The first and second years of the course teach the basic principles of chemistry with compulsory core modules in areas such as organic stereochemistry and reactivity, spectroscopy and structure, the chemistry of the elements, coordination and organometallic chemistry. In physical chemistry, we look at what makes reactions go, kinetics and thermodynamics, molecular organisation and architecture and the quantum world. A range of optional modules in medicinal chemistry, analytical chemistry, environmental chemistry and forensic analysis are also available. As the first two years are common to both the BSc and MChem programmes, you can transfer to the four year course at any time before the third year, providing you achieve a pass mark of 50% or higher in the end of year exams. A large portion of the third year of the BSc programme is dedicated to your research project. Using the skills developed in the first two years of the course, you undertake a major project in an area of your choice. Project work cultivates a range of transferable skills which are highly desirable to today’s employers. It is also possible to carry out your third year project in a local secondary school. This is an excellent introduction to teaching for students considering going on to a PGCE.

Teaching quality in the Department of Chemistry has recently been reviewed and rated excellent in many categories and research activity is wide-ranging and prolific.

The BSc Chemistry programme has a well-proven record of providing students with a high calibre qualification leading to a wide range of professional occupations or research degrees. This three-year degree programme incorporates all the latest developments in modern chemical science, having been recently revised and updated to reflect new applications and techniques in industry and research. In addition, the teaching laboratories in the Department of Chemistry have recently been refurbished to a high standard to accommodate practical classes and project work. A BSc honours degree in Chemistry is recognised as an excellent qualification for a career in industry, computing, teaching, research, public service, finance and business.
Why Reading?
The Reading University campus is the second-largest in the UK and certainly one of the most attractive, set in 130 hectares of beautiful parkland. The University community is open and friendly, with students from a wide range of nationalities and cultures. The centre of Reading is only a short walk or ride away. With its lively mix of culture, nightlife, shops and eating-places, it is one of the top ten shopping destinations in the country, and host to an international music festival. For those preferring country pursuits, the Chiltern Hills and the River Thames are close by. London and Oxford are both only a 25 minute train ride away, while Heathrow airport is 45 minutes by frequent coach service.

A multi-million pound Chemical Analysis Facility, fitted with a suite of state-of-the-art instrumentation, has recently been opened and the chemistry teaching laboratories are all fully equipped to the highest standard. All of our lecture theatres have recently been refurbished and upgraded, providing a suite of modern lecture-demonstration facilities, including video links and ‘ask the audience’ interactive student response systems.

The Department of Chemistry

The staff who will teach you at Reading will make sure that you receive the highest standards of teaching in a supportive learning environment. You can be sure of a friendly atmosphere with small group teaching and workshops featuring prominently in your timetable. We make sure that you receive all the support you need to get the most out of your time studying at Reading. We offer extra classes in areas that some students find more challenging (for example, to catch up on your maths). Staff members are dedicated to helping you make the transition from school to university and you will be allocated a member of staff to act as your own ‘personal tutor’, who will be available throughout your course to give you help and advice. This is in addition to the extensive University student welfare and support system.

A year away?
We offer two MChem programmes and one BSc programme that involve one year away from Reading working in the chemical or pharmaceutical industry. The department has strong links with many industrial partners and Reading is located in a major area of economic growth so almost all of our placements can be made within easy travelling distance of Reading. The companies include Glaxo-SmithKline, AstraZeneca, Procter and Gamble, Johnson Matthey, Syngenta, Castrol, ICI, 3M and AWE, reflecting the range of industries that employ chemists. During this time you carry out a major research project and we find that the experience and self-reliance that a student develops while being away from Reading is appreciated by employers as an important part of their training.

Career Prospects?
Career opportunities open to chemistry graduates are varied. Your scientific expertise may be applied in a university, a school, a government agency or in industry. Such jobs vary from research and analysis, through management, technical sales and product development, to teaching or scientific writing.

During your studies you will develop problem solving and time management skills, and the ability to analyse and handle diverse and complex data. You will be numerate, articulate, and effective in written and oral communication. These generic skills will make you a valuable employee if you should choose to find employment outside of science, in fields such as law, finance, management and accountancy.

All Programmes:

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BSc Chemistry Profile Entry 2012

June 2011