

UROP – Undergraduate Research Opportunities

The Department of Computer Science will offer undergraduate students an opportunity to become involved in cutting edge research early on in their program. This will allow us to leverage our research expertise for teaching, challenge the best of our students, and increase the visibility of our research.

A UROP is a well-defined project offered by an individual academic in their area of interest, often conducted in close collaboration with other members of the respective research group. Suitable projects will have a clear connection to ongoing research and will let the student gain insight about current research problems and offer the opportunity for creative problem solving. They allow undergraduate students to experience research first-hand and provide training in relevant research skills including literature research, algorithm development, prototyping, and experimentation. The programme is managed by the UROP coordinator, Matteo Sammartino.

UROPs will be advertised listing a title, the project supervisor, a description of the project, the starting date and the prerequisite knowledge. The projects are collected centrally on <http://urop.cs.rhul.ac.uk>. Students can apply for UROP by directly contacting the supervisor.

The CS2000P module

Students participating in the programme will be formally enrolled in the CS2000P module. At the end of their projects, they will need to prepare and submit a short report/paper summarizing their project and reflecting on the usefulness of the UROP experience.

Project duration and start time

UROP projects last six weeks (full-time) over the summer 2021 break. The earliest starting time is in June 2021, after the exam period.

Eligibility

UROP is available for students in any but the final year of their respective degree programme, provided the project supervisor agrees to take on the student. Students applying for UROP are expected to have attained a GPA of 70 or higher for their most recently completed year of study. First year students that have not yet completed any exams are expected to have performed at an equivalent level in their coursework.

Compensation

Participating students will receive a bursary of £ 1,500 for six weeks of full-time work. Due to the current situation, the payment model is yet to be determined.

Departmental Funding

The department will allocate funds to provide base funding for UROP. Decisions for departmental funding support are made by the head of department (HoD) on recommendation of the UROP coordinator. However, to ensure that sufficient funding is available for all qualified candidates and projects, supervisors are encouraged to use own funds for the bursary. Supervisors are also free to

top up funding to extend the payments using own funds. Projects can also be undertaken jointly with an industrial sponsor and partially or fully funded by that sponsor.

Final Year Project

UROP is not available in the final year, because it would interfere with the individual project. However, students that have previously undertaken UROP can, with agreement of their supervisor, sign up for a final year project that continues their ongoing line of research. They are thus exempt from the final year project allocation.

Passport Award

UROP will provide 40 RHUL passport points to recognise the student engagement.

UROP Process

The UROP process is as follows:

1. The supervisor posts a project and sets the project status to "available"
2. Students apply by sending an e-mail to the supervisor
3. The supervisor selects a student (no obligation to take on any student) and agrees on details of the project
4. The supervisor fills the UROP form, available at <https://uop.cs.rhul.ac.uk/manage-projects>, and sends it to the UROP coordinator (MS). To avoid administrative delays, **the UROP form should be submitted no later than one month before the start of the project.**
5. If requesting departmental funding, the "account" field of the UROP form should be set to "computer science". Along with the request for funding, the supervisor should submit evidence of the academic performance of the student. See the next sections for details about the timeline of funding requests and evidence of student performance.
6. Funding decisions are made by the HoD on recommendation of the UROP coordinator
7. If funding is not required or is granted, the EPMS office (Elaine Marshall) sets up the bursary for the student.
8. **Project starts.** The supervisor sets project status to "ongoing" on the UROP website.
9. At the end of the project, the supervisor sets the project status to "completed" on the UROP website

Funding decision timeline

The deadline for requesting departmental funds is **Friday, 24 April 2021**. Decisions will be communicated one to two weeks after the deadline.

Evidence of academic performance

On submitting a request for departmental funding, supervisors should also include evidence of the student's academic performance, which is the main criterion for allocating funds. We would require a spreadsheet with the **grades of all exams** taken by student since enrolment. For **first year** students, please send a similar document with the **coursework marks**. Optionally, the student's CV can be included as well.