

MSc Genetic & Genomic Counselling Admissions Criteria & Application Process

Contents

Overview	2
Application Stage	2
Application Deadline.....	2
Admissions Criteria (Essential)	2
Degree	2
Knowledge.....	2
Experience.....	2
English Language.....	2
Admissions Criteria (Optional)	3
Counselling Skills.....	3
Further Study	3
Personal Statement.....	3
References	3
Academic Reference.....	3
Caring Reference(s).....	4
Interview Stage	4
Post-Interview/Offer Stage.....	5
Placement Organisation	5
UK/Republic of Ireland (ROI) Placements.....	5
Non-UK/ROI Placements.....	5
Contact	5

Overview

The Cardiff University MSc in Genetic & Genomic Counselling is an extremely competitive programme. Because of this we have strict set of [admissions criteria](#) and a process to select applicants suitable to be offered a place on the programme.

The admissions process is split in to three stages:

1. [Application Stage](#)
2. [Interview Stage](#)
3. [Post-Interview/Offer Stage](#)

Application Stage

Application Deadline

To be shortlisted for interview, applicants must supply all evidence listed in the below [admissions criteria section](#) with their online application by **31st March**. This date may be extended and will be reflected on the programme page and in email correspondence to all current applicants.

All applications submitted after this date are unlikely to be considered due to the interview process that takes place following the deadline. Once the School and College have agreed that the programme has enough applications, all applications submitted after the deadline will be withdrawn and the programme will then officially be closed to new applications.

Admissions Criteria (Essential)

In addition to satisfying the requirements of the Cardiff University General Entrance Requirements, you must meet and provide evidence for all the below programme requirements:

Degree

Higher education qualification, minimum of a BSc (Hons) grade 2:1 in a biological or (bio)medical science. Equivalent science degrees are also accepted e.g. social science, nursing, psychology¹. Please upload certificates and transcripts of all your relevant qualifications to your online application².

Knowledge

Demonstrate knowledge, motivation, and commitment to a career in genetic and genomic counselling i.e. knowledge/experience of genetics and genomics in healthcare. This should be evidenced in your [personal statement](#) and will be assessed at [interview](#).

Experience

Six months or more of full-time equivalent (approximately 800 hours) non-family caring experience is required e.g. healthcare work, volunteering with a counselling service, in a genetic or genomic counselling clinic, or supporting a vulnerable child or adult (e.g. with a disability). This should be evidenced by [references](#) and in your [personal statement](#).

English Language

IELTS (Academic) - Overall score of 7.0 with a minimum of 6.5 in each subskill. Or an equivalent [Cardiff University accepted English language qualification](#)³.

¹ Please contact us for further guidance if you do not have the required undergraduate degree.

² If a degree award is pending and due to be awarded before the start date of this programme but after the application deadline, we will require a copy of a transcript from your current programme to assess the level you are working at. All other evidence must be submitted by the application deadline.

³ You will not be required to evidence English Language if you meet one of the criteria on our [English Language information page](#).

Admissions Criteria (Optional)

Evidence of the below sections will strengthen an application but is not essential for applying to this programme.

Counselling Skills

Evidence of counselling training and/or counselling skills training in the form of an additional reference (or included in your [caring reference](#)) or certificates and as part of your [personal statement](#).

Further Study

Further study in relevant areas is welcomed (e.g. PGDip, MSc or PhD).

Please provide details of your further study and upload all certificates as part of your online application.

Personal Statement

Your personal statement should provide information that is relevant to your application for admission to tell us why you wish to follow this programme, what benefits you expect to gain from it, and what skills and experience you possess which make you a suitable applicant.

You must use the below questions as headings in your document:

1. What motivates you to apply for this programme?
2. What personal qualities and attributes do you possess that would enhance your ability to work as a genetic counsellor?
3. Please describe any experience you have had working with individuals who might be considered vulnerable.
4. If you have previously applied for this programme and were unsuccessful, please describe what further experience you have gained which may strengthen your application.

Please supply your statement as a Word document or PDF. There is no word limit, but you should aim for a maximum of 2 sides of A4 as a guide.

References

You are required to provide at least two references as part of your application.

One academic reference and one or more demonstrating at least 6 months full-time equivalent non-family caring experience.

The references must provide sufficient information to enable the School to verify the reference.

Academic Reference

Academic references must:

- be submitted on company letterhead or on a [CU referee form](#) and signed & dated by a named referee
- include the referee's business contact details
- detail the referee's position within the university (must be a lecturer or supervisor)
- detail the referee's knowledge of the applicant, including length of time and capacity in which they have known the applicant
- detail the applicant's role with the university
- specify the duration of applicant's registration with the university (including the applicant's start and finish dates)
- detail the subjects, level of performance and result (or expected result) of the applicant's programme of study
- detail the applicant's motivation and intellectual capacity for the programme of study applied for
- detail the ability of the applicant relative to other students in the same year
- detail the applicant's potential for postgraduate study
- be submitted electronically - letters of reference should be provided in a non-editable PDF or jpeg format

Caring Reference(s)

Caring experience can be paid work or voluntary and must be for at least 6 months full-time equivalent (approximately 800 hours).

This can be in one or several posts⁴.

The key aspect of what constitutes “caring experience” will be whether you can reflect appropriately on what you have learned about the psychosocial impact of disease and disability, which will be something we will also expect at the interview stage.

Caring references must:

- be submitted on company letterhead or on a [CU referee form](#) and signed & dated by a named referee
- include the referee’s business contact details
- detail the referee’s position within the organisation (must be supervisor/line manager)
- detail the referee’s knowledge of the applicant including length of time and capacity in which they have known the applicant
- detail the applicant’s role with the organisation
- specify the duration of applicant’s employment or volunteering with the organisation (number of days, full-time or part-time [hours per week], including the applicant’s start and finish dates)
- detail the applicant’s motivation and intellectual capacity for the programme of study applied for
- be submitted electronically - letters of reference should be provided in a non-editable PDF or jpeg format

Interview Stage

This programme has an interview process associated with it.

Interviews usually take place at the end of April/beginning of May.

Dates for these are confirmed to all applicants closer to the time once they are confirmed.

Following the [application deadline](#), all eligible applications will be scored according to set criteria. The top scoring candidates at this stage will be invited for an interview in person or online⁵. Those that do not meet the cut-off score⁶ will be rejected.

The interview will consist of a standard question format, a five-minute presentation on a topic that is not related to genetics or genetic counselling, and a written reflective task.

Applicants are expected to demonstrate the following at interview:

- Knowledge of genetic and genomic counselling
- Reflective and self-awareness skills
- Ability to reflect on psychosocial impact of disease and disability
- Knowledge and understanding of human genetics
- Year 2 placement plans/preferences

More information on the interview stage is provided to candidates at the time of selection.

Successful applicants will be ranked on the basis of their combined scores from application and interview, and placement allocation in the UK and ROI will be carried out according to this ranking.

Unsuccessful applicants will either be rejected, if appropriate, or put on a waiting list in case a place becomes available.

⁴ If using several posts then a reference must be submitted for each.

⁵ For online interviews, you must have access to a webcam (or similar) and microphone in order to participate and photo ID in the form of a passport must be provided in advance on your application.

⁶ We do not release details of each year’s cut-off scores as they vary greatly from year to year.

Post-Interview/Offer Stage

If you are successful at interview you will be offered a placed on the programme informally via email. You will then be required to liaise with our academics with regards to the [organisation of the year 2 placement](#) prior to an official offer being sent out through our online application system on SIMS. This is because having a placement agreement set up in advance is a prerequisite of entry to the programme.

Once the placement is organised or an agreement is in place, an official offer letter will be sent to you formally via SIMS.

Placement Organisation

In terms of an application, you are not required to have the placement detail in the below sections sorted prior to receiving an offer although having some plans of where you would like to do your placement is advised and you will be questioned on this at [interview](#).

UK/Republic of Ireland (ROI) Placements

For placements within the UK and ROI, you will be asked for a preference of locations and the placements are then organised and allocated by the programme tutors. They will be allocated preferentially according to the rankings post interview.

Applicants who wish to complete their placements in the UK or ROI must NOT make direct contact with clinical genetics services in these countries.

Applicants from outside the UK or EU cannot complete placements in the UK due to Visa restrictions⁷.

Non-UK/ROI Placements

For placements outside of the UK/ROI, these are to be organised by the student and these plans should be confirmed with the programme tutors at this stage of the process.

Contact

If at any point during the admissions process you have any questions or concerns, please contact the School of Medicine's Postgraduate Taught Admissions Team.

Email: PGTMedAdmissions@cardiff.ac.uk

Phone: +44(0)29206 87214

⁷ We recommend EU applicants to have their year 2 placement in their own country as it is an easier process in terms of organisation and also provides that student with better future links in their more local Genetic Counselling service.