Year in Computer Science, YCS

> I would highly recommend the Year in Computer Science to anyone who has an interest in computing. Signing up was undoubtedly the best decision I have made!
>
> *Matt Roberts, Year in Computer Science student*

Computer Science is now a major factor in many businesses, professions and academic disciplines, as well as in everyday life. From practical ICT (Information and Communication Technology) to profound principles of computation, a solid grounding in Computer Science can be an important factor in making the most of your career potential.

To respond to the demand from students, employers and the government for more education in ICT, the School of Computer Science at the University of Birmingham has started an innovative new programme. Termed the 'Year in Computer Science' (or YCS), it offers students from non-computing disciplines the chance to gain in-depth knowledge of computing and enhance their work-based skills through the study of Computer Science.

Programme overview

In a degree with a Year in Computer Science, the additional year is 'sandwiched' between the penultimate and final year of your original honours degree – ie. between years two and three of a three year degree, or between years three and four of a four year degree. In the additional year you will study the core of Computer Science, and in your final year you will return to your home subject.

You can apply for the Year in Computer Science during your penultimate year of study and will be admitted if you fulfil all of the necessary entry requirements (for details, see overleaf).

Once admitted on the course, you will follow modules offered by the School of Computer Science and, for that year, all tutoring and monitoring requirements will become the sole responsibility of the School of Computer Science.

College of Engineering and Physical Sciences

School of Computer Science

Year in Computer Science (Structure and Application)

In the first semester, you will study:

☐ Computer programming (in Java):
The teaching for this element is mainly practical – there are lectures and tutorials, however you should be prepared to spend a significant amount of time in the computer labs

☐ The fundamentals of Computer Science: This covers some basic theory as well as practical aspects of how software is specified, designed and constructed

☐ Two options from the School of Computer Science second year modules: You will be advised as to which to choose, depending on your main degree

In the second semester, you will continue to study:

☐ Computer programming (in Java): By now you will be able to write some more interesting computer programmes, perhaps starting to interact with databases via web pages

☐ The fundamentals of Computer Science: A deeper introduction to the mysteries of data structures and algorithms is accompanied by an introduction to designing and using databases

You will also study:

☐ Two options from the School of Computer Science second and third year modules: Again, you will be guided as to which to choose, depending on your main degree

What are the entry requirements?

The Year in Computer Science is available to all current students who:

☐ Are in their penultimate year of study – ie. in their second year of a three year degree, or their third year of a four year degree

☐ Are studying any subject other than Computer Science

☐ Achieve a point average of at least 55% in their first and second year of study

☐ Successfully demonstrate their ability and enthusiasm for the course at interview

Please note that admission onto the Year in Computer Science cannot therefore be confirmed until the results of your second year examinations are released.

What do I get at the end of it?

Successful students will graduate with a degree in their home subject, with the addition of the words 'with a Year in Computer Science'. A full transcript of your marks on the year will also be available to you, and can be supplied to potential employers.

The year is assessed on a pass/fail basis. Credits gained during the year will NOT contribute to the credits required for your main degree, nor will marks contribute towards your degree classification in the main subject. In this respect, the YCS is similar to a 'year abroad', or a 'certificate in industrial studies'.

What does it cost?

In terms of cost, the Year in Computer Science should be viewed simply as an additional year of study – making a three-year degree into a four-year degree, for example.

If you pay your own tuition fees, then you will have to pay for an extra year. For those eligible, student loans should be available for all four years, however you should check with your LA that they will continue to give you financial support on the new programme.

How do I apply?

To apply for the Year in Computer Science you should complete the YCS application form (attached) and return it to the School of Computer Science Admissions Office. Once processed, suitable applicants will be invited to attend an interview with the YCS Admissions Tutor and and will be given further instruction.

The School also runs a YCS 'Information Day' in the Spring Term of each year. If you are interested in attending, please contact the School of Computer Science Admissions Office for further details.

School of Computer Science
Admissions and Marketing Office
Tel: +44 (0)121 415 8742
Email: ug-admissions@cs.bham.ac.uk

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UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

Application for the Year in Computer Science (YCS)

For current undergraduate students

TheYear in Computer Science is available to all current students who:

- ☐ Are currently in their penultimate year of study – ie. in their second year of a three year degree, or their third year of a four year degree
- ☐ Are studying any subject other than Computer Science
- ☐ Achieve a point average of at least 55% in their first and second year of study
- ☐ Successfully demonstrate their ability and enthusiasm for the course at interview

Once admitted onto this course, all tutoring and monitoring for the subsequent academic year are the sole responsibility of the School of Computer Science. Similar to a 'year abroad' or 'certificate in industrial studies',

the outcome of the YCS will have no impact upon your degree classification awarded. Successful completion of the YCS will however result in the creation of a new degree programme title; which will be the original degree title extended with the words 'with a Year in Computer Science'.

As an applicant for this course, you must demonstrate that you meet the academic criteria and requirements for the YCS Programme, and your application must be approved and signed by appropriate representatives from both the School of Computer Science and your home School/Department.

If your application is approved, your Local Authority will automatically be notified of the change. You should however check with the LA that they will continue to give you financial support on the new programme.

You will be able to see updates on the student portal at www.my.bham.ac.uk. Please contact the Admissions and Marketing Office with any queries.

School of Computer Science
Admissions and Marketing Office
Tel: +44 (0)121 415 8742
Email: ug-admissions@cs.bham.ac.uk

Section A – To be completed by the applicant and returned to the Admissions Office at the School of Computer Science.

Student information

Name	Current Programme
ID number	Home School/Department
Email address	Year One grade average (%)
Current Programme Director name	Current Programme Director email

A level subjects and grades achieved

I attended the YCS information day (please tick appropriate)   Yes ☐   No ☐

Applicant signature

Date

Section B – To be completed by the School of Computer Science Admissions Office

Stage 1: Interview

Interviewer name

Interview time

Interview date

Interview location

Outcome (please tick appropriate)   Successful ☐   Unsuccessful ☐

Interviewer comments

Interviewer signature

Date

Stage 2: Examination success

Year Two grade average (%)

Admissions staff name

Admissions staff signature

Date

Section C – To be completed by a suitable representative of the Home School/Department

I hereby authorise the one-year transfer of the above student onto the Year in Computer Science and understand that they will return to the 'home' school upon completion of this programme.

Name

Position

Signature

Date

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