



MSt AI Ethics and Society 2021-23

FAQs and further information for prospective applicants

March 2021



Please find below some frequently asked questions relating to the ***MSt AI Ethics and Society***. We hope these will help provide additional clarity regarding the Programme and inform your decision as to whether or not to apply. This should be read in addition to all of the information available at: [MSt in AI Ethics and Society | Institute of Continuing Education \(ICE\) \(cam.ac.uk\)](#)

If you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact the MSt AI Ethics and Society administrative team at ai@ice.cam.ac.uk

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| 1. Programme design | 1 |
| 2. Course content | 2 |
| 3. Course structure | 3 |
| 4. Course delivery | 3 |
| 5. Admissions | 5 |
| 6. Applications..... | 6 |
| 7. Fees & Funding..... | 7 |
| 8. College membership | 7 |
| 9. Further study..... | 8 |
| 10. COVID contingencies..... | 8 |

1. Programme design

a) What is a Master of Studies?

The MSt (Master of Studies) is a part-time Master's degree (the part-time equivalent of an MPhil at Cambridge), designed for individuals who may be working full time as well as studying. MSt programmes are not simply full-time programmes studied on a part-time basis. They are specifically designed as part-time programmes, to be flexible and accessible to accommodate the needs of working professionals.

An MSt programme allows you to develop your professional and academic interests for career progression, diversification and/or personal development. Many MSt students will have some years of experience in the field prior to undertaking the programme.

MSt programmes are academically rigorous postgraduate programmes, usually undertaken over two years, and cover 180 credits. They usually incorporate a significant taught element along with a research project and associated dissertation. Taught elements are normally broken down into discrete modules and research projects may be work-related, if appropriate. The modular structure of consolidated teaching blocks enables those living further away from Cambridge, including international students, to undertake an MSt.

Cambridge offers many MSts and has for many years, but this will be the first year for the MSt AI Ethics and Society.

b) Is this a University of Cambridge Award?

Yes. In addition to being a University of Cambridge Award, the MSt is a matriculated programme, which means that all students will be members of a college.

c) What is the Leverhulme Centre for the Future of Intelligence (CFI)?

The MSt AI Ethics and Society is developed and taught by the University's [Leverhulme Centre for the Future of Intelligence](#) (CFI), a global research centre at the forefront of AI Ethics and impact research, in partnership with the Institute of Continuing Education. Founded in 2016, CFI is an interdisciplinary Research Centre focused on tackling all of the different challenges posed by AI over the short and long term and based in Cambridge. Funded by the Leverhulme Trust, CFI is directly made up of a network of Universities (Cambridge, Oxford, Imperial College and Berkeley), broader international academic partners, industry and policy makers.

d) What is the Institute of Continuing Education (ICE)?

The Institute of Continuing Education (ICE) was founded at the University of Cambridge in 1870 in order to bring the teaching and research of the University to working men and women. ICE designs, delivers and curates a portfolio of research-informed, world-leading, award-bearing undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications in a broad range of disciplines.

For the purposes of the MSt AI Ethics and Society, ICE will act as the awarding body on behalf of the University and provide administrative support to both students and academic staff.

e) Can this course be taken full-time?

No. This course is only available part-time.

f) Will this course run every year?

Yes, this course will take a new cohort each year.

2. Course content

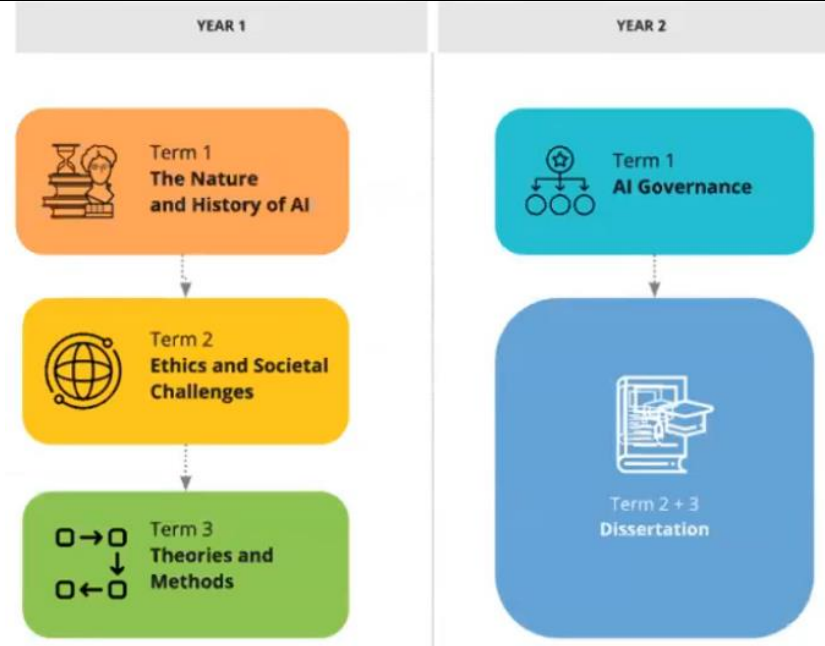
a) What does the course offer?

Artificial intelligence (AI) technology is rapidly developing and is increasingly being applied across sectors, posing significant ethical and societal challenges. There is therefore a national and global need to adequately enable future leaders and decision-makers to address these challenges. The Master of Studies in AI Ethics and Society will equip you with the rigorous knowledge and skills you need to effectively manage AI ethics within your sector or organisation. You will work (online and in person) with fellow students from across fields and with world-leading experts in areas such as machine learning, algorithmic bias, applied ethics, data privacy, AI governance and policy.

The full educational aims, learning outcomes and module content for the course can be found [here](#).

3. Course structure

a) How is this two year course structured?



For further information please see the [Teaching and Assessment tab here](#).

4. Course delivery

a) How is this Programme delivered?

This Programme uses hybrid course delivery, with both face-to-face teaching and content delivered through our Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). In addition to the teaching weeks, there will be interactive content on the VLE - likely to include videos, discussion forums, some synchronous discussion sessions and other aids - throughout the terms of the course. Student and tutor feedback will be sought each term, in order to ensure the best possible student experience.

b) What is a residential and when are they held?

A residential is a chance for the group to come together for a concentrated period of focus on the course content, to explore ideas together and to build a social community and professional network. Students are expected to attend four week-long residentials in Cambridge, as follows:

- 27 September - 1 October 2021 (Michaelmas Term)
- 10 - 14 January 2022 (Lent Term)
- 20 - 24 June 2022 (Easter Term)
- 26 - 30 September 2022 (tbc) (Michaelmas Term)

International students have successfully managed to travel to Cambridge from overseas for residentials on other ICE MSt programmes. We are anticipating that the residential sessions will run face-to-face but will comply with any government guidance.

c) What are the residential requirements?

At the moment, provided we can comply with any government regulations and guidance, including social distancing, we anticipate that teaching weeks will be face-to-face in Cambridge. We would always listen to any concerns/specific circumstances that make it not possible to attend in person, but currently would expect students to attend in person the residential element, where possible.

Although we suggest that students stay in college during the 4 week-long residentials (beginning on the dates noted above), it is not a requirement. The approximate cost of staying in college is £55-£65 per room per night.

d) What is the anticipated time commitment for the Programme?

In addition to attending in person the four residential weeks of the Programme, students should expect to spend around 8 hours per week (term time) studying for this course. This will include seminars, reading, self-study/reflection and it is likely that there will be some optional 'live' discussion sessions. Every effort will be made to make these as accessible as possible in terms of timing and offering asynchronous ways to join the discussion in the virtual learning environment (VLE). It is anticipated that any such sessions would also be recorded.

e) Which online platform does the Programme use?

We use a range of technology to support the MSt. The hub of the learning materials and community is a Virtual Learning Environment using Moodle, but Zoom and MS Teams are also used extensively across the University amongst staff and student cohorts.

f) What are the Cambridge term dates 21-23?

The University term dates can be found here: [Term dates | University of Cambridge](#)

g) What libraries would students have access to and are most of the resources now online for research purposes?

Students will have access to Cambridge's libraries - the main University Library (9 million + items) and the 115 smaller libraries! Membership of the University Library allows remote access to relevant journals and papers. The intention is for any mandatory text to be available online.

h) Who will be teaching on the Programme?

Our course team come from a variety of backgrounds, and there will also be a range of guest speakers. Currently leading on the Programme are:
Dr Stephen Cave, Director, Centre for the Future of Intelligence
Dr Henry Shevlin, Course Leader and Senior Researcher, Centre for the Future of Intelligence
Dorian Peters, Research Programme Coordinator, Centre for the Future of Intelligence

i) Who will be part of the supervisory team?

The list of supervisors is being developed and will be finalised when we have applications with suggested dissertation topics. There are a wide range of potential supervisors within the University of Cambridge and we always try to match specialty, where possible.

5. Admissions

a) What is the standard entry requirement?

For full details please see our requirements tab [here](#).

Bachelor's degree transcripts and certificate

- 2:i and above or equivalent
- All disciplines and subject areas accepted
- From an institution recognised by the university (Graduate Admissions)
- Translated into English
- Submit any postgraduate certificates

Language test

- IELTS 7.5 with no element lower than 7.0
- TOEFL iBT 110 with no element lower than 25 other than speaking. which can be no lower than 25
- C1 Cambridge Advanced: Grade A or B, with no less than 193 in any paper
- C2 Cambridge Proficiency: Grade A,B or C, with no less than 200 in any paper

We are very used to considering professional experience alongside academic awards. If you wish to be considered as a non-standard applicant, please do not be deterred from applying as there is provision to accept those who do not satisfy the standard academic criteria.

b) I'm currently completing my undergraduate degree, will I be able to apply?

We will accept you onto the course on the basis that you meet the standard academic criteria; achieving these criteria (prior to the course start date) would therefore become a condition of entry to the course, and you will need to provide proof of this in the form of a transcript (in English) or certificate/official letter from the awarding institution.

c) When will interviews be held?

If your application is shortlisted for consideration for admission, then you will be interviewed before an offer of admission can be made. This is to ensure your academic background provides appropriate preparation, the research topic is suitable for part-time study and that you will be able to meet all the requirements of the course in terms of attendance and active involvement. It is anticipated that interviews will be held in April 2021.

d) How many students will there be in the 2021-23 cohort?

The size of the cohort will depend partly on the number of qualified applicants. We expect it to be between 20 and 40.

6. Applications

a) Who are you anticipating applications from?

The MSt is an academically rigorous part-time programme aimed at professionals from business, public, and social sectors working with AI. Although the course will be arranged so that those who are working can still participate, work experience is not required and recent graduates are also very welcome to apply. The curriculum will be arranged to ensure both technical and non-technical professionals can fully participate.

b) What is a personal statement?

Your personal statement should be around 600 words stating your reasons for applying for the course and a summary of the most relevant experience or interest in relation to AI Ethics & Society. It is also useful to be able to demonstrate how you might balance part time study in addition to other commitments.

Please note that in order to apply successfully you are required to upload your personal statement twice; we apologise about this and hope to rectify in future.

c) How long should the sample of work be?

The sample of work should be no longer than 5,000 words, including references and bibliographies.

d) What references are required?

All applicants are required to provide two references. Although the online application form states that the references should be academic, we are very happy to accept two relevant up to date professional references (in lieu of academic references), especially if academic references are likely to be outdated.

The references should include relevant professional experience and a demonstrable commitment to, and aptitude for, advancing the ethical use of AI in society where possible. It will be expected that professional references are sent from professional email addresses. If the referees have previously witnessed you combining study with work / excellent time management, this would also be worth including.

e) When will the interviews be held?

The interviews for shortlisted applicants on the course will be held during the week starting **26 April 2021**.

7. Fees & Funding

a) What fees and expenses will I be expected to pay for this course?

The fees for 2021-23 will be £20,000 for home students and £30,000 for overseas/EU students, payable in instalments over the two academic years. The combined graduate fee includes college membership. If you are accepted on this course can apply to [Hughes Hall](#) college.

You will be expected to cover the application fee (£70 online) and any costs of travel, accommodation and subsistence during residential sessions in Cambridge. Accommodation is available in your college at their standard rates.

b) How can I obtain funding for this course?

You can find sources of government funding and financial support - including Professional and Career Development Loans - [here](#).

For information on a loan from Student Finance England for course fees and a contribution towards living costs, please see [here](#).

8. College membership

a) What is a College?

The University of Cambridge is a collegiate university, and all its students are members of a college, with access to associated facilities (including 3 libraries, grounds, sporting facilities etc.). College life includes formal and informal social events, membership of the college MCR (Middle Common Room, postgraduate society) and helps support both pastoral and academic aspects of your study for the duration of your course.

b) Is there a partner College for this MSt?

The partner College for the MSt in AI Ethics and Society is [Hughes Hall](#). In order to create a sense of cohort and have maximum benefit from the Programme, all applicants are strongly encouraged to apply to Hughes Hall.

c) Can I choose to study at a different college?

Each MSt programme partners with specific colleges in order to provide the best possible student experience and create a sense of cohort. If you wish to apply to a different college, please contact the course team on ai@ice.cam.ac.uk. If you are accepted onto the programme, we will then need to make a case to the alternative college to accept you. These cases tend to be successful where the applicant has a prior relationship with the college – eg. you are an alumnus/na of the college.

9. Further study

a) Does CFI offer a path to a PhD in this subject?

The CFI does not currently offer a path to a PhD in this subject. We hope to be able to offer a PhD however, in the coming years. In the meantime, we work with other departments in Cambridge, including Engineering, History and Philosophy of Science, Politics, and Philosophy to provide a route to continued academic study.

10. COVID contingencies

a) What contingency plans are in place?

The Institute of Continuing Education plans to deliver our postgraduate and MSt qualifications in-person in the academic year 2021-22, where applicable. Please note that this will be reviewed in line with the latest public health guidance available at the time. If required, to ensure the health and safety of students, we may look to utilise alternative teaching formats and will contact students if we expect changes to the course delivery. Please do refer to our website for the most current guidance. All learning outcomes will be met regardless of delivery format.