MEng Computer Science

UCAS code: G403

For students entering Part 1 in 2002

Awarding Institution: The University of Reading
Teaching Institution: The University of Reading
Relevant QAA subject benchmarking group(s): Computing
Faculty of Science Programme length:4 years
Date of specification: 15 March 2005
Programme Director: Dr GT McKee
Programme Adviser: Dr GT McKee
Board of Studies: Computer Science
Accreditation: British Computer Society

Summary of programme aims

This programme aims to prepare students for responsible professional leadership roles in technologically demanding areas of computing having a basis in science or engineering. Graduates will be well qualified to play a disciplined and creative part in a research, development or support environment.

Transferable skills

The University's Strategy for Teaching and Learning has identified a number of generic transferable skills which all students are expected to have developed by the end of their degree programme. In following this programme, students will have had the opportunity to enhance their skills relating to career management, communication (both written and oral), information handling, numeracy, problem-solving, team working and use of information technology.

As part of this programme students are expected to have gained experience and show competence in the following transferable skills: IT (word-processing, using standard and mathematical software, scientific programming), scientific writing, oral presentation, team-working, problem-solving, use of library resources, time-management, career planning and management, and business awareness.

Programme content

The profile which follows states which modules must be taken (the compulsory part), together with one or more lists of modules from which the student must make a selection (the "selected" modules). Students must choose such additional modules as they wish, in consultation with their programme adviser, to make 120 credits in each Part. The number of modules credit for each module is shown after its title.

Part 1 (three terms)		*Credits*
Compulsory modules		
Either		
CS1A2	*Programming 1*	10 C
CS1B2	*Programming 2*	10 C
or		
CS1C2	*Introductory Programming 1*	10 C
CS1D2	*Introductory Programming 2*	10 C
and		

CS1G2	*Introduction to Algorithms*	10 C
CS1H2	*Functional programming*	20 C
SE1A2	*Introduction to Computer Systems*	10 C
MA113	*Logic and Discrete Maths*	20 C
And either		
MA114	*Math. Foundations of Computer Science*	20 C
Or both		
CY1A2	*Cybernetics and its Application*	20 C
And CY1B2	*Analysis of Cybernetic Systems*	20 C

If necessary, an option from (say) Modern Languages, to make 120 credits 20 C

Part 2 (three terms)

Compulsory modules

CS2A2	*C and Compilers*	10 I
CS2B2	*Operating Systems*	20 I
CS2C2	*Computer Architecture*	10 I
CS2D2	*Databases*	10 I
CS2E2	*Software Engineering*	10 I
CS2F2	*Design and Programming Methods*	20 I
CS2G2	*Algorithmic Techniques*	20 I
CS2P2	*Information Systems Design*	20 I

Part 3 (three terms)

Compulsory modules

CS3Z2	*Professional Aspects of CS and IT*	20 H
CS3R2	*Case Study Project*	20 H
CS3Q2	*Computer Science Project*	30 H

Optional modules (a total of 50 credits to be chosen) from modules such as

CS3A2	*Computer Networking*	10 H
CS3B2	*GUI, Web and Multimedia Design*	10 H
CS3E2	*Distributed Systems*	10 H
CS3F2	*XML Technologies and Applications*	10 H
CS3L2	*Neural Computation*	10 H
CS3M2	*Evolutionary Computation*	10 H
CS3N2	*Software Quality Metrics*	10 H
CS3U2	*Linear Algebra for Computer Vision and Robotics*	10 H
CS3J2	*Computer Graphics I*	10 H
CS3D2	*Computer Graphics II*	10 H
CS3G2	*Computer Vision*	10 H
CS3W2	*Artificial Intelligence*	10 H
CS3Y2	*Robot Architectures*	10 H
CY3F2	*Virtual Reality*	10 H
CS3TR4	*Informatics for E-Enterprise*	20 H

Part 4 (three terms)

Compulsory modules

MM270	*Practice of Entrepreneurship*	20 M
CS4P2	*MEng Project*	40 M
CS4Q2	*Research Studies*	20 M

Optional modules (a total of 40 credits to be chosen):

CS4B2	*Parallel Algorithms*	10 M
CS4E2	*Robotic Intelligence*	10 M
CS4H2	*Applied Software Engineering*	10 M
CS4Z4	*Computer Security*	10 M

Students may take two modules (for a total of 20 credits) from Part 3 optional modules. The selected modules should not have been taken previously.

Students may also take a language module (20 credits) from the Institution Wide Language Programme if they have not taken a language module previously in Part 1.

Progression requirements

To proceed to Part 2 students must:

- Achieve an overall average of 40% over 120 credits taken in Part 1
- Achieve a mark of at least 30% in individual modules amounting to not less than 100 credits.

To proceed from Part 2 to Part 3 students must:

- Achieve an overall average of 50% over 120 credits taken in Part 2
- Achieve a mark of at least 30% in individual modules amounting to not less than 100 credits.

If an overall average mark less than 50% but greater than 40% is obtained, students will be re-registered for the BSc in Computer Science. To be eligible for Honours, students must obtain an overall average mark of 40% **and** no mark lower than 30% in any module **and** at least 40% in CS4P2 *MEng Project*.

The relative contributions to the final assessment of Parts 2, 3 and 4 are 1:2:2.

Summary of teaching and assessment

Teaching is organised in modules that typically involve both lectures and practical work. Most modules are assessed by a mixture of coursework and formal examination. However, some modules are assessed only as coursework, while others are assessed solely by examination. Details are given in the relevant module descriptions.

Admission requirements

Entrants to this programme are normally required to have obtained:
A minimum of GCSE English Grade C and GCSE Mathematics grade B.
A level: 320 points, at least two A2's.

Equivalent qualifications are acceptable.

Admissions Tutor: Dr MP Evans

Support for students and their learning

University support for students and their learning falls into two categories. Learning support

includes IT Services, which has several hundred computers and the University Library, which across its three sites holds over a million volumes, subscribes to around 4,000 current periodicals, has a range of electronic sources of information and houses the Student Access to Independent Learning (S@IL) computer-based teaching and learning facilities. There are language laboratory facilities both for those students studying on a language degree and for those taking modules offered by the Institution-wide Language Programme. Student guidance and welfare support is provided by Personal Tutors, the Careers Advisory Service, the University's Special Needs Advisor, Study Advisors, Hall Wardens and the Students' Union.

Within the providing Department additional support is given though practical laboratory classes. The development of problem-solving skills is assisted by appropriate assignment and project work. There is a Course Adviser to offer advice on the choice of modules within the programme. Course handbooks are provided for each Part of the course: these give more details about the modules which make up the degree. In addition, the School of Computer Science, Cybernetics and Electronic Engineering produces a Handbook for Students, which provides general information about the staff and facilities within the school.

Career prospects
In recent years most students who have followed this programme have gone into careers in the software industry. These range from small start up companies to multi-nationals and several graduates have started their own businesses. Others have joined research groups in university and industry, the public service, and the teaching professions. Graduates from this programme are partially exempt from the professional examinations of the British Computer Society. After a further year of higher education and a period of professional experience, a graduate can expect to achieve Chartered Engineer status.

Opportunities for study abroad
N/A

Educational aims of the programme
To develop the students' knowledge of the theory and practice of modern computer science, necessary for them to secure employment as professional software engineers in a wide variety of industries; to encourage their critical and analytical skills; and to develop their skills in applying theoretical concepts to the practice of computer systems design.

Programme Outcomes
The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, skills, qualities and other attributes in the following areas:

Knowledge and Understanding

A. Knowledge and understanding of:		**Teaching/learning methods and strategies**
1. software engineering and theoretical issues in Computer Science 2. a range of programming languages and environments 3. information technology. 4. appropriate mathematical techniques, including the use of mathematics as a tool for communicating results, concepts and ideas 5. business context. 6. engineering practice.		The knowledge required for the basic topics is obtained via lectures, exercises, practicals, assignments and project work. Appropriate IT and other software packages are taught. Practical demonstrators and project supervisors advise students, and feedback is provided on all continually assessed work. As the course progresses students are expected to show greater initiative. The Case study project and the Industrial courses is set in a business context with the co-operation of industrialists. **Assessment** Most knowledge is tested through a combination of practicals, assignments and formal examinations. Students write reports on many assignments, and also make oral presentations of their work. The industrial work requires presentations to be given to external visitors.

Skills and other attributes

B. Intellectual skills – able to:		**Teaching/learning methods and strategies**
1. select and apply appropriate computer based methods, mathematical and scientific principles for analysing general systems. 2. analyse and solve problems. 3. organise tasks into a structured form. 4. understand the evolving state of knowledge in a rapidly developing area. 5. transfer appropriate knowledge and methods from one topic within the subject to another. 6. plan, conduct and write a report on a project or assignment. 7. prepare an oral presentation.		Appropriate software, mathematical, scientific and IT skills and tools are taught in lectures, and problems to be solved are given as projects or assignments. Project planning is part of the second, third and final years (in particular in the projects), and written and oral presentations are required for various assignments and projects. **Assessment** Skills 1-5 are assessed partly by examination, though sometimes also by project or assignment work. Skills 6 and 7 are assessed as part of project work.

C. Practical skills – able to:		**Teaching/learning methods and strategies**
1. use appropriate software tools. 2. program a computer to solve problems. 3. use relevant software and analyse the results critically. 4. design, build and test a system. 5. research into computer science problems. 6. utilise project management methods. 7. present work both in written and oral form. 8. manage projects effectively		Software tools are introduced in lectures and their use is assessed by examinations and assignments. Programming assignments are set, and students may write programs to solve other projects. Practicals and projects are used to teach about skill 3, and projects are used for skills 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8. **Assessment** Skills 1 and 5 are tested in coursework and in examinations. Skills2, 5 and 7 are tested by assignments and projects, 3 is assessed in practicals and sometimes in projects, Skills 4, 5 , 6 and 8 are assessed through project work.

D. Transferable skills – able to:		**Teaching/learning methods and strategies**
1. use software tools. 2. acquire, manipulate and process data. 3. use creativity and innovation. 4. solve problems. 5. communicate scientific ideas. 6. give oral presentations. 7. work as part of a team. 8. use information resources. 9. manage time.		Software tools are taught partly in lectures, mainly through practical sessions and assignments. Data skills are acquired in laboratory and projects. Creativity and innovation and problems solving are experienced through projects, as are team working, time management and presentations. Use of information resources, such as the library and IT methods is experienced through projects and assignments. Team work is an important component of the MEng degree with a group project taking places in both the second and third years. **Assessment** Some skills, like the use of software tools and ability to communicate orally and in written form are directly assessed, in assignments or projects, other skills are not directly assessed but their effective use will enhance the students overall performance.

Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably expect to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in module and programme handbooks.