

## PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION – POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

### KEY FACTS

Programme name	<b>Clinical, Social and Cognitive Neuroscience</b>
Award	MSc
School	School of Health & Psychological Sciences
Department or equivalent	Department of Psychology
Programme code	PSCSCN
Type of study	Full Time/Part Time
Total UK credits	180
Total ECTS	90

### PROGRAMME SUMMARY

Neuroscience is the study of the brain and neurones. The popular sub-discipline of cognitive neuroscience combines cognitive science with neuroimaging techniques that allow mental processes to be viewed in the context of both the healthy and the pathological brain. Our increased understanding of the biological basis of cognition and behaviour has created a strong basis for the translation of this knowledge into social and clinical applications. The new interdisciplinary fields of social and clinical neuroscience are among the fastest growing research areas in psychology, and offer complementary knowledge and skills for pursuing either a clinical career (such as clinical psychology) or an academic career (i.e. relevant for grounding a PhD).

Students will learn about the latest advances in these areas and develop an appreciation of the reciprocal nature of research and practice in these domains (e.g. how insights from functional neuroimaging inform our understanding of neurological disorders and how clinical observations inform neurocognitive modelling). The knowledge and skills conveyed by this programme are highly valued in the Clinical and Health professions as well as in academic research. Future clinicians will be better equipped to develop and deliver evidence-based treatment. Aspiring researchers will achieve an understanding of fundamental brain functions valuable when undertaking a PhD.

This masters degree bridges three research and clinical disciplines: cognitive neuroscience (the study of human brain functions such as memory, perception and language), clinical neuroscience (the understanding of neurological, psychological or psychiatric illness via their neural and cognitive antecedents) and social neuroscience (the investigation of brain processes that help us communicate, feel, learn and interact with others).

Teaching will comprise seminars, lectures, computing and statistics classes, and supervision of an individual research project. Your learning experience during the programme will be enhanced by an invited speaker's programme of external experts who work in clinical, social or cognitive neuroscience.

During the MSc, there will be opportunities for some students to gain highly relevant clinical experience through placements within our newly established Centre for Excellence & Innovation in Mental Health & Wellbeing between City, University of

London and City & Hackney Mind. In some cases, there may also be the possibility of carrying out your dissertation research in these clinical settings.

There will also be opportunities to apply for research internships with members of staff.

The specific objectives of this programme are to equip you with theoretical knowledge and research skills within clinical, social and cognitive neuroscience.

These objectives will be met via taught modules that cover the principles of neuroscience (including brain anatomy); fundamental processes in cognitive neuroscience (i.e. memory, perception, attention, language); core findings for social and affective neuroscience; neurodevelopment and ageing; and the biological foundations of clinical psychology, psychiatry and neurology. This broad neuroscientific knowledge will be supported with training in the relevant neuroscience techniques (neuroimaging, neurostimulation and neurophysiology) and research methods for data collection and analysis. The knowledge, skills and interests you will develop during the programme will be used in your research dissertation, which will provide you with an opportunity to undertake a piece of independent high-quality research supervised by a specialist from the Department of Psychology.

The programme is offered in two modes: one year full-time, and two-years part-time. Part-time students will undertake half of the taught modules each year. The research dissertation can be carried out in part time bases over the two years.

There are three possible exit points for this programme:

***Postgraduate Certificate (60 taught credits)***

Those completing the Postgraduate Certificate in Social, Clinical and Cognitive Neuroscience will be able to examine fundamental theories and approaches in Cognitive Neuroscience across a wide range of topics. You will have critical insight into cognitive development in childhood and later adulthood and changes associated with aging and stress. You will also have used a range of techniques to undertake your scholarly work. You will have advanced practical knowledge about running experiments and extracting relevant descriptive statistics summarising experimental outcomes.

***Postgraduate Diploma (120 taught credits)***

Those completing the Postgraduate Diploma in Social, Clinical and Cognitive Neuroscience, in addition to the above, will have explored a neurobiological perspective on mental illness and its implications in clinical practice and research. You will have gained knowledge and critical understanding about current theories and approaches in Social Cognition. You will also have developed your knowledge of statistical procedures so that you can understand and implement the kinds of analyses used in modern clinical, social and cognitive neuroscience.

***MSc***

Those completing the MSc in Social, Clinical and Cognitive Neuroscience will additionally have demonstrated original application of knowledge to psychological approaches to mental health and the interaction of biological causes with individual, social and economic factors. You will have engaged in research or scholarly activity that contributes new views to the theory and/or application of clinical, social and cognitive neuroscience and practices.

## Aims

The aims of this programme are to provide you with opportunities to acquire knowledge and understanding of clinical, cognitive and social and cognitive neuroscience, broadly defined as the scientific study of biological substrates underlying cognition, mental illness and social interactions. Specifically, the programme aims to:

- (1) Provide you with advanced knowledge of core topics in clinical, social and cognitive neuroscience
- (2) Provide you with in-depth training on the ethics, conduct and management of research in clinical, social and cognitive neuroscience
- (3) Cultivate the ability to critically evaluate research findings from clinical, social and cognitive neuroscience
- (4) Provide you with the skills necessary to evaluate cognitive and neuropsychological research and its application to clinical practice
- (5) Provide you with the skills necessary to present their knowledge and findings in a structured and informative way.
- (6) Enable you to address their own capacity to develop as professional researchers and/or practitioners in academic, business, or healthcare settings
- (7) Provide you with the necessary theoretical and methodological grounding to pursue a professional career in the clinical environment (i.e. clinical psychology) or academic research (i.e. PhD)

## **WHAT WILL I BE EXPECTED TO ACHIEVE?**

**On successful completion of this programme, you will be expected to be able to:**

### Knowledge and understanding:

- Demonstrate a systematic understanding of recent research and key theoretical issues relating to the topic of clinical, cognitive and social neuroscience. This includes related areas such as neuroanatomy, clinical disorders, mental health and research methods in neuroscience.
- Demonstrate an appreciation of the strengths and weaknesses of different methods for inferring relationships between brain mechanisms and cognitive psychological constructs.
- Demonstrate critical and analytical thinking and the ability to critically appraise research in the neuroscience domain.
- To gain a deep understanding of different statistical methods and techniques in order to evaluate research questions in clinical, social and cognitive neuroscience.
- Show a deep understanding of brain functions and their neural correlates and how cognitive and neural models can explain the basis of human functions such as memory, vision, language, movement, and attention.
- Demonstrate an in-depth understanding of the relationship between the neuroscience of clinical disorders/mental health and treatment approaches.
- To gain a deep understanding in the developing of specific cognitive functions and its neurobiological structure
- Demonstrate a sound ability to relate neuroanatomical and neurobiological approaches to cognitive functions following brain damage.

- Demonstrate a systematic understanding of research and key theoretical issues relating to the topic of social cognition
- To plan and implement empirical studies in clinical, cognitive and social neuroscience.

#### Skills:

- Critically evaluate scientific research papers and their relevance in the domain of clinical, cognitive and social neuroscience.
- Demonstrate an ability to conduct high-quality research (research dissertation) and carry out independent web-based and library research
- Be able to appropriately present (written and oral) research findings to different types of audiences including the professional community.
- Demonstrate through formative/summative work proficiency in using the full range of learning resources available.
- Integrate and synthesise information from diverse sources which may be based upon conflicting and/or complementary epistemological frames of reference.
- Demonstrate the ability to reflect critically and constructively upon professional, intellectual and personal development within the context of clinical, cognitive and social neuroscience.
- Evaluate complex arguments and their factual support.

#### Values and attitudes:

- Appreciate the importance of a scientific approach to the study of human brain function
- Appreciate the value of different mental health models when working with clients and the advantages of neuroscientific approaches
- Appreciate that brain damage is personally meaningful for the patient and can trigger psychological illnesses
- Show awareness of the professional responsibilities associated with using neuroscience techniques to investigate human brain cognitive function.
- Show appreciation of the application of ethical principles and guidelines provided by the *British Psychological Society* (BPS).
- Demonstrate awareness of the ethical implications of research in neuroscience settings.
- Appreciate the importance of rigour in good research practice.
- Show awareness of the need to have respect for and sensitivity to the needs of the research participants.
- Evidence an awareness of the researcher's social responsibility in the process of knowledge production and dissemination.

### **HOW WILL I LEARN?**

The rationale for learning, teaching and assessment strategies is based on an active approach of independent learning supported by the teaching/learning team. You will be required to take responsibility for your own learning and to take advantage of the learning opportunities offered (e.g., invited speakers programme and online resources). The learning and teaching strategies for each module will expose you to a range of methods, comprising: lectures, guest lectures, seminars, group work, workshops, small group discussions, tutorials, reflective reports and one to one research project

supervision. A combination of lectures (to present information), seminars (to understand and assimilate lecture material) and practical sessions (to be able to use each methodology and their associated brain data processing) will be used throughout the programme. For online learning, we will use a combination of asynchronous lectures (such as recorded videos), asynchronous activities (such as discussion forums and quizzes), and synchronous activities (such as seminars, small group discussions, tutorials, group work) to enhance your learning experience.

Your independent learning will entail reading recommended books/papers, and 'reading around' the field to develop a deeper understanding. Much of this independent study will be focused on preparation of formative and summary essays and reports.

You will be encouraged to be actively engaged during class contact time, bring your own experience to these sessions, and to develop an appropriately independent, critical and professional attitude to the material presented. You will require a high degree of independent reading, study and reflection.

You will develop a research project (in collaboration with your supervisor) that addresses a new research question within the field of clinical, social and cognitive neuroscience. This will require a critical reflection on the current literature. Supervisors will provide additional training to use available techniques and methodology (e.g. electroencephalography [EEG], transcranial magnetic stimulation [TMS], Eye tracking, psychophysiological measurements, etc.)

Each module will provide you with detailed feedback to help prepare you with the skills and confidence to reach your potential in summative assessment. Teaching/learning staff will be available for one-to-one interactions and feedback.

In each module you will receive typically 30-34 hours of face-to-face contact, supported by online resources (e.g., videos and advanced readings provided on the learning platform, Moodle) for your self-directed study.

## **WHAT TYPES OF ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK CAN I EXPECT?**

### Assessment and Assessment Criteria

In order to assess your full range of learning, you will complete essays, examinations, oral presentations, research methods projects and interpretation of statistical analyses, formal research proposals and a research dissertation. In addition, you will be directed to independent study and receive detailed feedback on your coursework as an aid to your further learning. These different forms of assessment aim to assess your knowledge, skills and appreciation in different areas of neuroscience (e.g., theoretical knowledge and applied aspects of neuroscience techniques).

You will be provided with Assessment Criteria which are descriptions based on the intended learning outcomes, of the skills, knowledge or attitudes that you need to demonstrate in order to complete an assessment successfully.

You will be provided with Grade-Related Criteria which are descriptions of the level of

skills, knowledge or attributes that you need to demonstrate in order achieve a certain grade or mark in an assessment.

This information may be provided in programme handbooks, module specifications, on the virtual learning environment or attached to a specific assessment task.

You will be assigned a Personal Tutor as your primary contact. They will advise on academic matters and will monitor your progress throughout the programme, providing guidance and encouragement where required.

#### Feedback on assessment

Feedback will be provided in line with our Assessment and Feedback Policy. In particular, you will normally be provided with feedback within three weeks of the submission deadline or assessment date. This would normally include a provisional grade or mark. For end of module examinations or an equivalent significant task (e.g. an end of module project), feedback will normally be provided within four weeks. The timescale for feedback on final year projects or dissertations may be longer. The full policy can be found at:

[https://www.city.ac.uk/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0009/452565/Assessment-and-Feedback-Policy...pdf](https://www.city.ac.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0009/452565/Assessment-and-Feedback-Policy...pdf)

#### Assessment Regulations

In order to pass your Programme, you should successfully complete (or be exempted from) the relevant modules and assessments to acquire the required number of credits (180).

The Pass mark for each module is 50%.

If you fail an assessment component or a module, the following will apply:

1. Compensation: where you fail up to a total of 30 credits at first or resit attempt (15 for a Postgraduate Certificate), you may be allowed compensation if:
  - Compensation is permitted for the module involved (see the What will I Study section of the programme specification), and
  - It can be demonstrated that you have satisfied all the Learning Outcomes of the modules in the Programme, and
  - A minimum overall mark of no more than 10% below the module pass mark has been achieved in the module to be compensated, and
  - An aggregate mark of 50% has been achieved overall.

Where you are eligible for compensation at the first attempt, this will be applied in the first instance rather than offering a resit opportunity.

If you receive a compensated pass in a module you will be awarded the credit for that module. The original component marks will be retained in the record of marks and your original module mark shall be used for the purpose of your Award calculation.

2. Resit: where you are not eligible for compensation at the first attempt, you will be offered one resit attempt.

If you are successful in the resit, you will be awarded the credit for that module. The mark for each assessment component that is subject to a resit will be capped at the pass mark for the module. This capped mark will be used in the calculation of the final module mark together with the original marks for the components that you passed at first attempt.

If you do not meet the pass the requirements for a module and do not complete your resit by the date specified you will not progress and the Assessment Board will require that you be withdrawn from the Programme.

If you fail to meet the requirements for the Programme, the Assessment Board will consider whether you are eligible for an Exit Award as per the table below.

If you would like to know more about the way in which assessment works at City, please see the full version of the Assessment Regulations at:  
[http://www.city.ac.uk/data/assets/word\\_doc/0003/69249/s19.doc](http://www.city.ac.uk/data/assets/word_doc/0003/69249/s19.doc)

## WHAT AWARD CAN I GET?

### Master's Degree:

Part	HE Level	Credits	Weighting (%)
Dissertation	7	60	33.3
Taught	7	120	66.7

### **Class** **% required**

With Distinction	70
With Merit	60
Without classification	50

### Postgraduate Diploma:

Part	HE Level	Credits	Weighting (%)
Taught	7	120	100

### **Class** **% required**

With Distinction	70
With Merit	60
Without classification	50

### Postgraduate Certificate:

Part	HE Level	Credits	Weighting (%)
Taught	7	60	100

### **Class** **% required**

With Distinction	70
With Merit	60
Without classification	50

## WHAT WILL I STUDY?

### Taught component

All modules are compulsory. In order to obtain the MSc you must accumulate 180 credits which are achieved by taking eight 15 credit core modules plus a dissertation module worth 60 credits.

Module Title	SITS Code	Module Credits	Core/ Elective	Compensation Yes/No	Level
Principles of Neuroscience: Brain anatomy, techniques and paradigms	PSM201	15	C	N	7
Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience	PSM202	15	C	N	7
Mental Health, Wellbeing and Neuroscience	PSM203	15	C	N	7
Fundamental Processes in Cognitive Neuroscience and Neuropsychology I	PSM204	15	C	Y	7
Fundamental Processes in Cognitive Neuroscience and Neuropsychology II	PSM205	15	C	Y	7
Social Cognition and the Social Brain	PSM206	15	C	N	7
Research Methods and Programming	PSM207	15	C	N	7
Statistical models	PSM208	15	C	N	7

### *Research Project component*

In order to be eligible for the award of the MSc, you must complete the 60-credit research project.

Module Title	SITS Code	Module Credits	Core/ Elective	Compensation Yes/No	Level
Research Project	PSM209	60	C	N	7

## TO WHAT KIND OF CAREER MIGHT I GO ON?

The programme will equip you with a range of knowledge, skills and experience to enhance your employability prospects, both in terms of an applied/clinical occupation and further research. More specifically, the programme will provide you with the knowledge and experience necessary for applied clinical, neuropsychological, educational neuroscience and development and/or business careers, and additionally will ease the progression onto a PhD for a career in scientific research.

This MSc. is an excellent choice for those holding accredited psychology degrees who are considering pursuing further professional training as a clinical psychologist within a

clinical environment, by easing your way into Assistant Psychologist, Clinical, and Research Officer positions. The Programme could also allow you to branch out to educational development and/or educational neuroscience academic and research careers by giving you grounding in social and developmental neuroscience, and research design and methodology. This MSc also provides you with key theoretical knowledge and research skills that will serve as a basis for PhD or doctoral-level research in cognitive, social or educational neuroscience.

Furthermore, the transferable knowledge and skills you will acquire will be highly valuable in a range of sectors including neuromarketing, higher education, consultancy, healthcare, commercial scientific research, the Pharmaceutical industry, Computing industry and the media.

If you would like more information on the Careers support available at City, please go to: <http://www.city.ac.uk/careers/for-students-and-recent-graduates>

### **WILL I GET ANY PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION?**

No

### **HOW DO I ENTER THE PROGRAMME?**

In order to be eligible for entry in to the MSc in Clinical, Social and Cognitive Neuroscience you must have a first or upper second-class degree in Psychology, Biology or a related discipline. An equivalent qualification from an overseas university will also be considered. Selection will be by application form and references It is **not** a prerequisite to have a background in Neuroscience.

If your first language is not English, then the following qualifications will meet the English language requirement for entry to a postgraduate course of study:

- A first degree from a UK university.
- A first degree from an overseas institution recognised by City as providing adequate evidence of proficiency in the English language, for example, from institutions in Australia, Canada or the USA.
- GCE O-level/GCSE English language or English literature, grade C minimum.
- Cambridge ESOL CPE (Certificate of Proficiency in English) at grade C or above.
- An overall score of 7.0 in the English Language Testing System (IELTS) with a minimum of 6.5 for each subtest.
- Satisfactory standard in the verbal section of the Princeton Test (GMAT).
- US SAT with 500 in verbal performance.
- Warwick English Language Test (WELT) with pass grades of BBC minimum.
- Other evidence of proficiency in the English language which satisfies the board of studies concerned.

### **OVERSEAS QUALIFICATIONS**

Equivalent qualifications from an overseas university will be considered.

### **IT SKILLS**

You will be expected to be computer literate.

#### **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

The Programme is committed to equal opportunities. The admissions decision will rest on the qualifications, needs and aspirations of the applicant.

#### **RPL/RPEL Requirements**

In line with Senate Regulation 19, Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) will be considered for any student who has pursued appropriate studies in this or another institution or who possesses appropriate qualifications.

RPL will be permitted where the Programme Committee has assessed the claim in terms of acceptability, sufficiency, authenticity, currency and level and can demonstrate that the student's previously assessed or experiential learning meets all the learning outcomes stated in the Module Specification for the module for which they are to be awarded credit.

The limit to the volume of credit that can be permitted through RPL is outlined in Senate Regulation 19.

<https://www.city.ac.uk/about/governance/policies/city-university-of-london-senate-regulations>

Exemptions are not awarded for programmes/qualifications that were awarded five years ago or longer, prior to the enrolment date for the intended programme of study at City. Programmes/qualifications which were awarded over five years ago may be considered towards RPL/RPEL requests if the candidate can provide supporting evidence which gives an account of ways in which learning achieved through the programme/qualification has been applied actively and updated within the past five years.

If you are a former student of City who has withdrawn from a programme due to academic failure then you will not normally be permitted to RPL/RPEL awarded credits on the same programme within the School.

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