



St Mary's
University College
Belfast
A College of Queen's University

ENTRY
2026



ENTRY GUIDELINES

For Undergraduate Courses

Irish Leaving Certificate Qualifications
Access Course Qualifications



St Mary's University College is proud of its reputation as a specialist, distinctive and high performing institution of higher education. It offers a friendly, welcoming environment where staff and students work together, and the students are at the core of everything.

St Mary's offers degree programmes in Initial Teacher Education (Primary and Post-Primary), and in Liberal Arts. It is also a leading centre for teacher education in the Irish medium. The Bachelor of Education (BEd) degree programme leads to a professional qualification to teach in schools. The Bachelor of Liberal Arts (BA) opens up a wide variety of career opportunities in different fields.

St Mary's enjoys an excellent partnership with Queen's University, Belfast in which the College is autonomous but, at the same time, enjoys a close relationship of collaborative provision with this high status Russell Group university. The College has a good profile of international student mobility with students often choosing to complete part of their degree programme at partner universities abroad. The College welcomes students from all sections of the community and works for the development of the whole person through an emphasis on great pastoral care.



St Mary's offers three full-time undergraduate programmes:



BEd (Hons) Primary Degree Programme (Primary School Teacher)



- Duration:** 4 years.
- Outcome:** Graduates are fully competent, reflective teaching professionals.
- Degree structure:** 5 strands:
- **Education Studies**
 - **Key Skills**
 - **Professional Development and School Experience**
 - **Curriculum Studies**
 - **Subject Study and Subject Application**
- Main subject study:** Choice of 8 subjects (English, History, Irish, Mathematics, Music, Physical Education, Religious Studies, or Science).
- Optional course:** Students can also follow a three year certificate course in Religious Education which qualifies them to teach religion in post-primary schools, as well as meeting the requirements for teaching certification in Catholic primary schools.
- Prerequisites:** Minimum Junior Certificate grade O4 (or equivalent) in English Language and Mathematics. Minimum Junior Certificate Science, grade O4 (higher level).
- BEd interview:** Entry to the programme depends on a successful interview.



BEd (Hons) Post-Primary Degree Programme (Post-Primary School Teacher)

- Duration:** 4 years.
- Outcome:** Graduates are fully competent, reflective teaching professionals.
- Degree structure:** 4 strands:
- **Education Studies**
 - **Key Skills**
 - **Professional Development and School Experience**
 - **Subject Study and Subject Application**
- Main subject study:** Choice of 4 main subjects (Business Studies, Mathematics, Religious Studies, or Technology & Design).
- Subsidiary subject:** Choice of English, History, ICT, or Science. Applicants for Technology & Design will have ICT designated as their subsidiary subject. Applicants taking Science as their subsidiary subject require two of the following subjects at grade O4 or above (ordinary level): Biology, Chemistry, and Physics.
- Optional course:** Students can also follow a three year certificate course in Religious Education which qualifies them to teach religion in post-primary schools, as well as meeting the requirements for teaching certification in Catholic primary schools.
- Prerequisites:** Minimum Junior Certificate grade O4 (or equivalent) in English Language and Mathematics.
- BEd interview:** Entry to the programme depends on a successful interview.





BA (Hons) Liberal Arts Degree Programme

- Duration:** 3 years.
- Outcome:** Graduates gain a multi-disciplinary degree that can lead to postgraduate study or a range of employment opportunities in both the public and private sectors as well as the community, voluntary and charity sectors.
- Degree structure:** 3 strands
- **Human Development Studies**
 - **International Studies**
 - **Subject Study**
- Main subject study:** Choice of 6 subjects (Business Studies, English, History, Irish, Physical Education, or Religious Studies).
- Prerequisites:** Minimum Junior Certificate grade O4 (or equivalent) in English Language and Mathematics.

Applicants Presenting Irish Leaving Certificate Qualifications

- Applicants must pass a minimum of five subjects at higher level for admission to BEd degree and BA Liberal Arts degree programmes.
- Where competition for places is high, six Leaving Certificate grades will be required.
- Applicants must have achieved at least a grade O4 in English and in Mathematics. Applicants for BEd Primary degree programmes other than Science must present Biology, Chemistry or Physics at Leaving Certificate or have Junior Certificate Science, grade O4 (higher level).
- Applicants for BEd Primary with Science require two science subjects from Biology, Chemistry, and Physics with a minimum of one at Leaving Certificate Higher Level and one at Ordinary Level (O4).

BEd (Hons) Primary Subject Requirements

	ILC (Higher) Subject Requirement	
ENGLISH	H2 in English Literature	
HISTORY	H3 in History	
IRISH	H3 in Irish	
MATHEMATICS	H2 in Mathematics	
MUSIC	H3 in Music or acceptable alternative	N1
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	No specific subject requirement	
RELIGIOUS STUDIES	H2 in Religious Studies	
SCIENCE	H3 in Biology, Chemistry or Physics	N3

BEd (Hons) Post-Primary Subject Requirements

	ILC (Higher) Subject Requirement	
BUSINESS STUDIES	H3 in Business Studies or Accounting or Economics	N2
MATHEMATICS	H3 in Mathematics	N2
RELIGIOUS STUDIES	H2 in Religious Studies	N2
TECHNOLOGY & DESIGN	H3 in T&D, or O4 in ordinary level T&D with H3 in higher level Art or Computing or Physics or Construction or Engineering	

Questions regarding entry qualifications not listed in this brochure should be directed to the Academic Registry prior to submitting an application:

Email: admissions@smucb.ac.uk



Applicants Presenting Leaving Certificate Qualifications

BA (Hons) Liberal Arts Subject Requirements

	ILC (Higher) Subject Requirement
BUSINESS STUDIES	No specific subject required
ENGLISH	H4 in English Literature
HISTORY	No specific subject required
IRISH	H4 in Irish
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	No specific subject required
RELIGIOUS STUDIES	H4 in Religious Studies





Additional Subject Requirement Notes

- N1.** All applicants for Music should have a Grade 5 Music Theory and a Grade 6 or above Performance.
- N2.** Applicants presenting Irish Leaving Certificate qualifications who are taking Science as their Post-Primary subsidiary subject require two of the following subjects at grade O4 or above (ordinary level): Biology, Chemistry, Physics.
- N3.** Applications to BEd Primary with Science require two Science subjects from Biology, Chemistry or Physics with a minimum of one at Leaving Certificate Higher Level (H3) and one at Ordinary Level (O4).

Applicants Presenting Access Course Qualifications

BEd Honours Primary Subject Requirements

	Access Course Requirements	
ENGLISH	Minimum two modules specialising in English Literature	
HISTORY	Minimum two modules specialising in History	
MATHEMATICS	Minimum four modules specialising in Mathematics	
MUSIC	Certificate in Foundation Studies in Music with Commendation	N1
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	No specific subject	
SCIENCE	Modules specialising in Science must include Biology, Chemistry and Physics	

BEd Honours Post-Primary Subject Requirements

	Access Course Requirements
BUSINESS STUDIES	Minimum two modules specialising in Business

BA Honours Liberal Arts Subject Requirements

	Access Course Requirements
BUSINESS STUDIES	No specific subject
ENGLISH	Minimum two modules specialising in English Literature
HISTORY	No specific subject
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	No specific subject



Why Study at St Mary's?

Welcoming, Friendly Atmosphere

St Mary's has a real community feel about it and is a place where students are at the core of everything. Our students say that they feel genuinely cared for and supported in their studies and that they are not just a number.

St Mary's is a College of Queen's University

Students have access to the facilities of both campuses such as the McClay library and the PEC. Students also graduate with a degree from Queen's which is a member of the Russell Group.

Fantastic Services for Students

At St Mary's our students come first, so we offer academic, pastoral, and financial support as well as great IT and Library services, a Writing Centre, a Careers Service, and the Students' Union.

Subject Study

The College is a place where students can study a subject that they love and they can combine this with a professional qualification such as teaching. Alternatively, they can choose to study a subject in combination with the diverse and interesting modules within Liberal Arts such as politics, ethics, philosophy, economics, or international studies.

Small Classes

At St Mary's the small classes means that it's easy to get to know the other students and the lecturers. In each class there is an excellent student-tutor ratio which allows timely feedback on assignments and quick access to help when needed.

Excellent Teaching

The enthusiastic lecturers are very knowledgeable and have interesting, interactive styles of teaching.

Social Life

Everyone knows everyone at St Mary's which makes for a great social life. The Students' Union organise legendary nights out and offer many services to assist students with welfare, accommodation, and financial advice.

Clubs and Societies

There are a great range of college clubs and societies, so there's something for everyone at St Mary's. The sports teams have a fantastic success rate for a small college, and everyone gets a chance to play.

Study Abroad

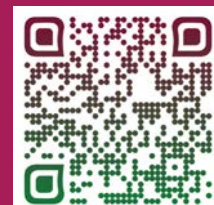
There are several Study Abroad opportunities including students taking a full year at a college in USA and shorter study periods with one of our partner universities in Europe.

Work Placements

The College offers students several opportunities to gain valuable work experience during their degree programme. Students can gain knowledge and skills in a variety of sectors that really prepare them for the world of work. There's also careers advice tailored to individual need.

Location

St Mary's is located in the Gaeltacht area of West Belfast adjacent to the Royal Victoria Hospital. The city centre is only a five-minute journey on the Glider service.





How to Apply

All applications must be made directly to the College as St Mary's is not a member of the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS). Online application forms can be accessed using the QR Code below.

The Application deadline for undergraduate degree programmes is Wednesday 21st January, 2026.

St Mary's welcomes applications from students with specific needs. The College's disability policy outlines its commitment to make every reasonable effort to accommodate a student with a disability, long-term medical condition, or specific learning difficulty. To find out more contact:

The Academic Registry
St Mary's University College
191 Falls Road
Belfast BT12 6FE
Tel: +44 (0)28 9026 8320
Email: admissions@smucb.ac.uk

