- MSc and MRes programmes

Research

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