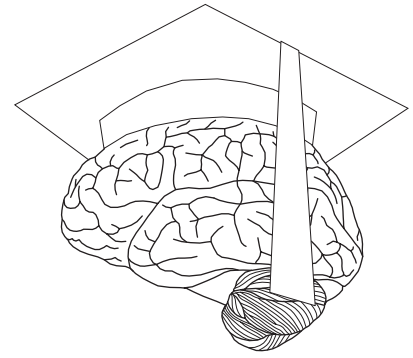


Training & Careers



When many young students think of a career in science, it can conjure up images of white coats and laboratories. Hopefully, this booklet will have gone some way to showing that there are many different aspects to neuroscience and that research on the brain will touch peoples' lives in many ways. From the laboratory to the hospital to many other walks of life, there is a diverse range of exciting opportunities within the field.

University Neuroscience Courses

Many universities now offer undergraduate degrees in neuroscience. Often the subject is taken as a specialisation after earlier years training in such subjects as biology, physiology, pharmacology and psychology. A knowledge of genetics and molecular biology can also be valuable.

However, you do not necessarily have to be doing only science subjects in the sixth form to get into some of these courses. Find out about neuroscience courses and their entry requirements by looking at the UCAS pages on the internet. You can look through these by subject or in relation to the universities to which you may be interested in applying.

Medicine

Medicine in Britain is an undergraduate degree. Many universities have Medical Schools and there has recently been an expansion in the number of students being trained through the creation of several new Medical Schools. Specialization in subject areas such as neurology, neurosurgery, psychiatry and radiology comes in the later years of training, but there are often opportunities to work in neuroscience research laboratories during summer vacations and intercalating years. The competition to get into medical courses is considerable, but so are the rewards of a career in medicine.

"The privilege of a job in a University is the intellectual freedom. No day is the same. Every day you learn something new, every day you are stretched and challenged"

Maria Fitzgerald, Professor in London University.

"The appeal was, and still is, the prospect of finding out, being pleasantly surprised by discoveries, and the small leaps of insight that result"

Richard Ribchester, Neurophysiologist in the University of Edinburgh

**Rosamund Langston,
Neuroscience PhD
student at Edinburgh University**

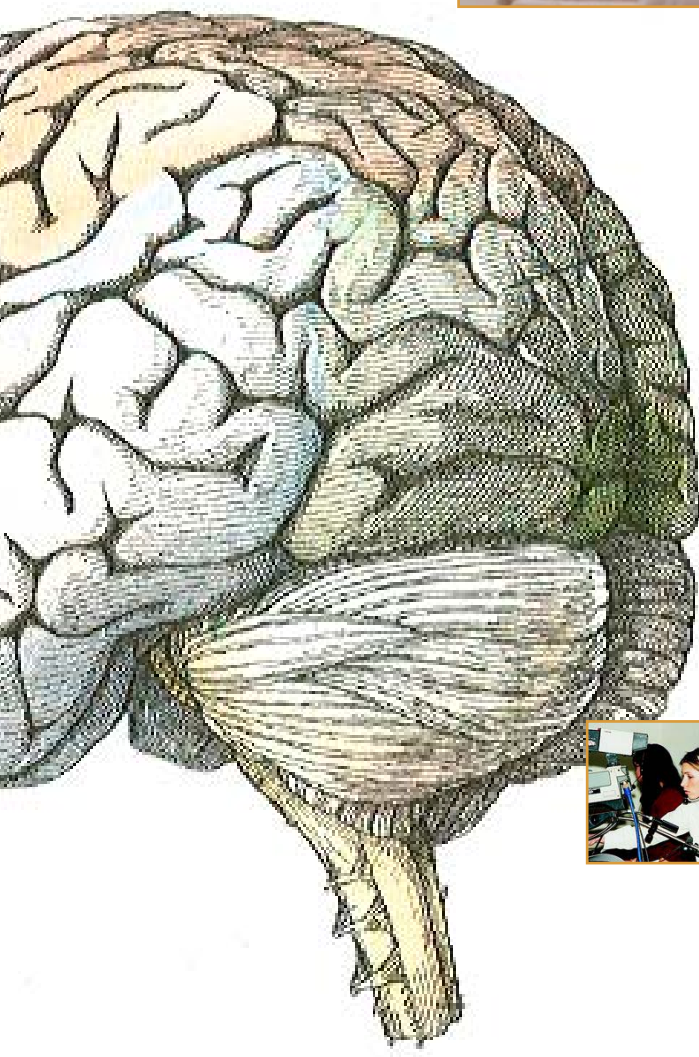


"I studied sciences and English at A-level and then went on to study biological sciences in Edinburgh. I specialised in Neuroscience in my final year and really found my niche. I was lucky enough to be offered a position as a research assistant in the Cognitive Neuroscience department of Edinburgh University and this eventually lead to a PhD."

**Thomas Petty,
Medical student
at Edinburgh University**



"I have been set on medicine as a career ever since school and I applied to Edinburgh because of its good reputation. In third year I was given the opportunity to do an intercalated Bsc course and I chose to study Neuroscience. The year gave me an opportunity to study the core research behind the medicine and I took a great deal from it and really enjoyed it."



Industry (Pharmaceutical Industry)

New medicines are constantly being discovered and developed and the brain is a critical target for drug treatment. Pharmaceutical companies, as well as financially supporting academic institutions, conduct their own research. Many co-operate with universities to offer years in industry to help develop laboratory skills and experience. Graduates from a variety of biomedical science courses including neuroscience make desirable employees, particularly when they have had associated laboratory experience.

Neuroscience Research

There are a huge variety of opportunities in research. The field has many elements ranging from brain-imaging and behavioural studies through to neurophysiology and molecular-genetic research. Researchers within universities are always happy to encourage keen students to find a path of academic study that suits them.

Computing Industry

Neuroscience may not spring to mind as a subject to do at university if you are interested in a career in computing or information technology. Still, as we have seen in the booklet, there is growing interest in 'brain-style' computing and this is set to grow with the development of the world-wide web. There is increasing interest in non-medical applications of brain science.

School Teaching

Neuroscience is not taught as a subject in schools. However, graduates with a degree in neuroscience will be well placed to teach biology and will have many other skills, including numerical skills, that would be invaluable in a teaching career.

Science and the Media

From journalism to radio and television, a career in the media is competitive and demanding. However, many opportunities to enter the field of science communication are available. Science is continually advancing and new findings need to be reported for the purposes of both education and public interest. Work on brain research is no exception. There is huge social interest, well recognised by the media, and the latest findings have the potential to have considerable social impact. With a good scientific background and understanding of research, obtained while doing a university degree, it would be much easier to communicate complex findings accurately and effectively both with other scientists and the public.



Science and art

Science and art are not mutually exclusive. Design which captures the imagination is crucial in the presentation of science to a wider audience. Museums, galleries and the media, and other organisations encourage and fund creative, experimental collaborations between scientists and artists.

