SOFTWARE ENGINEERING
MSc / PG Diploma

Full-Time / Part-Time
Distinctly Ambitious
www.hw.ac.uk
Programme Structure

The first two semesters (September-May) are spent studying taught courses in software engineering. Research skills are also developed as a preliminary for work on an MSc project. Exams take place at the end of each semester.

In the third semester (May-August) students undertake a specialist project which is written up as a dissertation. It enables further development and consolidation of skills introduced in the taught courses, applying them to a challenging practical problem.

Aim of Programme

The aim of this MSc programme is to impart the understanding and skills to engineer software at an advanced level to professional standards. Students can specialise in areas like dependable systems, mobile applications, advanced interactive systems like games or using artificial intelligence techniques.

Duration of Programme

The full-time MSc programme starts in mid September and lasts 1 year. The Postgraduate Diploma starts at the same time but only lasts 8 months. Students completing the PG Diploma at MSc level may transfer to the MSc.

Part-time study for the MSc over 2 years is also possible by special arrangement with the programme director.

Heriot-Watt University offers a first-rate environment for postgraduate study and research. We are one of the UK’s leading universities, recognized internationally for excellent teaching and innovative technology in our specialist areas of science, engineering, business management, languages and textile design.

Heriot-Watt became a university in 1966 and its origins go back to the foundation of the School of Arts in Edinburgh in 1821. We are Scotland’s most international university. Over 30% of our students come from outside the UK.

We introduced the first Computer Science degree in Scotland in 1966, have taught MSc degrees in this subject from 1970 and are part of the world class SICSA research cluster that aims to sustain and expand Scotland’s research excellence in Informatics.

Heriot-Watt University is a global university which prides itself on being education focused and research orientated with international status. It is one of the leading universities in the UK and international.

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The project is carried out under the supervision of an academic who is an expert in the field. In some cases the project can be carried out in collaboration with an outside industrial or academic organisation.

The table shows essential and optional courses in the first 2 semesters. Full time students do 4 courses each semester.

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To enable an agile and flexible response

To develop proficiency in modern

To give practical experience of

To provide detailed understanding and

To develop detailed theoretical and

To establish a practical understanding

To impart an appreciation of why

Computation

To develop programming skills in

2D/3D graphics and animation.

F21BC Biologically Inspired Computation

To impart an appreciation of why traditional computation finds it difficult or impossible to perform certain key tasks in pattern recognition, problem solving and autonomous intelligence.

To show how a range of natural, mainly biological systems approach these tasks.

To introduce the main biologically-inspired algorithms and techniques which are researched and applied.

To establish a practical understanding of the real-world problems to which these techniques may be fruitfully applied.

F21CN Computer Network Security

To impart critical understanding of key concepts, issues, theories and principles of computer network security.

To develop detailed theoretical and practical knowledge of foundational issues in computer network security.

To provide detailed understanding and practical experience with key services and tools used for network security.

To give practical experience of analysing requirements, designing, implementing and testing secure network applications.

F21SC Industrial Programming

To develop proficiency in modern industrial programming languages such as C#, C++11, Python, PHP.

To enable the elaboration and combination of system components in different languages;

To enable an agile and flexible response to changes in industrial practices;

To enable participation by industrial practitioners to provide context and applicability.

F21IF Information Systems Methodologies

To explore a range of issues concerning advanced methodological approaches to information systems development.

To enable students to develop critical faculties and techniques in relation to the selection and application of these methodological approaches.

F21RS Rigorous Methods for Software Engineering

To address the challenges of developing high quality software including specification, static analysis, formal verification and abstract interpretation.

To impart understanding of processes, standards and quality metrics for rigorous software engineering.

F21GP Computer Games Programming

To instil a grasp of design, history and theory of computer games.

To give understanding of physics, obstacle avoidance, path planning, group movement and learning and adaptation in games.

To impart knowledge of computer games tools and environments.

To develop programming skills and techniques in 2D and 3D games.

F21DP Distributed & Parallel Technologies

To explore technologies and techniques underlying advanced distributed and parallel software development including distribution technologies, parallel program design and performance analysis.

C11PA Project Management

To develop an appreciation of the knowledge and skills of a professional project manager.

To develop competence in using a generic set of quantitative and qualitative project planning and control tools and techniques.

To enable recognition of the limitations and appropriateness of approaches to project management.

To study project progression from strategy formulation to execution.

To define the role and current issues faced by project managers in the context of project control.

F21AD Advanced Interaction Design

To develop extensive, detailed and critical knowledge of requirements gathering, design and evaluation techniques in interaction design.

To develop awareness of current research and emerging issues in the field of interaction design.

To impart a range of specialised skills, and research methods involved in working with users.

F21AS Advanced Software Engineering

To consolidate skills in concurrent, procedural and team software development.

To develop further object oriented programming and design methods.

To instil understanding of the concepts and benefits of advanced software engineering methods.

To enable the deployment of patterns and UML in software engineering.

F21BD Big Data Management

To review principal abstractions, methods and techniques for the management of large and complex data sets (“Big Data”).

To develop understanding of tools and foundations of the Semantic Web.

To impart ability to appreciate critically a range of data integration solutions.

F21RP Research Methods and Project Planning

To develop skills in critical thinking, research planning, academic writing and experimental design appropriate for a MSc programme.

To impart skills in project planning and awareness of legal, social ethical and professional issues relevant to IT.

To enhance employability via job seeking and career planning skills.

We may alter the courses offered at any time. Some courses may not run every year. Not every course combination may be possible to take. Students must satisfy each course’s prerequisites and their course choice must be agreed with the programme’s director.
Entry Requirements

Applicants require a 1st or 2nd class honours degree in Computer Science or its equivalent. Graduates with a little less than this may sometimes be admitted to the Postgraduate Diploma programme. If their exam and coursework performance is MSc level by May, they may then be recommended for transfer to the MSc.

Non-native English speakers must also satisfy the university’s requirements for competency in English. This can be done with an IELTS score of 6.5, an ECCE certificate, Pearson Test of Academic English 58, Cambridge First Certificate in English A or B, level C in academic English from our own English language teachers or by proving they have studied wholly in English at university level. A full range of English language training courses can be taken at Heriot-Watt University before starting a programme.

How to apply

Apply online at

www.hw.ac.uk/study/apply/uk/postgraduate.htm

Supporting documents including 2 academic references, degree certificates, transcripts of marks and English test results can be uploaded digitally to the online application facility.

Contact information

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