

Study with us

About your course

Courses covered

Code	Title
PEAPM	MSc Astrophysics
PEAPME	MSc Astrophysics with Advanced Research
PEAPME	MSc Astrophysics (Sandwich)

You can find full details of your course in the *Programme Specification*.

Important points

- This course is run by the department of Physics Astronomy and Mathematics, and taught by staff from PAM's Centre for Astrophysics Research (CAR) – a research group with an international reputation. The expertise of CAR researchers focuses on observational astronomy across the full range of the electromagnetic spectrum (from X-rays to radio). The research spans many size scales, ranging from the properties of dust grains, up through stars and extra-solar planets through to entire galaxies and clusters of galaxies in the near and high-redshift Universe. Survey astronomy is a particular strength. CAR computing facilities also permit extensive in-house computer modelling and simulation.
- The University's Bayfordbury Observatory is a highlight of the teaching programme. Students use the observatory to study a wide range of astrophysical phenomena ranging from extra-solar planets to distant galaxy clusters, and processes across many scales from the orbits of earth-crossing asteroids to the expansion of the universe. The observatory has eight individual domes next to a fully equipped computer building, with the domes housing five 40cm Meade telescopes (with CCD detectors), a solar telescope, and a video telescope. In addition there are 4 radio telescopes (which also facilitates a 3 element radio interferometer). The facilities are automated (with weather sensitive control) so observing can be done remotely (via queue observing) or directly through on-site student visits.
- Transport to scheduled practicals at our off-site observatory is normally provided free of charge by the School.
- The normal entry requirements for the programme are a good (2.1 or 1st class) Honours degree (or equivalent) in physics, astrophysics, or a closely related subject, where the degree is accredited by a Professional Statutory Regulatory Body such as the IoP (or a body of equivalent standing in a related subject or overseas).
- The MSc Astrophysics with Advanced Research degree (2 years full-time) is structured to have 90 credits of core level 7 taught modules, and a 60-credit level 7 project during year 2. It also includes 60 credits of option modules at level 6 / level 7, and a 30-credit level 7 Advanced Research Seminars module that runs in parallel with the project.

- The award of an ‘MSc Astrophysics with Advanced Research’ degree requires 240 credit points (of which at least 180 credits must be at level 7, and up to 60 credits can be at level 6). The ‘Astrophysics Masters Project’ must be passed, and the ‘Advanced Research Seminars’ module must also be passed.
- The MSc Astrophysics (Sandwich) degree is a 2-year degree. The degree is structured to have 90 credits of core level 7 taught modules in year 1, as well as 30 credits of optional modules at level 6 / level 7. The work placement begins in year 2 and runs through semesters A and B of year 2. A 60-credit level 7 project then follows in semester C of year 2.
- To be eligible for a placement, students must have passed 120 credits, AND passed their first 60 credits at first sitting. Students who have not met these progression requirements, including those with outstanding deferrals, will normally be transferred from the sandwich course to the corresponding 2-year ‘with Advanced Research’ course. Students may also be eligible to transfer to the corresponding 180-credit pathway, following consultation with the programme leader.
- Although the responsibility for finding a placement is with the student, our Careers, Employment and Enterprise Service maintains a wide variety of employers who offer placement opportunities and organise special training sessions to help you secure a placement, from job application to the interview. Optional one-to-one consultations are also available. Please contact see: <https://ask.herts.ac.uk/complete-guide-to-placements>

Academic Year

Academic Year 2023 – 2024

The University’s academic year is made up of 3 Semesters (A, B and C). Semester A and B are made up of teaching weeks followed by exams, where applicable (the re-sit period falls within Semester C). Semester C is normally used for final dissertations and projects.

- *Semester A runs from Monday 25 September 2023 to Friday 19 January 2024*
- *Semester B runs from Monday 22 January 2024 to Friday 10 May 2024*
- *Semester C runs from Monday 13 May 2024 to Friday 6 September 2024*

Additional expenses

Description	Year	Mandatory/ Optional	Estimated cost
Desktop or laptop computer. Please see: https://ask.herts.ac.uk/buying-a-computer-for-uni	1, 2	Optional	From £400
Texts to support the curriculum. Postgraduate study requires extensive reading and access to reference works. Recommended texts are available in the Learning Resource Centre either as ebooks or printed material. Please note that availability of printed material may be	1, 2	Optional	The average price of a recommended text is £50, although you may be able to buy second-hand copies.

limited so students may wish to purchase their own copies.			
Placement year	2	Optional	During your placement year, you may incur additional costs i.e. travel and accommodation. The exact value of these costs will depend on where your placement is located.
No additional expenses have been specified for this course.			