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If you have any questions about courses, applications or student life at Bristol, please contact the Enquiries Team.

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Pharmacology



Undergraduate study



Courses

Single Honours

BSc Pharmacology

three years B210

MSci Pharmacology

four years B212

MSci Pharmacology with Study in Industry

four years B211

This leaflet contains information for students planning to start university in autumn 2020. We have made every effort to ensure all details are correct at the time of going to press (May 2019). However, since this information is subject to change, you are advised to check the University's website, bristol.ac.uk/ug-study, for the latest updates.

Why study pharmacology at Bristol?

Pharmacology is the study of the action of 'drugs' in the widest possible sense, encompassing many types of chemicals and medicines that affect the functioning of the body.

For students who are drawn to this fascinating subject, Bristol's degrees in pharmacology deliver a rigorous training for many careers in bioscience and medicine alongside transferable skills valued by employers beyond the scientific world.

You will benefit from:

- a dedicated teaching staff whose research excellence is embedded in the teaching;
- innovative educational resources where you can rehearse your lab skills, a human patient simulator, and an online histology virtual microscope;
- excellent teaching labs where you will receive hands-on experience in advanced techniques throughout your undergraduate course;

- being taught in a Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) in Applied and Integrated Medical Sciences;
- training in presentation skills, experimental design, data handling, scientific writing, biomedical research, ethics and enterprise;
- cutting-edge facilities for research in neuropharmacology, cell signalling and cardiovascular pharmacology;
- year in industry opportunities with top biotechnology and pharmaceutical firms;
- automatic enrolment as a British Pharmacological Society member.

'The pharmacology course provides many opportunities to explore different aspects of the subject, especially in the final year. The practical lab sessions are always great due to the relaxed environment and provide a great place to quickly acquire skills that are essential for learning the connection between theoretical and practical science.'

Kris (BSc Pharmacology)

What will you study?

You will study pharmacology and a choice of optional units in each of your first two years. In the first year you will be introduced to key concepts such as how drugs interact with receptors to exert their effects on the body, and how drugs enter the body, are distributed around it and then removed. The drug design and development process is also discussed. These concepts will then be applied to different body systems and diseases in the remainder of the first and second years.

In year one you also learn how the body works, through a mandatory unit that will enable you to understand how drugs may affect normal physiological processes. Pharmacology is closely related to several scientific disciplines and your optional units in years one and two can cover subjects such as physiology, neuroscience, anatomy, biochemistry, and cellular and molecular medicine. This gives you an excellent multidisciplinary grounding. A second-year unit in biomedical science skills covers aspects of data interpretation, data analysis and presentation skills and an introduction to understanding scientific literature. There is also the option in year two of taking an open unit such as philosophy or a language.

In your final year you will focus entirely on pharmacology, taking units from within the School of Physiology, Pharmacology and Neuroscience. Students on the BSc course will undertake a research project, drawing on the expertise of our academic staff.

If you are studying for the MSci you will follow the same programme of study as the BSc, then in your final year you will undertake an extended research project alongside units to enhance your skills in communicating science and developing ideas that could be used to solve specific scientific challenges.

The MSci with Study in Industry gives you the opportunity to spend your third year gaining valuable experience of how pharmacology is related to the pharmaceutical and associated industries. Placements may be in major pharmaceutical companies or other health, biotech and research companies in the UK and abroad. In the final year you will take units alongside BSc students, but in place of the research project you will write a research grant application.

All students (BSc and MSci) are encouraged to apply for Nuffield, British Pharmacological Society and Wellcome Scholarships to carry out summer placement projects at the end of the second year.

Assessment

In years one and two assessment is by coursework and end-of-unit exams. Coursework includes dissertations, presentations, essays and practical work, all of which contribute to the end-of-unit mark.

In the final year, assessment is mainly based on end-of-year written exams. In addition there is assessment of coursework including your research project.

For MSci Pharmacology with Study in Industry you are required to write a report following the completion of your year in industry and present a poster.

Teaching methods

During your first two years, you will typically attend nine lectures and three practical classes a week. You will also attend several small- and large-group tutorials and undertake Directed Self Education. In your third year you will have lectures as well as undertaking a research project.

Research projects

BSc and MSci students will carry out a research project in the third year, supervised by a member of staff. A variety of projects is offered, and they may be laboratory-based or involve performing a detailed literature review of an area of current pharmacology interest. You will produce a written dissertation and a poster presentation, both of which contribute to your final mark. MSci students will also do an extended research project in the fourth year within an active research laboratory supervised by a member of staff.

If you are studying towards the MSci with Study in Industry, your final year will involve designing a research grant application in place of the research project.



Careers and graduate destinations

A degree in pharmacology opens up many rewarding career opportunities. You could join a pharmaceutical or biotech company as a researcher and be part of a team involved in the discovery of new drugs which may affect the lives of millions of people.

Alternatively, you may be more interested in the product management side of the industry or in applying your skills to areas such as marketing and medical information, where you act as the link between the pharmaceutical company and doctors and patients.

Typically, about 30 per cent of Bristol pharmacology graduates enter employment in areas of research, finance, financial consultancy, NHS, accountancy, management, medical sales and the public sector. Another 30 per cent will go on to further study with master's degrees or PhDs. The remainder tend to find employment in areas of their own interest.

85 per cent of pharmacology students went on to work or further study after graduation (Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education survey, graduates from 2016/17).

Bristol is the second most targeted university by top UK employers.

High Fliers Research 2019



Graduate employers
Pharmaceutical Press
Hampstead School
Cisiv
Stem Marketing
Ipsos MORI



Career destinations
Technical Writer
Junior Business Analyst
Graduate Trainee
Teacher (Teach First)
Scientific Adviser

Source: Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education survey 2016/17. Find out more at bristol.ac.uk/careers/be-inspired.

Making your application

Visit bristol.ac.uk/ug20-pharmacology for more information about our courses.

Typical offer for BSc Pharmacology

A-levels AAB including Chemistry and one of the following subjects (contextual ABC or BBB including BB in Chemistry and one of the following subjects): Biology or Human Biology, Physics, Mathematics or Further Mathematics.

IB Diploma 34 points overall (contextual 31) with 17 at Higher Level (contextual 15), including 6, 5 (contextual 5, 5) in any order at Higher Level in Chemistry and one of the following subjects: Biology, Physics or Mathematics.

Our contextual offer is a grade reduction of up to two grades below the standard entry requirements, made to applicants from under-represented groups. Find out more at bristol.ac.uk/contextual-offers.

GCSEs No specific subjects required.

Selection process UCAS.

For other accepted qualifications, and for our English language requirements, visit bristol.ac.uk/ug20-pharmacology.

Application advice for pharmacology courses

Applicants should normally be taking A-levels in three subjects which must include Chemistry and one other science subject.

Applicants should demonstrate a clear desire to study pharmacology; this may take the form of wider reading in areas of interest that are not necessarily covered in school work. Pharmacology-related work experience is not necessary, but any involvement in science-based work experience or other science activity would be helpful. We welcome applications from mature candidates and those with non-standard qualifications. We will invite you to attend a visit day after we have made you an offer.

Further information

Find out more about the School of Physiology, Pharmacology and Neuroscience: bristol.ac.uk/phys-pharm-neuro.

This information is correct at the time of printing (May 2019), but we recommend you check the University website for the latest information: bristol.ac.uk/ug20-pharmacology.



Read more about how we support you when you are here:

bristol.ac.uk/students