

**PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION
(2013-14)**

Programme Title	MSc in Cognitive Neuroscience
UCAS/JACS Code	
School/Subject Area	LHS: Psychology
Final Award	MSc in Cognitive Neuroscience
Interim Award(s)	Postgraduate Diploma in Cognitive Neuroscience
Mode(s) of Study	Full-time or part-time
Normal Length of Programme	12 months full-time; 24 months part-time
Total Credits	180
Programme Accredited By	N/A
Dates Programme Specification Written and Revised	30/4/04 (first submission); 18/11/04 (revised); 31/09/07 (revised), 13/6/12 (revised); 15/10/12 (revised and renamed – formerly MRes Cognitive Neuroscience)

Educational Aims of the Programme	<p>To provide students with the opportunities to realise their academic and/or professional potential through well-structured and varied learning experiences.</p> <p>To provide an environment where staff research interests guide and motivate student learning.</p> <p>To develop students' understanding of advanced research methodology and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data to enable them to carry out independent work of a publishable standard.</p> <p>To produce graduates who can bring qualities of critical judgement and reasoning in the field of Cognitive Neuroscience to their chosen occupation and who are capable of applying and disseminating accurate and up-to-date Psychological knowledge.</p> <p>To provide students with a variety of transferable professional skills that can be used to facilitate career escalation.</p> <p>To promote competent and ethical academic psychology practitioners</p>
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Relevant Subject Benchmark Statements and other current External and Internal Strategies, Policies or Research used to inform programme outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University Mission Statement and Strategic Plan • University Learning and Teaching Strategy • UK Quality Code Part A.1 (2011) • Life and Health Sciences: Research Strategy • ESRC Post-graduate Training Guidelines
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TAUGHT STAGE

Programme Structures and Requirements: Levels, Modules and Credits						
Module Title	Credits	Level	Module Code	Core/Option	Condoneable Y/N	Pre-requisite(s) Y/N
Advanced Methods in Psychological Research	10	7	PY4010	Core	Y	N
Advanced Research Design and Analysis	10	7	PY4020	Core	Y	N
Advanced Statistical Methods	20	7	PY4030	Core	Y	N
Cognitive Neuroscience Research Methods	20	7	PY4057	Core	Y	N
Communication Skills in Research/Professional Development	10	7	PY4067	Core	Y	N
Research Rotation	20	7	PY4100	Core	Y	N
Research Practicals in Cognitive Neuroscience	30	7	PY4207	Core	Y	N
TOTAL	120					

DISSERTATION STAGE

Programme Structures and Requirements: Levels, Modules and Credits						
Module Title	Credits	Level	Module Code	Core/Option	Condoneable Y/N	Pre-requisite(s) Y/N
Research Dissertation in Cognitive Neuroscience	60	7	PY4307	Core	N	Y
TOTAL	60					

Programme Outcomes, Learning and Teaching and Assessment Strategies			
A. <u>Knowledge and Understanding</u>			
	On successful completion of their programme, students are expected to have knowledge and understanding of:	Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategies to enable outcomes to be achieved and demonstrated	
		Learning and Teaching Methods	Assessment Methods
1	The major current theories and issues in academic Psychology and how these are systematically informed by both cutting-edge and established research techniques	Each of items 1-6 are taught in lectures, seminars, research practicals and research rotation. Taught materials are supported by both directed and student managed learning.	By: examination, continuous assessment via essays, practical and research reports, oral presentations, poster presentations, and a dissertation project.
2	A comprehensive range of design principles and analysis techniques available to Psychologists both for basic research and for clinical studies		
3	The range of techniques available for research in Cognitive Neuroscience; how to use them with originality; how to analyse and interpret data gathered		
4	How to plan, execute and report original research in Cognitive Neuroscience using a relevant research design		
5	The varied roles of the academic Psychologist in society, including teacher, researcher and editor and the professional and academic responsibilities thereof		
6	How to critically evaluate and interpret psychological data from the research literature cogently and creatively		

B. <u>Intellectual Skills</u>			
	On successful completion of their programme, students are expected to be able to:	Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategies to enable outcomes to be achieved and demonstrated	
		Learning and Teaching Methods	Assessment Methods
1	Test specific scientific hypotheses using appropriate methodology	Each of items 1-3, and 6 are taught in lectures, seminars and the research practicals and further consolidated through student-managed learning.	By: examination, continuous assessment via essays, practical and research rotation reports, oral presentations, poster presentations, and a dissertation project.
2	Analyse a given data set with an appropriate statistical technique		

3	Critically evaluate and integrate information from current research and advanced scholarship to generate novel hypotheses	Items 4 and 5 are mainly developed through the research rotations, the research practicals, and the individual dissertation project.	
4	Conduct original, sound and ethical scientific research independently		
5	Design an original study on a contemporary topic in Cognitive Neuroscience, carry out the study using appropriate methods and analysis and report it cogently to an outside audience		
6	Understand the implications and ethical issues engendered by their own and others research		

C. Professional Skills			
	On successful completion of their programme, students are expected to be able to:	Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategies to enable outcomes to be achieved and demonstrated	
		Learning and Teaching Methods	Assessment Methods
1	Draw on current theory and practice to design and evaluate research in the cognitive neurosciences	Lectures and demonstrations, research practicals, research rotation, dissertation project and through both directed and independent study	By dissertation, examination, essay, research reports, oral and poster presentations
2	Plan and execute scientific experiments with experimental rigour and safety		
3	Prepare oral, written and poster presentations		
4	Exercise initiative and professional responsibility to guide their professional development		

D. Transferable Skills			
	On successful completion of their programme, students are expected to show:	Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategies to enable outcomes to be achieved and demonstrated	
		Learning and Teaching Methods	Assessment Methods
1	The ability to communicate effectively in both written and oral forms to both specialist and non-specialist audiences	Through a mixture of lectures, group discussions, group work, independent study and group practical work	By: continuous assessment via essays, practical and research reports, oral presentations, poster presentations
2	The ability to make sound decisions about the best course of action for a given research question in the absence of complete data		
3	Self-direction and originality in the planning and execution of research		
4	Independent learning skills to facilitate academic and/or professional development		
5	Analysis and problem solving skills		
6	Team building skills and ethical sensitivity		

Entry Requirements	Applicants with a good honours degree of 2.2 or above. Suitable applicants may be asked to attend for a formal interview. Overseas applicants will also need to demonstrate their English Language ability (IELTS 6.5 with a minimum of 5.00 in each subset, a TOEFL score of at least 600, or equivalent).
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Programme Regulations	<p>The programme is governed by the General Regulations for Postgraduate Taught Programmes. In addition, the following Special Regulation also applies: All modules must be taken before the dissertation module PY4307.</p> <p><u>Failure in modules</u> In modules where assessment is by continuous assessment only, all components must be completed to the satisfaction of the Board of Examiners.</p>
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General Regulations (<http://www1.aston.ac.uk/registry/for-staff/regsandpolicies/general-regulations/>) and the Regulations for the programme (above) take precedence over other information sources such as student handbooks if there is a conflict. If there is a conflict between General Regulations and Programme Regulations then General Regulations take precedence unless an exemption has been approved.

Further Information	
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This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the threshold learning outcomes that a student might normally be expected to achieve and demonstrate if they take full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. **The individual modules included in the programme may differ from those listed in this programme specification as our programmes are continuously reviewed.** Information on admissions requirements and career opportunities is available in the relevant prospectus. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in the appropriate module specifications and programme handbook(s) which are available to students on enrolment.