

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 break. The earliest starting time is in June, 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 £1,500 bursary, to be paid as a lump sum at the end of the project.

Intellectual Property

The 2021 IP policy sets out that the results (e.g. software) will belong *to the student* unless you ask for an exception to be made and your request is granted. For more information about the exceptions process that would need to be followed please see the section "***Default IP Ownership and process for requesting exceptions to the 2021 Intellectual Property and Commercial Partnering Policy***". Please contact Miranda Joyce if you have any questions about this process or are unsure if it would be necessary or sensible to request an exception.

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.

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 [online UROP form](#)
5. Funding decisions are made by the HoD on recommendation of the UROP coordinator
6. **Project starts.** The supervisor sets project status to “ongoing” on the UROP website.
7. At the end of the project, the supervisor sets the project status to “completed” on the UROP website

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.

Default IP Ownership and process for requesting exceptions to the 2021 Intellectual Property and Commercial Partnering Policy

The 2021 Intellectual Property and Commercial Partnering Policy sets out that research results are owned as follows:

Who owns the research outputs created by an individual? - part 1



in most cases the **University:**

	Employee	Postgraduate Student	Supplier
Intellectual Property*	University	University	University
Copyright in: • Artistic Material* • Scholarly Material*	individual	individual	University
Copyright in: • Teaching Material • University Material	University	University	University

* unless the box below applies

Who owns the research outputs created by an individual? - part 2



in most cases the **individual:**

	Academic Visitor	Undergraduate Student	University of London Student
Intellectual Property	individual*	individual*	individual*
Copyright in: • Artistic Material • Scholarly Material	individual*	individual*	individual*
Copyright in: • Teaching Material • University Material	individual*	individual*	individual*

* unless the individual is paid as an Employee or Supplier or the Commercial Partnering Panel has agreed an exception and the individual has signed an assignment

The 2021 Intellectual Property and Commercial Partnering Policy acknowledges that in some instances the default IP ownership arrangement is not appropriate and provides an “exceptions process” which allows staff and students to request that a deviation from the default IP ownership be granted.

The individual who would like to request an alternative IP ownership arrangement (the “Requester”) should get in touch with the relevant Research Contracts Manager and will need to put his/her request in writing to explain:

- what “alternative arrangement” the Requester proposes (e.g. that he/she/RHUL/a third party own a particular piece of software)
- why the Requester believes that the alternative arrangement is fair

The relevant Research Contracts Manager will:

- if the Requester is an academic visitor, discuss the request with the Requester’s host and HoD
- if the Requester is a student, discuss the request with the Requester’s supervisor and HoD
- if the Requester is an employee, discuss the request with the Requester’s HoD

and if the consulted individuals agree that the request is fair, ask for the request to be discussed as an AOB at the next Commercial Partnering Panel meeting.

The relevant Research Contacts Manager will inform the Requester of the decision of the Commercial Partnering Panel and, if a deviation to the 2021 2021 Intellectual Property and Commercial Partnering Policy is agreed, prepare the agreement to document the deviation.

It is noted that the 2021 Intellectual Property and Commercial Partnering Policy does not expect that requests will routinely be granted.