

Questions and Answers

MSc Computational Neuroscience and Cognitive Robotics (CNCR)

October 2020

1. Admission requirements:

- a. 2:1 or above in BSc Psychology, Neuroscience, Computer Science, Physics, Engineering or Mathematics
- b. Applicants must have a strong interest in learning in an interdisciplinary environment and substantial quantitative and programming skills in Matlab, Python, other languages (good programming skills are mandatory for robotic placements). Students with very good undergraduate degrees from relevant backgrounds are encouraged to apply. These include psychology, neuroscience, computer science, physics, engineering and mathematics. Given the diversity of the applicants and the interdisciplinary of the program, all applications will be looked at on an individual basis.
- c. International students would also be required to provide proof of the Birmingham University recognised English Language qualifications. Further details about this are available at: <http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/postgraduate/requirements-pgt/international/index.aspx>

2. Fees:

Please check the University website for the latest fees:
<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/postgraduate/pgt-fees/fees.aspx>

3. Are there any bursaries?

The MSc programmes are self-funding courses, however students can check the University website for any scholarships **that may be available for postgraduate courses**: <http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/postgraduate/pgt-fees/index.aspx>

4. Application process:

- a. Applications are made online at: <https://pga.bham.ac.uk/> and can be made any time until **30 June**, in the year you wish to study. However, we do recommend that students apply early as possible in the year. Late applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- b. Please note it is the student's responsibility to ensure that they provide the supporting documents (personal statement, two references, transcripts) to enable the University to process the application as quickly as possible.

5. What do I put in my personal statement?

- a. Provide one paragraph that describes your experience and qualifications in the following five areas: neuroscience, experimental investigation and scientific method, programming, mathematics/quantitative, robotics. Keep in mind that knowledge of every area is not necessary, here we want to ensure that you will be able to learn and effectively use the topics on the course. Note that

suggestions on how you should prepare before the course starts will be based on this description.

- b. A second paragraph should describe one or two projects you would like to work on during your placements. You should also identify one or more CNCR members that can supervise the projects.
- c. A third paragraph should highlight other aspects of the CV or points of achievement.
- d. What are your career aspirations? Why do you have these aspirations?
- e. Highlight other aspects of the CV or points of achievement.

6. What does the part time MSc look like?

- a. In Year 1, students complete all the required taught modules. Class meetings are held on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesday, with some of the optional modules offered by Computer Science on other days of the week. The rest of the week is typically unscheduled, allowing time for part-time work. There are MSc-related commitments during these other days (such as homework) but they are up to the student to schedule. During the summer term, students conduct the first research component, the research proposal.
- b. In Year 2, students complete the research components of the course (a lab placement and completion of the research project).
- c. We work very hard to accommodate work schedules and the teaching MSc schedule is planned well in advance.

7. Can I be a full time student and work part time?

- a. Full-time students are encouraged not to work in other jobs because the study is set out to be a full-time commitment. But if necessary, the maximum number of work hours is 15 hours per week. Please bear in mind when planning work commitments that these are not acceptable excuses for delays in handing in assessments or deferring exams.
- b. Some students have part time jobs and we do our best to accommodate some level of paid work commitment.

8. Is the course BPS accredited?

- a. The MScs are not accredited by the BPS and, therefore do not offer Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership of the society. The BPS does not normally approve or not approve of masters courses.

9. Do I need to choose supervisors for my research components at this stage?

- a. Students have to find their own supervisors in the first week of Semester 1 and are encouraged to contact potential supervisors over the Summer. The School do organise short talks (as part of the induction week) by staff that are able to offer placement and project supervision, to provide students support with being able to find suitable supervisors.

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10. Who to contact for and programme enquires:

PG Admissions Team:

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Email: PGT-psych-staff@contacts.bham.ac.uk