

Programme Specification

Postgraduate Programmes

Awarding Body/Institution	University of London
Teaching Institution	Goldsmiths, University of London
Name of Final Award and Programme Title	MSc User Experience Engineering
Name of Interim Award(s)	N/A
Duration of Study / Period of Registration	1 Year
UCAS Code(s)	N/A
HECoS Code(s)	(100736) Human Computer Interaction
QAA Benchmark Group	Master's degrees in computing
FHEQ Level of Award	Level 7
Programme Accredited by	N/A
Date Programme Specification Last Updated/Approved	July 2019
Primary Department / Institute	Computing

Departments which will also be involved in teaching part of the programme:
Psychology, Institute of Management Studies (IMS)

Programme overview

A user's experience of technology depends on the design and engineering choices that influence their interactions. Emerging and future technologies will exceed the capabilities available today, so our experts will give you the research needed to exploit and market new possibilities for the benefit of users. This innovative programme will explore how people experience the world around them, particularly when using technology. You will learn how each layer of technology - from core hardware through to the way that media is handled - can affect user experience in practical tasks. Building on this, you will be given the skills for transforming user requirements into appropriate technical solutions.

A variety of optional modules in advanced technologies and psychology will enable you to choose a path that emphasises the technology of your choice. Given the vocational nature of the programme, there is an option to undertake a field study thesis project as an alternative to the conventional academic thesis. The importance of human computer interaction and good interface design is increasingly recognised as the key to the future of successful tech development. User-centric software and hardware continue to evolve and are becoming more important in product design as technological breakthroughs drive innovation. The ability to select and implement the appropriate technologies to deliver usable and satisfying solutions will address a current skill shortage and will equip students with in-demand vocational skills.

Programme entry requirements

An undergraduate degree of at least upper second class standard in computing, psychology, design or related disciplines, and an interest in and capability for working in interdisciplinary contexts. In exceptional circumstances, outstanding practitioners or individuals with strong commercial experience may be considered.

Aims of the programme

The programme has the aim that students will learn to design and produce computing based systems and solutions that have been validated to:

- Meet the functional requirements of users
- be usable

- be accessible and inclusively meet the needs of the relevant user groups in any given context
- to provide users with a satisfying and fulfilling user experience.

What you will be expected to achieve

Knowledge and Understanding		Taught by the following modules
A1	Know the core capabilities and limitations of human performance, both biomechanically and cognitively	Computing the User Experience Applied Topics/Guest Lectures Cognitive Neuroscience
A2	Know the spectrum of technologies from which solutions can be implemented to meet users functional and non-functional requirements	Computing the User Experience Applied Topics/Guest Lectures
A3	Know the range of techniques available to elicit user requirements, to test that implemented systems are usable in ways that provide a positive user experience.	Introduction to Research Methods Applied Topics/Guest Lectures

Cognitive and Thinking Skills		Taught by the following modules
B1	Ability to consider the requirements of users and to propose designs for technical solutions that can be implemented and meet the requirements	Computing the User Experience Introduction to Research Methods Interaction Science Statistical Methods Applied Topics/Guest Lectures Computing Project OR Field Project
B2	Ability to analyse the experience of users when trying out prototypes or implemented solutions during a validation phase and to propose appropriate changes	Computing the User Experience Introduction to Research Methods Interaction Science Statistical Methods Applied Topics/Guest Lectures Computing Project OR Field Project
B3	Ability to present solutions and to argue for designs that optimize user experience with other stakeholders involved in the implementation and deployment of solutions	Marketing Strategy Computing Project OR Field Project

Subject Specific Skills and Professional Behaviours and Attitudes		Taught by the following modules
C1	Ability to build prototypes and technology based solutions using design, prototyping and programming tools	Computing the User Experience Computing Project OR Field Project
C2	Ability to run trials and validation sessions in ways that are scientifically robust and ethically defensible	Computing the User Experience Introduction to Research Methods Interaction Science Statistical Methods Applied Topics/Guest Lectures Computing Project OR Field Project
C3	Ability to analyse accessibility and inclusion issues in any application context and to propose appropriate solutions for these users.	This will be taught throughout the programme

Transferable Skills		Taught by the following modules
D1	Team & interdisciplinary working	Introduction to Research Methods Interaction Science Statistical Methods Applied Topics/Guest Lectures

		Marketing Strategy Computing Project OR Field Project
D2	Present themselves and their work.	This will be taught throughout the programme
D3	Reflect on and evaluate their work.	This will be taught throughout the programme
D4	Be proactive, plan their activity in advance, and exercise personal responsibility in their work	This will be taught throughout the programme

How you will learn

The Departments of Computing, along with our partners in Psychology and the Institute of Management are committed to a diverse and stimulating range of learning and teaching methods that ensure the programme outcomes are addressed rigorously and effectively. Learning emphasises a close synthesis between theoretical understanding and practical application that helps students develop an advanced, critical approach to the subject.

The teaching and learning methods to which you will be exposed have been designed in recognition of: (a) the different background expertise; (b) the learning requirements of different types of information and skills; and (c) the need for you to engage in a complementary range of learning activities leading to the synthesis of academic knowledge and professional skills/competencies.

Learning and assessment strategies

To achieve the learning outcomes a range of teaching/learning methods will be adopted, including formal lectures, workshops, computer labs, seminars, module work (essays), and the conduct of an independent research project. Professional competencies are integral to teaching throughout the programme, during which you will be provided with many opportunities for discussion and debate. This learning strategy is designed to challenge your preconceptions, facilitate your independent thought, and enable you to develop subject-specific critical abilities. You will attend *lectures* in order to gain the necessary background knowledge, and computer lab sessions to acquire the required level of technical skills. Both the background knowledge and the technical skills will then be used in the compulsory modules of the programme to leverage the acquisition of more advanced expertise required for the development, and application of, skills in addressing the User Experience requirements and solutions.

These teaching/learning methods are integral to the acquisition of subject specific skills and understanding, but also provide the opportunity for discussion and debate. An aim of the programme is to facilitate independent thought and enable you to develop a critical perspective. You will receive feedback on written work (essays and coursework) in the form of structured numerical feedback, relating to the logic of arguments, their coherence, references, coverage of background literature, as well as in the form of written constructive criticism, highlighting the major strengths and weaknesses sufficient to allow you to know how to improve your work.

During meetings with programme teaching staff, you will have a further opportunity to receive feedback and academic guidance. The reliability and validity of these forms of assessments are assured by group meetings between teaching staff. In addition, all written work is either second marked or moderated. Detailed criteria for marking bands are provided for students in the Programme Handbook on the University's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).

Students are expected to engage in considerable independent reading and practical work for all modules culminating in the software or field project. This independent work will be supported by library resources, access to lab space and computing cluster facilities, and supervision from teaching staff.

Finally, you will be invited to attend the Departmental Talk series at the Department of Computing and Psychology, and the Whitehead lectures, jointly organised by both departments. These series of talks, covering the broader areas of Computing, Psychology, and Neuroscience, will expose you to module researchers and to

contemporary ideas and practices in these fields. This may help you with decisions concerning your future career.

How you will be assessed

The vocational domain that students will be expecting to work in following graduation is characterized by the agile approach and team working within multi-disciplinary cohorts. For this reason, the assessments within this programme will largely be based on the presentation and demonstration of outcomes to assessed coursework and associated reports.

Marking Criteria

Mark	Descriptor	Specific Marking Criteria
80-100%	Distinction (Outstanding/Exceptional)	A grade in the range of 80-100% will be awarded in the case of really accomplished work that demonstrates high levels of scholarship and originality. This grade will reflect the overall achievement of the appropriate learning outcomes to an exceptionally accomplished level. In particular a grade in the 90s should be reserved for work deemed to be outstanding, and of publishable quality.
70-79%	Distinction	A grade in the range of 70-79% will be awarded when candidates show evidence of an excellent application of appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills as specified in the module learning outcomes. Demonstration of a thorough grasp of relevant concepts, methodology and content appropriate to the subject discipline; indication of originality in application of ideas, in synthesis of material or in performance; insight reflects depth and confidence of understanding of the material.
60-69%	Merit	Demonstration of a deep level of understanding based on a competent grasp of relevant concepts, methodology and content; display of skill in applying interpreting complex material; organization of material at a high level of competence. Students should be able to demonstrate the ability to work independently to research and implement state of the art technologies.
50-59%	Pass	Demonstration of a sound level of understanding based on a competent grasp of relevant concepts, methodology and content; display of skill in organizing, discussing and applying complex material. Students should be able to implement state of the art technologies under guidance.
30-49%	Fail	Represents an overall failure to achieve the appropriate learning outcomes. Students achieve some of the aims but were unable to demonstrate independence and originality beyond what would be expected at undergraduate level.
10-29%	Bad fail	Represents a significant overall failure to achieve the appropriate learning outcomes.
1-9%	Very bad fail	A submission that does not attempt to address the modules specified learning outcomes. It will be considered a non-valid attempt and the module must be re-sat.
0%	Non submission or plagiarised	Work was not submitted or it was plagiarised.

How the programme is structured

The first semester focusses on presenting the core concepts of the programme and on choosing the research topic for the academic thesis or field project.

The programme provides the students with the opportunity to take three optional modules (one in 1st semester, two in 2nd semester) that will be useful for their thesis and will meet their individual vocational goals. It will also include modules that will demonstrate and explore vocational practices useful for UX professionals, including working within agile methods and interfacing with other disciplines, particularly marketing professionals. An indicative list is included in the list below. **(Please note that this is an indicative list of modules and is not intended as a definitive list. Not all of these modules may be available every year.)**

The students will apply their prior learning and new knowledge and skills in an academic thesis or in a field project. The field project will be supervised by an industrial partner supported by a Goldsmiths academic and may be undertaken in a pair working on a real user experience problem faced by the external institution partner.

Academic Year of Study 1

Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Status	Term
Computing the User Experience	IS71090A	15	7	Compulsory	1
Introduction to Research Methods	IS71091A	15	7	Compulsory	1
Interaction Science	IS71092A	15	7	Compulsory	1
Statistical Methods	PS71020D	15	7	Compulsory	2
Applied Topics/Guest Lectures	IS71093A	15	7	Compulsory	2
Computing Project OR Field Project	IS71094A or IS71095A	60	7	Compulsory	3
Marketing Strategy	IM71033A	15	7	Optional	2
Physical Computing 1	IS71	15	7	Optional	1
Physical Computing 2	IS71	15	7	Optional	2
Workshops In Creative Coding 1	IS71014B	15	7	Optional	1
Digital Sandbox	IS71044B	30	7	Optional	1 and 2
Machine Learning And Statistical Data Mining	IS71060A	30	7	Optional	1 and 2
Interactive Data Visualisation	IS71066A	15	7	Optional	1
Workshops In Creative Coding 2	IS71014B	15	7	Optional	2
Critical Social Media Practices	IS71055B	15	7	Optional	2
Cognitive Neuroscience	PS71092A	15	7	Optional	2

The programme comprises compulsory modules to the value of 135 credits, and 45 credits of options. Students choose 15 credits of optional content in term 1, and 30 credits in term 2, guided by their individual vocational and academic goals. Students accepted on to the programme are encouraged to contact the programme leader to discuss their choices of optional modules.

NB: Physical Computing 1 is a prerequisite for Physical Computing 2 and the two x15 credit modules must be taken together.

Academic support

Support for learning and wellbeing is provided in number of ways by departments and College support services who work collaboratively to ensure students get the right help to reach their best potential both academically and personally.

Students are allocated a personal tutor and a Senior Tutor in each department who has overall responsibility progress and welfare. Departments arrange regular communication to students in the form of mailings and

meetings as well as regular progress reports and feedback on coursework and assignments. This is in addition to scheduled seminars, tutorials and lectures/workshops.

Every student is assigned a personal tutor who will meet with their student twice a year either face-to-face, as part of a group and/or electronically, the first of which normally takes place within the first few weeks of the first term. Personal tutors are also available to students throughout the year of study. These meetings aim to discuss progress on modules, discussion of the academic discipline and reports from previous years if available (for continuing students). This way progress, attendance, essay/coursework/assessment marks can be reviewed, and an informed discussion can be about how to strengthen learning and success.

Students are sent information about learning resources in the Library and on the VLE so that they have access to programme handbooks, programme information and support related information and guidance. Timetables are sent in advance of the start of term so that students can begin to manage their preparation and planning.

Taught sessions and lectures provide overviews of coursework themes, which students are encouraged to complement with intensive reading for presentation and discussion with peers at seminars. Coursework essays build on lectures and seminars, so students are encouraged to attend all taught sessions to build knowledge and their own understanding of their chosen discipline.

In depth feedback is provided for written assignments and essays via written feedback forms and formative feedback with module tutors/leads is provided to ensure that students' work is on the right track. Feedback comes in many forms and not only as a result of written comments on a marked essay. Students are given feedback on developing projects and practice as they attend workshops and placements.

Students may be referred to specialist student services by department staff or they may access support services independently. Information about support services is clearly provided on the College Website and for new students through new starter information and induction/Welcome Week. Any support recommendations that are made are agreed with the student and communicated to the department so that adjustments to learning and teaching are able to be implemented at a department level and students can be reassured that arrangements are in place. Opportunities are provided for students to review their support arrangements should their circumstances change. The Inclusion and Learning Support and Wellbeing Teams maintain case loads of students and provide on-going support.

The Careers Service provides central support for skills enhancement, running the Gold Award Scheme and other co-curricular activities that are accredited via the higher education achievement report (HEAR).

The Academic Skills Centre works with academic departments offering bespoke academic literacy sessions. It also provides a programme of academic skills workshops and one-to-one provision throughout the year, which students can access directly at gold.ac.uk/asc/.

Links with employers, placement opportunities and career prospects

The programme team has established an Industrial Advisory Board consisting of the following: Aled Evans (Kainos), David Walker (Philips Research), David Sloan (Paciello Group), Tim Pennick (BT), Amrit Bhachu (Realise), Melinda Klayman (Google), Katie Taylor (GDS). This group is providing advice on the employability aspects of the programme and reviewing the curriculum to ensure that it meets the current and foreseen needs of employers. In addition the field project and the guest speaker module will provide immersion and insights into the professional aspects of working as a User Experience designer, developer or engineer.

The requirements of a Goldsmiths degree

Master's Degrees

All Master's degrees at Goldsmiths have a minimum value of 180 credits. Programmes are composed of modules which have individual credit values. In order to be eligible for the award of a Master's degree students must have passed all modules on the programme.

Intermediate Exit Points

Some programmes incorporate intermediate exit points of Postgraduate Certificate and Postgraduate Diploma, which may be awarded on the successful completion of modules to the value of 60 credits or 120 credits respectively. Individual programmes may specify which, if any, combination of modules are required in order to be eligible for the award of these qualifications. The awards are made without classification.

Final Classification

There are four possible categories of final classification for Master's degrees: Distinction, Merit, Pass and Fail. In order to be awarded an overall classification of Distinction, students should have obtained

For further information, please refer to the Regulations for Postgraduate Taught Students, which may be found here: <http://www.gold.ac.uk/governance/studentregulations/>

Programme-specific rules and facts

N/A

Programme costs

General Programme Costs

In addition to your tuition fees, you will be responsible for meeting standard costs associated with your study. Find out more information here: <https://www.gold.ac.uk/programme-costs>

How teaching quality will be monitored

Goldsmiths employs a number of methods to ensure and enhance the quality of learning and teaching on its programmes.

Programmes and modules must be formally approved against national standards and are monitored throughout the year in departmental staff / student forums and through the completion of module evaluation questionnaires. Every programme also has at least one External Examiner who produces an annual report which comments on the standards of awards and student achievement.

This output is considered with other relevant data in the process of Annual Programme Review, to which all programmes are subject, and which aims to identify both good practice and issues which require resolution.

Every six years all programmes within a department are also subject to a broader periodic review. This aims to ensure that they remain current, that the procedures to maintain the standards of the awards are working effectively and the quality of the learning opportunities and information provided to students and applicants is appropriate.

Detailed information on all of these procedures are published on the webpages of the Quality Office (<http://www.gold.ac.uk/quality/>).