What to do with a degree in ... **Psychology or Neuroscience**

If you are questioning your career options or what others like you are doing with their degree, this guide is a good place to start. It will provide you with industry-specific information on careers, schools, associations, labour market information, and more.

Career & Leadership Development Centre

dal.ca/cldc
Psychology is the study of thought and behaviour. All thought and behaviour is believed to come from the nervous system. Therefore Neuroscience, the study of nervous systems, often intersects with Psychology. Psychology and Neuroscience study topics including perception, memory, personality, love, motivation, and consciousness. As a profession, psychology promotes human welfare through personal counselling and treatment of behaviour problems. Psychology is concerned with all aspects of behaviour.  

[Dalhousie Psychology and Neuroscience Department]

Though a degree in psychology and neuroscience can lead to employment within the field, it also develops a number of transferable skills that can be used across multiple careers. These skills include:

- Interpersonal skills
- Written/Verbal Communication
- Conducting Research
- Bibliographic skills
- Abstract reasoning
- Meeting deadlines
- Data analysis
- Organizing materials
- Emotional intelligence

These degrees prepare you to be able to pursue a wide range of careers. The career options available to you will likely depend on what specialty skills you have developed both inside and outside of your education in addition to your interests and goals. When considering where to start, keep in mind any significant projects you were involved in, internships, personal strengths, past employment, and other background information that may guide you.

The skills you will have developed in this degree will make you competitive in the following areas:

- Medical Technician
- Pharmaceutical Sales
- Psychiatric Technician
- Correctional Service Officer
- Youth Care Worker
- Rehab specialist
- Police Officer
- Community Service Worker
- Educational Assistant
- Mental Health Worker
- NGO Staff
- HR Personnel
- Respite Worker
- Public Health Statistician
- Crisis Intervention Worker

Your options will be influenced by your level of education. If you pursue a Masters or PhD, your career opportunities directly related to the field will improve. Alternatively, individuals who complete additional graduate or certification programs may expand into other fields. Many students in both Psychology and Neuroscience go on to apply to programs in medicine, physiotherapy, research, government, and epidemiology. Here are options available to a psychology/neuroscience graduate who has completed additional training:

- Neuropsychologist
- Clinical Psychologist
- Engineering Psychologist
- Counsellor
- Psychometrist
- Occupational Therapist
- Audiologist
- Gerontologist
- Speech Language Pathologist
- Neuro Imaging Technician
- Public Health Nurse
- Social Worker

With the many of options a graduate can choose, it can be hard to know where to start when looking for a career. It would be of value to try out as many different jobs, positions, and experiences to help discover what you are good at and enjoy. This will help point you in the right direction when looking for a career path.
Opportunities in Your Program

Certificate in Science Leadership and Communication - obtain a specialized leadership certificate while taking your degree. Visit dal.ca/scienceleadership

Research Labs & Study Centre - volunteer opportunity that requires 1hr./wk. commitment manning the centre in exchange for your own private study space.

NESC/PSYO3010 - Gain Experience as a lab instructor for 1st-year Introduction to Psychology (PSY1011/12). Focus on improving your communication and interpersonal skills, working in groups and presenting scientific information to different audiences.

PSYO 3000/3001 & NESC 3000/3001 - Complete an independent study in the field of psychology and neuroscience under the direction of a supervisor. A great way to gain research experience.

Opportunities at School

Involvement in extra curricular activities will make you a more competitive candidate for positions in your field. It will also give you the chance to focus on any specialties you are interested in. Consider joining a program like the ones listed:

- Dalhousie Association of Psychology Students
- Psychology Tutoring Group Dalhousie
- Undergraduate Neuroscience Society
- DALConnects

The Dalhousie Co-curricular record (CCR) is a great way to track your extra-curricular involvement and display it for employers. Visit dal.ca/CCR to learn more.

Summer Jobs and Volunteer Work

Summer jobs and volunteering are great ways to gain experience, develop specialties, and discover what you like in a job. Check out these resources:

Federal Student Work Experience Program (FSWEP)
A program that provides post-secondary students with experience related to their field of study.

Talent Egg
This website provides postings for internships, co-ops, volunteer opportunities and entry level jobs.

Volunteer Halifax
A posting board where non-profits in Halifax post their volunteer opportunities and positions.

Professional Associations & Conferences

Professional associations and conferences are a great way to network with professionals in your field. This is especially true for graduate students. Below is a sample listing of professional associations and conferences that may be worth examining.

Canadian Psychological Association  www.cpa.ca
Canadian Counselling Association  www.ccpa-accp.ca
Society for Neuroscience  www.sfn.org
Psychology

Psychology is a popular program, and Dalhousie has a high enrollment of students. In fact, the Department of Psychology is the largest in the Maritime region. We have over 30 faculty members with interests that include virtually every area in psychology and excellent facilities for undergraduates. A solid background in general psychology is required before you can specialize in one area such as neuropsychological, clinical, cognitive or social psychology.

Neuroscience

Neuroscience is exceptionally well represented at Dalhousie; faculty members study the nervous system at molecular, cellular, and behavioural levels. The program at Dalhousie, offered through the Psychology & Neuroscience Department with the cooperation of Neuroscientists across campus, is well established and of high quality. Approximately a dozen faculty members work directly in the neuroscience area, and because of our membership in the Neuroscience Institute, we enjoy strong interdisciplinary relationships with the Departments of Anatomy and Neurobiology, Biochemistry, Pharmacology, and Physiology.

Graduate Programs

The department has considerable strength in many research areas including:

- Animal Learning & Behaviour
- Clinical
- Cognitive
- Developmental
- Forensic
- Health Psychology
- Neuropsychology
- Neuroscience
- Perception
- Physiological

Research programs are carried out within the department, local hospitals, schools, and forensic facilities in order to provide the most advanced and relevant research experience possible.

Incoming students must have a 4-year Honours Bachelor degree from a Canadian University or its equivalent elsewhere. The honours degree should be in the area of intended study with at least a B+ average.

[ Dalhousie Psychology webpage ]
There are many other established psychology and neuroscience programs in Canada and abroad. A great resource for examining post-secondary programs is Career Cruising. Career Cruising can be accessed through your Dalhousie MyCareer profile or by visiting the Career & Leadership Development Centre. Below are some notable psychology programs as identified by 2013-2015 QS world University Rankings:

**University of Toronto #18**
Location: Toronto, Ontario
BA, MA, PhD
Subject areas: Collaborative Program In Neuroscience, Environment and Behaviour, Social Psychology, Cognitive Psychology, Physiological Psychology.

**McGill University #20**
Location: Montreal, Quebec
BA, MA, PhD

**University of British Columbia #27**
Location: Vancouver, British Columbia
BA, MA, PhD

**University of Western Ontario #51-100**
Location: London Ontario
BA, MA, PhD
Subject areas: Clinical Neurological Sciences, Neuropharmacology, Cognition and Perception, Development, Industrial Organization, Personality and Measurement, Social.

**York University #51-100**
Location: Toronto, Ontario
BA, MA, PhD

**McMaster University #51-100**
Location: Hamilton, Ontario
BA, MA, PhD
Subject areas: Animal Behaviour, Neuroscience and Behaviour, Cognition/Perception, Developmental, Neural Plasticity, Brain Imaging, Psychophysics, Evolution and Social Behaviour, Systems and Behavioural Analysis.
Labour Market Information

Given the broad array of directions you can take a psychology or neuroscience degree it is difficult to choose a specific sector to analyze the job outlook. So to begin it is important to first identify the sectors that Psychology and Neuroscience students work in. Looking at LinkedIn statistics on Dalhousie alumni in appears that most alumni end up in the following fields:

- Healthcare Services
- Education
- Research
- Community and Social Services
- Entrepreneurship
- Sales
- Operations
- Consulting
- Human Resources
- Media and Communications
- Legal
- Program and Project Management

Projections

The following Labour Market Information (LMI) was taken from jobbank.gc.ca. It represents the 2013-2015 projection period. For jobs with a 4 digit dumber you can use that number on Job Bank to look up additional information on the field.

For more LMI on other jobs within your field click on 'Explore Careers'. If you search by occupations or education program then click on outlook for specific LMI.

Good Outlook ★★★

(3 out of 3 stars)

The best career outlooks for individuals with a psychology/neuroscience degree are: Occupational Therapists (3143), Managers in Health Care (0311), Specialist Physicians (3111), General Practitioners and Family Physicians (3112), Nursing (3233, 3152, 3413), Early Childhood Educators and Assistants (4214), Psychologists (4151), Medical Laboratory Technologists and Pathologists' Assistants (3211), Medical Laboratory Technicians (3212), Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists (3141), and Specialist Physicians (3111).

Fair Outlook ★★★

(2 out of 3 stars)


Limited Outlook ★★

(1 out of 3 stars)

Jobs with a limited outlook within Nova Scotia a psychology or neuroscience graduate could pursue include: senior government managers, government program officers, and secondary school teachers.
Online

MyCareer - https://mycareer.dal.ca/
A resource for Dal students to connect with jobs, employers and career related events on campus.

TalentEgg - tallentegg.ca
Find internships, student jobs, and entry level positions. You can also find great advice and career guides. In addition to this, TalentEgg has challenges to help young people build transferable skills.

Tiger Society - https://tigersociety.dsu.ca/
This site lists all Dalhousie Societies and information about them. You can register to join a society through this site.

Career Beacon - careerbeacon.com
Provides job listings and corporate profiles with a strong presence in Eastern Canada. It can be a great resource for identifying what jobs are in your field and what skills employers are looking for.

Career Cruising - careercruising.com (log on available through MyCareer)
A comprehensive website that provides information to help you make informed choices about your career path.

Employment and Social Development Canada - National Occupational Classification
Contains occupational information and is used to find jobs that exist within Canada’s labour market.

Print


The Everything Guide to Careers in Health Care (2007). Kathy Quan


Psychology as a Major: Is it right for me and what can I do with my degree (2009). Donna Schultheiss.

So, You Want To Be A Doctor, Eh? (2007). Anne Berndl

Careers in Psychology: Opportunities in a changing world (2007). Tara Kuther & Robert Morgan


The Canadian Student & Grad Job Search Directry. Sentor Media inc.

What Color is your Parachute: A practical manual for job-hunters and career-changers (2014)

*All books are located within the Dalhousie Career & Leadership Development Centre

Other

Career Counselling - Dalhousie - Student Union Building 4th Floor
This free service is a confidential and collaborative process in which you work with a career counsellor who assists you in your educational and career decision-making

Career & Leadership Development Centre - Dalhousie - Student Union Building 4th Floor
This resource centre can provide you with all the career tools and resources you need. Drop in for assistance with resumes, cover letters, interviewing and more.

DALConnects - Leadership Program - dal.ca/dalconnects
This program will connect you with leadership opportunities and workshops.
Psychiatric Technician

Position: Full Time - Salary: $45,000-50,000 - Hours: 40

Provides assistance and monitoring of patient activities and procedures, under the direction of a registered nurse, ensuring a safe and secure environment for both patients and employees.

Duties

• Perform direct patient support work.
• Establish therapeutic relationship with patients.
• Observe, report, and record changes in the behaviour of patients.
• Conduct patient group activities.
• Perform safety checks.

Qualifications & Skills

• Bachelor degree in Psychology or related field - Psychiatric technician experience not required.

• Must be able to communicate effectively with departmental personnel, other hospital personnel, physicians, patients and families.

• Must be able to demonstrate patient centered/patient valued behavior.

• Good knowledge of principles, practices and techniques of current methods of mental health care.

• Must be able to demonstrate basic patient care skills and the use of supplies and assigned equipment.

• Must be able to work well within a team

• Must be able to do some heavy lifting and moving.

Make sure you tailor your resume to the position by examining the responsibilities and matching your experiences with them. By examining job ads, you can identify skills/experience gaps you should develop throughout school.

Skills you can hone while volunteering or by doing an internship:

Experience can be developed through practical work.

You may want to list a class that you learned these skills in.

Skills you will have developed throughout your education and can further develop at a summer job.

May want to join a society or varsity team to demonstrate this skill.
Penelope Psychology
226 Vernon Street • Halifax, NS • B3R 5T9
Phone: (902)-472-9760 • Email: penelopepsychology@dal.ca

Skills Summary

• Demonstrates strong time management through never missing a deadline
• Conducted detailed and extensive research through honours and class projects
• Exceptional oral and written communication skills from writing and defending a thesis
• Team player; excels in group and individual settings
• Shows initiative, reliability, and excellent problem throughout several leadership roles
• Combined 3 years of experience in laboratory setting

Education

Bachelor of Science, Major in Neuroscience (Honours) 2011-2015
Dalhousie University, Halifax, NS
• GPA 3.6

Relevant Experience

Meal Assistant Volunteer 2012-Current
Nova Scotia Health Authority, Halifax, NS
• Established problem solving strategies to ensure the patients were sufficiently fed and satisfied
• Collaborated with hospital staff and other volunteers to ensure and promote the comfort of the patients by participating in activities around the table
• Communicated and started conversation with patients in the halls to confirm their well-being

Research Volunteer 2013-2015
Dr. Neil Neuro’s Brain Lab, Dalhousie University, Halifax, NS
• Conducted EEG experiments on more than 20 volunteer participants while following proper ethical and laboratory protocol
• Scheduled numerous participants weekly, based on lab and their own availability
• Collaborated with other lab members and provided input on scholarly papers, presentations, and actively contributed in other lab discussions

Teaching Assistant 2013-2015
Dalhousie University, Halifax, NS
• Directed a lab of 25 students enrolled in an introductory psychology course
• Evaluated student’s weekly assignments and provided feedback on ways to increase their research and problem solving skills
• Organized the weekly lab assignments with a team of 10 other TAs while ensuring that the assignments related to the current lecture material
Head Leader - Orientation Week Sept 2013-2015
Leader - Orientation Week Sept 2012
DSU, Dalhousie University, Halifax, NS

- Coordinated a diverse team of 6 orientation leaders where we created, organized, and implemented various strategies that were aimed to engage first year students which included inclusive house cheers and social gathering to promote a welcoming and respectful environment at Dalhousie.
- Communicated actively to students by developing a strategic marketing strategy involving the orientation leaders which resulted in an increasing number of students attending each event.

Sports Representative 2013-2014
Undergraduate Neuroscience Society, Dalhousie University, Halifax, NS

- Recruited players for 4 sports teams to represent neuroscience in Dalhousie’s intramural league.
- Corresponded with players and captains to ensure that game times and locations were known.

Awards and Certifications

Dean’s List 2012-2015
Dalhousie University

Change Agent Certificate 2015
DALConnects, Dalhousie University

First Aid / CPR exp. 2018
St. John’s Ambulance
For more information, comments, or questions please contact:

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