Guidelines on completion of the personal statement

Applicants for the Cognitive Neuroscience MSc and MRes programmes are expected to complete a personal statement to accompany their application. The personal statement will be used to evaluate your suitability for the programmes. The personal statement need not be long and we recommend a maximum of two pages. However, it is important that you put care into it. Below are four specific points for you to bear in mind. It may be useful, although not essential, to structure your personal statement around these points. You may add additional information as you see fit.

1. Briefly describe your interest in the subject and in the MSc or MRes programme

   How did you become interested in cognitive neuroscience (e.g. degree course, personal experience)? What was it about the subject that captured your interest? Looking at the modules on the MSc or MRes programme, which ones interest you most and why? Why are you applying for the MSc version of the programme rather than the MRes (or vice versa)?

2. Demonstrate, giving a specific example, your knowledge and interest in the subject

   We would like you to discuss a specific book or article that you have read that has aroused your interest in cognitive neuroscience. It may have been published in a scientific journal (e.g. Nature Neuroscience), a more popular publication (e.g. New Scientist), or it could be a single authored book. Please tell us the article name, author, publication date, and journal (if appropriate). What were the main findings or ideas and why was it of interest to you?

   We are aware that some people have limited experience of cognitive neuroscience before making an application, and we shall take this into account when assessing your statement. However, we do expect all applicants to have some understanding of the kinds of issues that are likely to be covered in the programme.

3. Which research area within cognitive neuroscience interests you most at the moment?

   Please describe what topic you might like to investigate during the research project that forms part of the MSc and MRes. Do you have possible supervisors in mind? How will any past experiences doing research help you during the project?

4. What are your future plans?

   Please describe how completion of the MSc or MRes will help you achieve your short- and long-term career goals. You may discuss more than one potential goal if you are undecided.