Computer Science at City

This is an opportunity to speak to our students currently studying Computer Science programmes here at City, both about the course itself and about life as a PG student here at the University.

Thank you for joining us today for the Computer Science CityChat session. We have a number of students here today who can help to answer your questions. One is studying Business Systems Analysis and Design MSc, another who is on the Human Computer Interaction Design MSc and finally student from the MSc Cyber Security course. Please get in touch with any of your questions about studying here at City.

Good afternoon! I am currently a student on the MSc in CyberSecurity, and on am in the UK on a Tier 4 visa. Any questions, let me know. 🙂

Hello, I am currently studying the MSc in HCID full-time at City.
Feel free to ask me any questions about this specific course but also about City and the School of Mathematics, Computer Science and Engineering overall. 🙂

hi - what sort of background did you come from before your msc?

Hi - I was working in IT Support / Helpdesk before starting with Cyber Security.

Hi All, Are there any work study programs that we can utilize at City that are related to Computer Science (or specifically Cybersecurity)?

Hi - City has a really good Professional Liaison Unit that assists with Interships for the course for the Cyber Security. Also the Program Director has links in the industry that can push students in the right direction

Hi - Our MScs in Computer Science subjects offer the opportunity to take a six month internship as part of your course, after you have passed your taught modules in June. You can find more information here:
https://www.city.ac.uk/mathematics-computer-science-engineering/placements-and-internships/placement-internship-schemes/computer-science/postgraduate-internships

Did you have much programming experience before you started? How did yo find the course in terms of level of skills needed before joining?

I had a basic level of programming, but you can pick up some extra skills on your own before the course starts. Upon acceptance to the program, the Program Director will provide you with some links that will better prepare you for the programming / mathematics aspects of the course that are available on Coursera. There is also a C++ course elective that should also help you in the overall course

Hi - can you tell me how HCID will be as a course, more design oriented or research oriented. And what subjects do you find most interesting ?

Hi

I think the course is well rounded overall. The lectures are supported with great research pieces in the industry and you are also encouraged to use them in your coursework. deeper research will be required in your dissertation. The coursework then has different design tasks included, depending on the module you are taking. This can range from actually designing a prototype to creating user journeys.

My favourite module was Interaction Design, as it teaches you all the necessary basics for a HCID degree, and Cognition and Technologies.

Hello everyone - I am an international student currently studying Business Systems Analysis and Design (MSc). Let me know any questions you might have about this course, the department or being an international student at City, or City in general! 🙂

Hi - do you have any information about the part time study of HCID. What would be the schedule like? How many days of study do we have to dedicate for studying part time course. Thanks. Nida

Hi

The part time students will be asked to attend lectures for 1 day in the week.

As for studying, that of course depends on the individual but the members of my cohort that are in the part-time scheme dedicate their weekends to this and sometimes take leave days to finish a coursework or prepare for an exam.

Hi all, I'm managing the Computer Games Technologies course here at City, one of our Computer Science MSc courses. I'd be happy to take questions about it!

Hi, I'm the course director of the MSc in Software Engineering - glad to answer any questions you may have about the course.

Hi - I am starting the Human-Computer Interaction MSc in September. I am interested to know how you prepared for the course during the summer? Is there an area in which you wish you had prepared more?

Hi

The program can be seen as a crash-course in HCID as it teaches you everything you need to do to start out as a professional. Therefore, i did not prepare anything in particular and as long as I kept on top of the readings and assignments during the year, I was fine.

Hi I am international student and I would like to find a loan to continue my studies to city London how do I can get a loan?

Hi

There are number of funding opportunities available at City. You can read more information about this here: https://www.city.ac.uk/study/fees-and-funding You can also get in touch with out financial support team via this email: funding@city.ac.uk

Hi, I'm the programme director of the MSc Business Systems Analysis and Design and I can provide information about the course content

Hi - before starting the course in Software Engineering , what preparations I have to do ?

Hi, the course assumes that you have a programming background - either through a BSc in Computer Science or extensive professional experience (5+ years). As such, there's no specific preparation you need to do. If you plan to take the Big Data module in Term 2, then it'd help to familiarise yourself with Python.

By the way - the Big Data module is an elective in Term 2, not a core module.

Hi - is there a list of suggested companies that we can do our internship with or is this something that we will have to sort out independently?

Hi

SMCSE has a dedicated placement unit (PLU) that will help you with finding an internship. They leverage City, University's relationships and our Alumni engagement to source internships.
Of course you are also encouraged to o your own research. The PLU and our lecturers are great in giving CV, Portfolio, and Cover Letter advice.

Our Professional Liaison Unit will publish to our students internship opportunities that they source. Occasionally programme directors may share internship opportunities with students on their programme. Students can also source their own internship if they wish.

Second question: is it wise to start looking into internship opportunities before the start of the course (software engineering)? Or will the university arrange that for me or give me guidance?

Hi, there's no need to start looking into internships before the start of the course - there's a whole team available that supports students with that.

We have a dedicated team of specialists. called Professional Liaison Unit (https://www.city.ac.uk/mathematics-computer-science-engineering/placements-and-internships?SQ_VARIATION_282488=0) which supports postgraduate computer science students with search for the internships, which is an option for students as a final project.

Hello, does anybody have experience with the SAP TERP10 Certification during the Software eng. course? How much does it cost, how much time do you need to invest with a SAP background and does it interfere with lessons?

Hello - I'm not studying Software Engineering but we were offered the chance to take this certification also. The cost will be communicated to you in due time, although I know it comes at a very discounted rate. I hope that helps you out a bit.

Hi, the SAP certification is at a substantial discount (unsure right now how much but it's around 10-20% of the full price). It runs in parallel with tought modules and from what I've heard from past students is not too hard.

Hi - when creating a personal portfolio, do you find that most of the work has to be created outside of the classroom? Or have you been able to use course work to help build a portfolio? Also, how necessary are coding skills in HCID?

Hi

I created my portfolio in my own time outside of class but all contents of it were coursework projects I have created within the course. The projects really give you a wide variety of skills that you can present.
However, in the 2nd half there was the possibility to select an elective where you learned how to code your own website and you could have utilised this for your portfolio.

As for coding, the electives include a coding component but they vary in what expertise level you need. For example, I only know the basics of HTML and CSS and succeeded in all of my courses.

Can you tell me what the weekly schedules are like? is the course more on the practical (programming) side of security or more theory based? what languages are used in throughout the course? how confident do you feel looking for jobs in the security sector? how confident do you feel about generic tech grad jobs?

The weekly schedule consists of taught sessions, including practical lab sessions, during the week, and then there is an element of self-study that you need to do to ensure you stay on track with the workload.

I would say the course is more Theory based and it teaches you really good principles of Cyber Security. There are practical lab sessions where you are exposed to practical tools that are used in the Security Industry.

Java and C++ are the two most used programming languages for this course.

As far as confidence goes, I feel very confident, because the course has really taught me so much and I feel that the skills acquired have prepared me really well for applying into the industry. With regards to the generic Tech Jobs confidence, I also feel very confident as my current skills, combined with the knowledge acquired from City, has put me in a really good position overall.

Hi - thanks for answering my previous question. I am also curious to know the students' general level of coding/programming ability. I am learning HTML and CSS at the moment and also Sketch. Will that be sufficient?

Hi

In the 2nd half of the course you will be able to choose electives, which can include a coding component. So if you want to use your learned skills in HTML and CSS then you can apply them there, but you can also choose electives with smaller or no coding experience needed.
As for the other modules, no coding experience is necessary to succeed.

Can someone guide me with the Ielts requiremnet please. I have been living and working in the UK for the past 10 years and have still been asked to do Ielts. Of course I can understand, write and speak english and my cover letter have also demonstrated that. Can someone help me with this regard.

Hi - there is a range of reasons why you may have been asked to take the IELTS test; for example, students who will need a Tier 4 visa to do their course, need to have a formal English test done to officially assess their knowledge. This is to satisfy the UKVI (government) requirements. If you want me to look into your circumstances in detail, please do send me your student number. You can also send us a query by email to smcsepg@city.ac.uk

Hi

IELTS is required to have a score of 6.5+ average (or 6.0 in all 4 areas) in all Computer Science programs.

Hello all, Is there any programming involved in Business Systems Analysis and Design (MSc)? What is the prospect for graduates? Do new postgraduates need any specific prior reading?

Hi In the databases module you will get to learn how to use SQL and then PhP to create a web application which connects with a database. The programme has been running since 1976 has has a very good track record of getting graduates into jobs. General reading around the area of systems and business analysis would be a good idea e.g. business processes, UML etc

Hello just to add to what was said earlier: The prospect for graduates is quite wide I must say especially if you're able to be very practical about the modules you'll be involved in. I particularly was interested in the Business Intelligence & Analytics module and I've been able to improve my data visualisation skills using Tableau which is sell-able in the real world out there.

Hello - I applied for the the Msc Information Systems and Technology programme. Can someone share their experience with that programme?

I run the IST programme as well, but only in terms of teaching and can only answer on that basis.

Hi -I'm considering taking the part-time Msc in Computer Games , I was wondering if the timetables take in consideration students who have full time jobs. Is there any classes between 9-to-5 ?

Hi -yes, we try hard to accommodate students with full time jobs who want to attend our part time study option. Those classes are in the evenings. Also, most of our classes get recorded and you can access them at a later time. (note that full time study classes go through the day).

Hello again -what are most of the students degree backgrounds on the HCID course? I did my BSc in web development but I feel like those who have more of a design background will have an advantage because of their choice in what they have studied. Would you agree?

Hi Emilia,

No I wouldn't agree at all :-D

Currently my cohort is made out of students with very different backgrounds and previous degrees. for example, nursing, photography, history, business to name a few that are not CS related.
The course will teach you everything you need to know to succeed in the individual projects and in the group work it is very good to have different expertise present.
However, a web development background came in handy to 2 of my student colleagues in this last term, as their elective required these skills ☺

Hello I take it the database module is optional? When is the timetable coming out for 2018/2019? How many days roughly does the course entail?

if you have not taken a database module before in your undergraduate degree, you must take that module. If you have taken such a module on relational databases, you will be allowed to undertake the Information Retrieval module instead. The timetable is finalised over the summer. For full time students you will need to attend 4 modules which are half days, so two full days in the university per semester.

In terms of previous knowledge do all the students start from the same point?

yes, we take you from first principles.

Thanks - I am also interested in working on the UX consultancy team within the college. Do you have any advice for how I can get involved?

Hi Melissa,
yes it is a great opportunity, which will come available while you are studying on the course.
So do not worry about getting involved now, there will be communication once you are settled in our department :)

Hi - what was your background in before beginning the HCID MSc at City? Also, is there any specific design program (sketch, XD..) that students are expected to use? Or is it an individual choice?

Hi
I have an undergraduate degree in Business and worked in logistics before this (so no relation to HCID haha).

The lecturer do provide you with a suggestion for tools you can use for the coursework (for me it was Axure and Balsamiq) but you are free to choose the tool you are most comfortable with as long as you can meet the coursework requirments.

Software engineering: How much previous knowledge in Math is excpected of the students?

We don't have core modules that require a deep knowledge of Mathematics. They'd be useful for electives though (e.g., Advanced Algorithms, Big Data).

Hi! I'm starting HCID part-time in September. Could someone let me know if there were any books or reading material people find useful in preparing for the course?

Hi - you can find some suggested reading for HCID here: https://www.city.ac.uk/postgraduate-applicants/reading-lists
Also, perhaps Pia has some additional reading suggestions.

Hi

I personally came into the course with an unrelated background and did all necessary reading during the course.

Thanks - I have one last question for you. My current job have agreed to letting me work part-time for them 2 days per week. Do you think I could realistically manage this on top of the course workload?

Hi
Some of my course mates have done this as well and it definitely is doable if you have the right work ethic behind it and it depends on your style of learning. Some individuals had to dedicate their full attention to this course and other were able to squeeze in a part time job.
However, as you are doing the part time scheme you have half the work as the full -time students 😊

Thank you that is most helpful. In terms of internship; do most students opt for it? Are there also any networking events or employment fairs during our studies?

Hi - yes a number of students opt for the internship route but I'll advise you talk to the PLU unit on your options as soon as you commence. There are also a lot of career fairs organised by the Careers service. Be sure to visit them on your first day! (it might seem to early but you stand to gain a lot of foresight into the future activities)

I remember on the first week of resumption I attended up to 3 events (one was the Consulting Fair) which was very helpful for me later on

thanks for scholarship information but when I looked but It is only for students living in UK currently I am not over there I am living in ivory coast - what would be the best way to get in touch?

Hi

I would highly advise to get in touch with our Financial Support Team, as they would have detailed and up-to-date information on this: T: +44 (0)20 7040 7040 E: funding@city.ac.uk

Hi - at our School we also have an international scholarship scheme (worth £2,000). For details visit:
https://www.city.ac.uk/mathematics-computer-science-engineering/scholarships-and-funding/international-applicants-scholarships

How much of the IST programme carries a business context. I ask because I have no particular background in business but want to know if there is anything I can do to prepare for the courses.

There is one module - Information and Knowledge management - which examines the management of information in a business context and requires examination of organisational structures to understand information use and flow. We also look at business processes in the Business Engineering and ERP solutions module.

Thank you for answering my previous questions. Is there any way for me to see detailed syllabus info for the course or some notes? Also to touch on a previous point, how would you describe the security sector for graduates compared to generic tech grad roles? eg: how big is the sector for graduates? do graduates have enough knowledge to be able to enter the security sector directly after the msc?

For prospective students, the individual module specifications are not available online, but I can provide you an overall Cyber Security specification here:
https://www.city.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/368510/PSCYSE-MSc-Cyber-Security.pdf
Also, the reading list per module that you might find helpful, can be found here:
https://www.city.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/408487/MSc-Cyber-Security.pdf

Should you need more information on the individual modules, you can contact the Program Director, Nikos Komninos on nikos.komninos.1@city.ac.uk. He is very good in responding and providing information timeously.

I think the Cyber Security roles are more attractive than just the general tech roles as there is a huge need for Cyber Security as the industry is looking for expertise. There is currently a lack of people with the technical knowledge in Cyber Security. Graduates do have the necessary knowledge to enter the security sector after graduating MSc.

I will be doing the course full-time but I'm sure with enough caffeine I will be able to manage haha! I've just thought of one quick last question - I promise it's the last one! Would you suggest getting a pretty basic laptop just to take notes on during classes or one with a higher spec? I have an iMac that I'd do work on outside of classes but wondered if it would be best to get a basic laptop or one that can handle more to bring to uni?

We are happy to take as many questions as you have.

The school does have resources that you can use in case your computer cannot handle a specific program but in my experience from this year I had to run a few programs on my computer next to using it for notes and writing up the project work (i.e Axure, Balsamiq, MORAE)
From what I saw the iMac should be fine 😊

Thank you 😊 You have given me a much better understanding of the course. How many students do the course on a full time basis? Additionally; can you tell me more about the dissertation?

We have around 30-35 students on the programme, part time and full time. i'll let the student moderator give information on the project, but in general its focused on some form of business or systems analysis problem.

You're welcome. In my class currently, we are about 30. As regards dissertation, it depends on whether you're taking the internship route or not. If you're taking the internship route, you'll work in a company which will be the basis of your writeup

If you're not taking the internship route, you'll have to discuss with your supervisor who will give you further guidance.

Also with regards to HCID part-time, what is the duration of the course? The brief description I've got states completion date Jan 2020.

Hi
You will have classes and exams until June 2020 and then your dissertation work. You can complete this within 3 month to be done by October 2020, or (since you will probably be working?), until December 2020.
Then in January 2020 the results will be ready and you will officially graduate if you completed all necessary modules.

Are there any particular extracurricular programs or groups that apply directly to Cyber Security?

Hi

There are some Penetration Testing / Hacking websites that you, or a group, can try out. However with the course workload being quite intense, you might find yourself limited to explore such activities.

Can you give a few examples of Dissertation Topics past students have addressed in the Information Systems programme

Students have done a wide range of project, including implementing sofware (e.g. web applications), research projects (undertaking surveys) and evaluation projects (applying evaluation techniques to search systems for example)

Hi All, What type of extracurricular activities are available for city students (have the options expanded since becoming part of the university of london)?

Hi - We have a wide range of clubs and societies. Our Careers Service and our Student Development teams also have a wide range of activities and opportunities for students, including a microplacements scheme, professional mentoring scheme, Unitemps, volunteering opportunities, etc.
In terms of benefits derived from being part of the University of London, you can apply online for access to the Federal Library resources and our students can have access additional accommodation services.

Thanks for the answer. Just a follow up, I'm going the Open Evening at the University, I was interested in seeing the labs and talk to other students from the course but I noticed there's no talk on the Computer Games course. Do you know if there's any specific campus tour that would cover the Computer Games course or if I can freely visit the facilities?

There is no talk for Computer Games, no. This is because we don't have a huge crowd generally and I'll be there (roughly) between 17:00-20:00 and can answer questions one on one. Students are currently engaged in exams so it will be difficult to get hold on them.

Is there any link to these past dissertations?

You can search for city thesis from our library: http://library.city.ac.uk/ if they are available publically you will find them there

One last question- Sorry! After your master's are there any opportunities for further study like Phd at City, University of London?

yes. One of our past Graduates did her PhD at City and was recently appointed to a lectureship in the department, so we do have students who like to stick around

Yes, of course. For that the most important thing is to decide on which specific topic you'd like to do your PhD and find a supervisor who works in that specific topic. And with whom you can actually work for 3-4 years... 😛