



Bachelor of Science Education (BEdSc) UCC

Frequently Asked Questions 24/1/'23

This information sheet has been designed to answer questions that have been frequently asked by students about the programme. The official documentation provided by UCC contains the definitive rules and regulations and all prospective science education students are recommended to read this documentation on the UCC website. The main information that is available for the BEdSc is summarised as follows:

1. An overall summary of the programme and documentation may be found at:

<https://www.ucc.ie/en/education/learn/>

2. This information sheet may be downloaded from:

<https://www.ucc.ie/en/education/programme/faqs/#bsc-in-science-education-queries>

It will be helpful to remember when reading the answers to the following questions that one full year of student workload is equivalent to 60 ECTS credits. All credits referred to in this document refer to ECTS credits as this is the system used throughout the European Union. (Some universities in the UK use a different system called CAT credits)

1. How do I become a qualified science teacher?

There are two main routes to becoming a qualified science teacher:

1. You undertake a Bachelor of Science Education degree in which you study both science and education as part of the degree. The Bachelor of Science Education degree (BEdSc) in UCC is an example of this type of degree. This route is often referred to as the **concurrent model** of teacher training. The Bachelor of Science Education degree was initiated in UCC in 2000.
2. You undertake a BSc degree followed by a two-year course called the *Professional Master of Education* (PME). In former years, the PME course was called the *Professional Diploma in Education* (PDE) and *Higher Diploma in Education* (HDE). This route of a BSc degree followed by a teaching qualification is often referred to as the **consecutive model** of teacher training.

2. How long does it take to become a fully qualified science teacher via the Bachelor of Science Education route?

It takes 4 years via the BEdSc route. At the end of this four-year period, you will be fully qualified to teach your two specialist subjects to Leaving Certificate level and to teach Junior cycle Science.

3. How long does it take to become a qualified science teacher via the BSc + PME route?

It takes 6 years to qualify as a science teacher via the BSc + PME route, i.e. 4 years studying for the BSc degree and two years for the PME.

4. Is the BEdSc degree in UCC recognised by the Teaching Council?

The Bachelor of Science Education degree has been fully recognised by the Teaching Council since the degree was first set up in 2000. The original Bachelor of Science Education programme involved students undertaking a common first year programme which they entered through CK402, CK404, CK406 and CK408. Graduates of the original programme were qualified to teach one Leaving Certificate subject. This “new” Bachelor of Science Education programme is being introduced in 2023 in which applicants will enter via CK413 and will qualify to teach two Leaving Certificate subjects. At the time of writing, all programmes in the School of Education are undergoing reaccreditation by the Teaching Council.

5. If I graduate with the Bachelor of Science Education degree from UCC, will I be a fully qualified science teacher?

Yes, you will be a fully qualified science teacher when you graduate with the Bachelor of Science Education degree and you do not have to gain a further qualification in order to be recognised as a qualified science teacher by the Teaching Council.

6. Do I have to undertake the PME (Professional Master of Education) course when the BEdSc is completed?

No. Graduates of the BEdSc are fully qualified science teachers and do not need to undertake the PME course.

7. How do I apply for the Bachelor of Science Education programme in UCC?

You apply via CAO through entry route CK413. On registration for the programme, you choose one of the following five routes:

Route I: Biology + Chemistry

Route II : Physics + Mathematics

Route III : Computer Science + Mathematics

Route IV: Chemistry + Mathematics

Route V: Computer Science + Chemistry

Note: If you are the holder of a level 7 or level 8 degree, you may apply through the Direct Entry route into third year. Details about this route are given in the answer to Q 16.

8. I am not sure about which route to take. How can I find out more about each route?

When you have obtained a place on the programme, a discussion on each route will take place during your Induction Seminar and this will help you to decide on your preferred route.

9. On graduation from the programme, what subjects will I be qualified to teach to Leaving Certificate standard?

You will be qualified to teach the two specialist subjects in the route that you have followed.

10. Will I be qualified to teach Junior Cycle science on graduation from the programme?

Yes. Graduates of the BEdSc degree are automatically recognised by the Teaching Council as being qualified to teach Junior Cycle science.

11. What subjects will I be studying in first year?

In first year you will study your two specialist science subjects and science education. A list of all subjects studied in first year is available in the UCC Undergraduate Calendar. A copy of this calendar may be downloaded from:

https://issuu.com/discoverucc/docs/ucc_20prospectus_20development_20for_20higher_20op

Full details about each individual module are given in the UCC book of modules which may be viewed at:

<https://ucc-ie-public.courseleaf.com/modules/>

12. What subjects will I be studying in second year, third year and fourth year?

In second year you continue with your study of your two specialist subjects and science education. The science education modules involve lectures, tutorials, seminars, laboratory practical work and undertake school placement in a secondary school.

In third year, you continue with your study of your two specialist subjects, science education and school placement in a secondary school.

In fourth year, you will study science education, general education topics and undertake school placement. .

13 . Can I take additional modules while I am an undergraduate student undertaking the BEdSc in UCC in order to gain a qualification to teach a third Leaving Certificate subject?

It is not possible to take extra modules in any one year as the maximum number of ECTS credits that can be taken in any one year is 60 credits. The Bologna Process limits undergraduate degrees to 180 – 240 ECTS credits (<http://www.eua.be/eua-work-and-policy-area/building-the-european-higher-education-area/bologna-basics/Bologna-an-overview-of-the-main-elements.aspx>)

It is important to remember that 1 ECTS credit corresponds to a student workload of 25 – 30 hours (http://ec.europa.eu/education/tools/docs/ects-guide_en.pdf)

Thus, 60 credits over the year corresponds to 1500 – 1800 hours workload for students. Taking into account the academic year (e.g. 24 weeks) and time for examinations (e.g. 4 weeks), 60 ECTS credits corresponds to a weekly workload of 1500 – 1800 hours divided by 28, i.e. equivalent to 54 – 64 hours per week. It would be most unfair on students to expect them to work more than this number of hours without lowering the standard of the degree.

14. How does the Teaching Practice Placement component of the BEdSc programme operate?

The Education modules in second and third year BEdSc may be summarised as follows:

Second year

ED2103 Science Education I (10 credits)

ED2104 Teaching Practice Placement Science Education I (10 credits)

Third Year

ED3101 Science Education II (15 credits)

ED3102 Teaching Practice Placement Science Education II (15 credits)

Note that in second year and third year you participate in Teaching Practice Placement where you gain experience of science teaching.

In second year, Teaching Placement usually begins in late September or early October. This enables you to attend some lectures in Education to prepare you for Teaching Placement. It also enables you to finalise your timetable of science lectures, education lectures, practicals, tutorials, etc. so that you can show the school when you are free to fit in your Teaching Placement lessons. The lessons that you teach during Teaching Placement are fitted in around UCC lectures and lab practical work. Under no circumstances can you skip lectures or other UCC activities to undertake Teaching placement.

Teaching placement takes place in local secondary schools (usually in Cork City and county, Waterford or Kerry) over a 10 week period and involves teaching of 2 hours per week (usually 3 × 40 minute lessons) + 1 hour of mentoring in the school. During this time you will receive two visits from your Teaching Practice supervisor.

Fourth Year

In fourth year, all modules are Education modules. Full details of these modules are given in the UCC College Calendar. In fourth year, the school placement module (ED4102) involves you teaching over the entire school year in a secondary for 4 hours per week (usually 6 × 40 minute periods) or a minimum of 140 hours approximately over the year. In addition, you will be involved in various associated activities in school. You will receive supervision visits from your Teaching Practice supervisors during this time. In fourth year, your lectures in UCC will take place on Tuesday afternoons (2 – 6 p.m.), Weds (2 – 5 p.m.) and on Thursday afternoons (2 – 6 p.m.). Thus you are free to teach in your placement school all day on Monday, Tuesday 9 – 1 p.m., Weds 9 – 1 p.m. Thursday 9 – 1 p.m. and all day on Friday.

Note: Payment is not made for teaching hours that fall within the compulsory minimum number of hours per week specified above. However, if you engage in additional teaching above the minimum number of hours, it may be possible to receive payment from your teaching placement school if funding is available.

15. How is the BEdSc course assessed?

The course is assessed by means of terminal written examinations and continuous assessment. Details of the assessment of each individual module are given on the UCC website <http://www.ucc.ie/modules/>

16. What is the "Direct Entry" route into the BEdSc?

This entry route is designed for graduates of Physics or Chemistry or Biology or Agricultural Science or Computer Studies who wish to teach their specialist subject(s) to the highest standard at secondary school level. Applicants who hold a degree (at least NFQ Level 7) in Physics or Chemistry or Biology or Agricultural Science or Computer Studies which satisfies the requirements of the Teaching Council for recognition to teach the subject to the highest level in secondary school or an equivalent qualification may enter this programme in Third Year and take ED1101, ED1102, ED2103, ED2104, ED3101, ED3102 in Third Year before proceeding to Fourth Year. Students who enter the programme via this route must pass the above modules in Third Year before proceeding to Fourth Year.

To facilitate direct entry students, in third year all lectures, tutorials, laboratory practicals, etc are held on Weds evenings in UCC from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. In addition, in third year you will participate in Teaching Placement in a local school (3 hours per week

minimum). In third year you will receive four supervision visits from your Teaching Placement supervisor during the year.

In fourth year, the school placement module (ED4102) involves you teaching over the entire school year for 4 hours per week (usually 6 × 40 minute periods). In addition, you will be involved in various associated activities in school. You will receive four supervised visits from your Teaching Practice supervisors during this time. In fourth year, your lectures in UCC will take place on Tuesday afternoons (2 – 6 p.m.), Weds (2 – 5 p.m.) and on Thursday afternoons (2 – 6 p.m.). Thus you are free to teach in your placement school all day on Monday, Tuesday 9 – 1 p.m., Weds 9 – 1 p.m. Thursday 9 – 1 p.m. and all day on Friday.

An application form to enter the BEdSc degree via the Direct Entry route may be obtained from the Admissions Office UCC (admissions@ucc.ie) or may be downloaded from <http://www.ucc.ie/en/study/undergrad/how/>

Completed application forms to enter the BEdSc Direct Entry route must be submitted to the Undergraduate Admissions Office, West Wing, UCC, Tel (021) 4903571. The closing date for applications is usually mid June but it may be possible to get a late application accepted if there are any vacancies still available after the closing date. Once your application is officially approved and you are set up on the students' database and the fee paid, you will be registered in August prior to the commencement of the programme. If you have any queries about the Direct Entry route, please contact the Programme Director (d.kennedy@ucc.ie).

If you are currently in third year of a level 7 degree programme, please wait until you have your academic transcript confirming that you have passed your level 7 degree before you apply for a place on the programme via the Direct Entry route. If you do not have your exam results before the closing date, you may submit your application as soon as possible after the closing date.

If you are entering the BScEd programme via the Direct Entry route from a level 7 programme, the fee is €5400 in third year and €3130 in fourth year. (The fee is lower in fourth year as you have not undertaken a fourth year in your undergraduate degree previously and UCC can claim the tuition fees from the Government on your behalf). This amount of €3130 includes the student contribution fee of €3000 and the capitation fee of €130.

If you are entering the BScEd programme via the Direct Entry route from a level 8 programme, the fee is €5400 in third year and €5400 in fourth year.

If you identify any shortfalls in your qualifications for recognition by the Teaching Council, please contact the Programme Director to discuss taking additional modules to satisfy these shortfalls. There is no extra charge to the above fees for additional modules undertaken by you to satisfy Teaching Council requirements.

Note re possible shortfalls in your science modules to satisfy Teaching Council requirements:

In former years the Teaching Council provided a service that enabled Direct Entry students to submit their qualifications to the Teaching Council for prior approval before entering the BEdSc degree. This service is no longer provided by the Teaching Council. Hence, it is important that you are aware that the onus is on you to ensure that you meet the subject requirements for registration with the Teaching Council after graduation. The subject requirements may be found at:

<https://www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/news-events/latest-news/curricular-subject-requirements.pdf>

Please study the subject requirements for your own specialist area and check that you satisfy these requirements. If you are entering a level 7 or level 8 programme with the intention of undertaking a career in science teaching via the Direct Entry route, you are advised to contact the Director of the relevant programme in that institution and enquire if the programme satisfies the requirements of the Teaching Council.

Please note that it is recommended that you have a minimum of 10 ECTS credits in biology, 10 ECTS credits in chemistry and 10 ECTS credits in physics to assist you to teach Junior Cycle science.

If you have already graduated from a level 7 or level 8 programme and identify any shortfalls in your qualifications, please contact the Programme Director of the BEdSc to discuss taking additional modules to satisfy these shortfalls. Since your education lectures in third year take place on Weds evenings, then third year is a good time to make up any shortfalls identified by you. Requests for registration for additional modules must be made through the Programme Director. The Programme Director will then arrange for you to undertake these additional modules free of charge in UCC.

If the Teaching Council identifies any shortfalls after you have graduated, then you will be required to make up for these shortfalls as specified by the Teaching Council. Hence, it is important that you identify any shortfalls when applying for the programme.

17. I have successfully completed a first year science course in another third level institution. Is it possible to transfer into second year of the Bachelor of Science Education degree in UCC?

Information about transferring from one institution to another (“Advanced Entry”) is available at

<https://www.ucc.ie/en/study/undergrad/entryreqs/transferadvancedentry/>

Advanced entry is **not** processed by the Programme Director of the Bachelor of Science Education degree but rather by CAO.

18. What is the situation about Garda vetting?

As outlined in the UCC Undergraduate Prospectus, a condition of enrolment on the Science Education programme is that all incoming students must have cleared the vetting process in accordance with university policy and the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012.

Further information may be found at:

<https://www.ucc.ie/en/study/undergrad/admissionspolicies/>

19. What are the fitness to practice requirement of the programme?

Full details of the Fitness to Practice requirements may be found at:

<https://www.ucc.ie/en/academicgov/aago-policies/fitnesstopractise/>

20. I would like to speak to some former graduates of the BEdSc, is this possible?

Since the programme has been running since 2000, there are many former graduates teaching in schools throughout the country. If you wish to speak to any of these former graduates of the programme, please contact the Programme Director (contact details below) and he will be happy to put you in touch with some of these graduates.

21. I would like to travel after doing this degree and I am wondering if it is recognised in countries outside of Ireland?

The degree is fully recognised outside of Ireland and several of our former graduates are teaching abroad.

22. If I do not obtain sufficient points to gain a place on the BEdSc programme via CK413, is it possible to obtain a place via a Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) course?

UCC has a QQI FET route that allows entry into specific Science programmes. A student would need to undertake a QQI FETAC award for a year and then compete for a place.

There are certain requirements that will need to be met and places are allocated on a competitive basis according to quotas. Further details may be found at:

<http://www.ucc.ie/en/study/undergrad/fetac/>

23. Is there any video clip summarising the BEdSc programme?

A short (19 min) video clip giving an overview of the programme may be found at:

<https://media.heanet.ie/page/459c6a0aa3124e4cad6eb3b3e5f7e554>

If you have any questions which are not answered in this information sheet, please contact:

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