OPEN THE DOOR TO HIGH QUALITY TEACHER PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

PROSPECTUS

MASTER OF EDUCATION 2025-2026

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

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A College of Queen's University

On behalf of the Professional Development Team at St Mary's, I am very pleased to introduce our programme of research-informed and highly relevant in-service teacher education at Masters level. We believe that the distinctive educational ethos of St Mary's provides a platform for the highest standard of Teacher Professional Learning. Our ethos also emphasises high levels of pastoral care and individual attention for the learner, and we know this is important for busy professionals. Please take a look at what our programme offers you and contact d.hazzard@smucb.ac.uk if you have any queries.

Dr Donna Hazzard

CONTENTS

WELCOME

Dear Colleague in Education

The Master of Education programme (MEd) of St Mary's is designed around professional competences for the teaching profession. The programme has been developed to advance teacher professional learning through an integration of educational theory and classroom practice.

We believe that the professional development courses outlined in this prospectus provide teachers with the opportunity to expand their knowledge and understanding of the current practices and processes of pedagogy, leadership and school improvement.

Further, as professional learning by its very nature is organic and evolutionary, we have developed an MEd programme which is a synthesis of applied research with the on-going sharing of professional experience and expertise.

In recent years we have made delivery of the MEd programme more flexible to provide greater choice and to facilitate how students want to learn.

The educational community of Northern Ireland wishes for our school system to be consistently high-performing and to achieve that will require our teachers to continue to develop their knowledge and skills.

We trust you will find that our range of provision meets the professional needs of teachers and those of their schools. Please do not hesitate to contact the College if you require further information.

Best wishes

Professor Peter B. Finn, KSG
Principal
St Mary's University College Belfast

Peter Finn@Anorthosis87   Peter Finn

INTRODUCTION

General Information
The contribution of St Mary's to Teacher Professional Learning consists of a range of accredited modules that may be taken on a stand-alone basis or that may contribute to one of the following awards:

- Postgraduate Certificate in Education Studies
- Postgraduate Diploma in Education Studies
- Master of Education

Entrance Requirements
Candidates for admission to the Masters programme in Education should normally hold either:

(a) Qualified teacher status and an honours degree or equivalent qualification or
(b) An honours degree or equivalent qualification with at least two years' professional experience in an educational, training or professionally related context.

Application Procedure
Application for a new part-time MEd course can be made online at https://bit.ly/44wDuoj

or continuing students at

Click here

Academic Registry Office
St Mary's University College
191 Falls Road
Belfast BT12 6FE

Tel: +44 (0)28 9026 8320

Application forms for entry to the MEd programme should be submitted to the Academic Registry Office no later than two weeks prior to the commencement of a course.

Late applications will be considered subject to the availability of places.

Finance
Students wishing to complete a course do so on a self-funding basis though financial support may be sought from a Board of Governors. In the academic year 2025-26 the following fees will apply:

M-Level points	Fee
10	£406
20	£811
30	£1,217
60	£2,434
Bridging application fee	£48
Bridging assignment fee	£190

Postgraduate Tuition Fee Loan
Students starting a postgraduate course are able to apply for a Postgraduate Tuition Fee Loan (PG TFL) of up to £6,500.00. The PG TFL is non-means tested and is paid directly to the Higher Education provider.

For further information please contact the College Finance Office, telephone 028 9026 8234.

Academic Regulations
The formal regulations that appear in the Queen's University Calendar apply to all participants.

Attendance
Students are expected to attend all planned teaching sessions and, if unable to do so, to inform the course tutor.

Programme Aims
St Mary's provides teachers and education-related professionals with a stimulating, welcoming and supportive environment in which they have the opportunity to work alongside a strong community of fellow professionals. The programme has the following aims:

- Embed a culture of self-evaluation by providing opportunity for critical reflection.
- Ensure that teachers receive targeted and supportive professional development, needed to strengthen leadership capacity and raise achievement in schools.
- Facilitate school improvement by encouraging and promoting professional collaboration and sharing of best practice.
- Inspire creativity, passion and optimism in the teaching profession.
- Make educational excellence and success accessible to all.
- Nurture the talent and ambition of teachers who are committed to their own professional development.
- Promote personal excellence, teamwork and leadership among educational professionals.
- Support career-long professional development
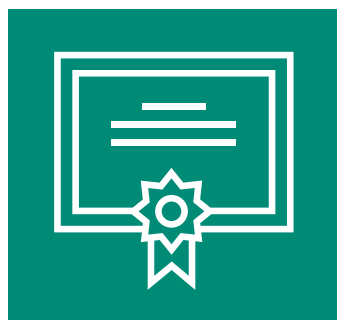
M-LEVEL ACCREDITED COURSES

Postgraduate Certificate in Educational Studies

The Postgraduate Certificate is awarded to those students who have accumulated 60 MEd credit points. The course may be completed over one academic year, or students may build up the required number of modules over a period of up to five years. Students can select modules from any option listed in this booklet.

Postgraduate Diploma in Educational Studies

The Postgraduate Diploma is awarded to those students who have accumulated 120 MEd credit points. Students may build up the required number of modules for a period of up to five years. In order to obtain a named Postgraduate Diploma in a specialist option, students must take a minimum of two modules within the selected option.

Master of Education

The MEd is awarded to those students who have accumulated 180 MEd credit points which include a 15,000-20,000 word dissertation. The dissertation is equivalent to 60 MEd credit points. Students may build up the required number of taught modules and complete the dissertation over a period of up to five years.

In order to obtain a Masters degree in a specialist option, students must take a minimum of two modules within the option, an Educational Research Methods module, and one other module of their choice, as well as complete an MEd dissertation worth 60 MEd credit points.

Supervised Individual Study Module
In exceptional circumstances, for example, in the case of there being no suitable alternative to a withdrawn module, candidates may apply to St Mary's to take a Supervised Individual Study (SIS) module. Successful completion of an SIS module requires the satisfactory assessment of a supervised assignment of 5,000 words in a field of study covered by the module it replaces. The assignment must be carried out and submitted in the same time frame as a taught module.

Assessment
All accredited modules are assessed by coursework. There are no formal, written examinations. Results are made available following the External Examination process. This may take up to eight weeks to complete. Results for the dissertations and details of awards are made available in December, in time for Christmas graduation at the University. Distinction or commendation may be awarded on the recommendation of the Board of Examiners.

Awards
A pass with commendation will be awarded to those graduating with a Master of Education, Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate who achieve an average mark of at least 60%.

A pass with distinction will be awarded to those graduating with a Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate who achieve an average mark of at least 70%.

A pass with distinction will be awarded to Master of Education candidates only when the following three conditions have been satisfied: an overall programme mark of 70+ is achieved in the dissertation module and a weighted average of 65+ is achieved in the other modules.

Dissertation Students
Successful completion of the research methods module is a requirement before a student can proceed to dissertation study. Dissertation students must also have their dissertation proposal formally approved by the MEd Programme Team in St Mary's.

Students whose dissertation research merits dissemination to the rest of the profession will be invited to make an electronic version of their dissertation available to the College library catalogue.

Recognition of Prior Learning
Some Questions and Answers

1. What is Recognition of Prior Learning?

St Mary's University College invites applications to its degree programmes from all prospective students who possess the ability, knowledge and experience required to benefit from them. St Mary's demonstrates its commitment to this aspiration through its widening participation schemes, its arrangements for credit accumulation and transfer, and the recognition of prior learning. St Mary's operates a Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) scheme which recognises relevant prior learning for admission and/or credit purposes.

2. What does Recognition of Prior Learning actually mean in practice?

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is the generic term used for demonstrated learning that has occurred at some time in the past. It encompasses:

i. Recognition of Prior Certificated Learning (RPCL)
    The process through which previously formally assessed academic learning for which credit has been award is considered and, as appropriate, recognised for academic purposes. This is also known as credit transfer where the credits were awarded by another Higher Education (HE) provider.

For example, students may be awarded credit of up to 30 CATS M-level points for completed awards, such as the PGCE, and therefore gain exemption from optional taught modules of the programme.

ii. Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL)
    The process through which an applicant reflects on experiences on learning achieved outside education or training systems, which is assessed and, as appropriate, recognised for academic purposes.

    St Mary's recognises that some prospective students may not be able to evidence that they meet St Mary's entry requirements though the accepted qualifications detailed in College publications, but they are able to provide substantial and relevant alternative evidence that they have the potential to succeed on their chosen programme. This policy may be used in these circumstances. Copies of the policy and the relevant application forms are available from the Academic Registry.

3. How do I apply for Recognition of Prior Learning?

A request for recognition of prior learning should be made at the time of application to the MEd programme using the RPL Application Form (available from the Academic Registry). Where this is made prior to admission, the RPL Application Form should be submitted at the same time as the application for entry.

Each application will be considered on an individual basis and the applicant will be notified in writing.

Those students who are currently studying or have already studied on an MEd programme at another UK university or recognised institution and who wish to transfer to the St Mary's programme are required to pay a RPL application fee of £48. The maximum credit which can be transferred for postgraduate courses taken at another institution is one third of the total required for the course. This equates to 60 CATS points towards a Masters degree.

All awards for credit transfer including PGCE, must have been completed within a 10 year time frame on admission to the programme.

4. Are there any caveats?

In the event that a student holds two awards which could contribute credit transfer, credit may be given for one award only. All students gaining credit should also note that they will be required to complete two of the core modules for any named award; otherwise, they will be awarded an MEd/PG Diploma in Educational Studies.

A successful MEd will be considered to be the completion of a cycle of study and may not contribute to a new PG Certificate or PG Diploma. If after completing an MEd you wish to study for an PG Certificate or PG Diploma, you must begin a new cycle of study.

5. Can I be accredited for the award of Professional Qualification for Headship (PQH)?

An application for credit transfer in respect of a completed PQH (NI) will be considered for the award of a maximum of 60 MEd points. This is conditional upon successful completion of the 'bridging' process comprising the submission of a 5,000 word reflective assignment assessed as satisfactory at Masters level. The application process and fee for credit transfer are as above. The fee for the bridging process is detailed above under Finance.

All students gaining credit for a PQH should note that they will be required to complete two of the core modules for any named award; otherwise, they will be awarded a MEd/PG Diploma in Educational Studies. Exemption cannot be gained for the MEd dissertation or the compulsory research module.

Applications for credit transfer in respect of the PQH (NI) qualification must normally be made within five years of obtaining the award.

Specialist options apply to the Master of Education and Postgraduate Diploma courses only.
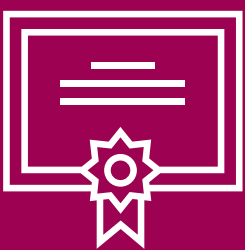
MEd/PG DIPLOMA SPECIALIST OPTIONS

Specialist options apply to the Master of Education and Postgraduate Diploma courses only. For the purpose of continuity, students are advised to take a specialist option. The research module is compulsory for anyone wishing to undertake the MEd dissertation. To be awarded a named Masters degree, the dissertation must also be in the area of study of the specialist option. The remaining module(s), subject to availability and timetable restrictions, may be chosen from the full range of modules detailed in the prospectus.

Students should note that not every module will be available every year within a course of study. The following is a list of specialist options:

- Curriculum Development and Primary Education
- Developing Physical Education, School Sport and Coaching Science
- Early Years Education
- Irish and Irish-Medium Education
- Leadership in Catholic Schools
- Leadership for Learning
- Pastoral Issues
- Special Education

For further information please refer to: https://www.smucb.ac.uk/MPros/

MEd/Pg Diploma in Educational Studies

Students who satisfy general regulations for Master of Education or Postgraduate Diploma but do not meet specific option requirements will be awarded a Master of Education degree or Postgraduate Diploma in Educational Studies.

Curriculum Development and Primary Education

This option is ideally suited to practitioners in the Foundation Stage, Key Stages One and Two, as well as school leaders and managers. Students will have the opportunity to reflect on and engage in analysing key module themes in the light of current policy, legislation and research. The option design incorporates key aspects of primary education which are currently very topical.

Option Aims
- To explore core principles and practices underpinning current issues in the teaching of literacy and numeracy.
- To encourage reflection and evaluation of effective practice and resources to enrich children's learning opportunities in literacy and numeracy.
- To provide teachers with the tools to critique and develop their practices and their schools' policies in relation to children's rights in education.

List of Modules
EDC7081	Putting the Sting into STEM
EDC7088	Art for Wellbeing in Schools
EDC7092	Education for Sustainable Schools
EDC7093	The ABC of numeracy and Maths: Accessibility, Boarders and Creativity

Or other relevant module.

Developing Physical Education, School Sport and Coaching Science

This option offers participants the opportunity to develop specialist, in-depth knowledge within the field of physical education, school sport and coaching science. The course is suitable for both Primary and Post-Primary teachers, for those who are subject specialists and those simply wishing to develop some expertise in this area. Theory is complemented by a strong emphasis on practical application. Teaching methods include lectures, workshops, tutorials and a large element of practical work. The module includes the following elements, physical education, sports coaching and teaching, match analysis, biomechanics, sports nutrition, exercise physiology and sport psychology.

Option Aims
- To develop professional competence, advanced knowledge and critical understanding of physical education, school sport and coaching science.
- To explore pedagogical perspectives and current research in physical education, school sport and coaching science.
- To examine the factors that contribute to high-quality teaching and learning in this field.

To support participants in becoming more effective, reflective PE teachers and coaches.

List of Modules
EDC7069	Pupil Learning through Physical Education and School Sport
EDC7070	Developing Coaching Science and Physical Education in Schools
EDC7078	Current Issues and Future Directions in Physical Education and School Sport

Early Years Education

This option is relevant for those who teach or have an interest in educational matters relating to the nursery or Early Years setting. The option provides the opportunity to engage in the study and investigation of issues pertinent to the education of young children and examines the responsibilities and challenges that are inherent in the job. Students will be encouraged to reflect on their own professional practice through engagement with current research while debate and discussion regarding theory and practice will be facilitated and encouraged. Issues to be considered include the study of the underlying principles of Early Years education, the significance of child development, the nature and consequences of childhood stress, therapeutic teaching approaches and the appropriateness of a variety of teaching methodologies. How children think and learn will be explored as will the implications of this for the teaching and learning process.

Option Aims
■ To engage in informed debate regarding education in the Early Years setting.
■ To reflect on the relationship between theory and practice.
■ To develop specific competence in the area of Early Years education.
■ To reflect on the appropriateness of professional practice.
■ To extend knowledge of the nature of childhood and the ways in which children acquire and process knowledge.
■ To gain insights into the teaching and learning process in the Early Years classroom.
■ To critically appraise research in the field of Early Years education.

List of Modules
EDC7004   Approaches to Education in the Early Years.
EDC7006   Principles into Practice in the Early Years.

An Ghaeilge agus Oideachas Lán-Ghaeilge
Irish and Irish-Medium Education

Tá an roghachúrsa seo fóirsteanach dóibh siúd atá ag obair in earnáil na Gaelscolaíochta. Díreofar na modúil ar shaincheisteanna a bhaineann leis an oideachas trí mheán na Gaeilge agus dearadh iad le dea-chleachtas an tumoideachais a léiriú ag gach céim den oideachas. Gheobhaidh múinteoirí agus cleachtóirí deis, leis na modúil seo, machnamh a dhéanamh ar theoiricí agus ar chleachtas sa tumoideachas, ag fiosrú na bpróiseas agus na dtorthaí a bhaineann le teagasc, foghlaim agus measúnú i suíomhanna lán-Ghaeilge.

This option is for individuals working in the Irish-medium sector. The modules focus on a range of current issues relevant to Irish medium education and have been designed to reflect best practice in immersion education models at all phases. These courses will allow practitioners to explore and reflect on theoretical principles and classroom practice in immersion education by examining the processes and outcomes involved in learning, teaching and assessing in Irish medium settings.

Aidhmeanna an Roghachúrsa
- Bheith páirteach i ndíospóireachtaí a bhaineann leis an oideachas agus leis an oideachas lán-Ghaeilge.
- Cur lena n-inniúlachtaí gairmiúla mar oideachasóirí san earnáil lán-Ghaeilge, scileanna teanga san áireamh.
- Machnamh a dhéanamh ar an nasc idir cleachtas agus teoiric ina gcomhthéacs gairmiúil oibre.
- Bheith ar an eolas faoi thaighde agus faoi fhorbairtí san earnáil lán-Ghaeilge.
- Taighde a dhearadh, a chur i gcrích agus a luacháil. Déanfar an roghachúrsa seo a sholáthar trí mheán na Gaeilge agus chuige sin beidh leibhéal cuí d'inniúlacht sa Ghaeilge de dhíth.

Option Aims
- To engage in informed debate about major issues in education and Irish medium education.
- To develop further competence as educators in the Irish medium sector including the development of participants' own Irish language skills.
- To reflect in depth on the relationship between theory and practice in professional working contexts.
- To keep abreast of research, innovation and developments in the Irish medium sector.
- To design, conduct and critically appraise research.

This option is provided through the medium of Irish and therefore an appropriate level of competence in Irish is required.

List of Modules
EDC7043	Saibhreas agus Cruinneas na Gaeilge / Eloquence and Accuracy of Expression in Irish (10-point module).
EDC7075	Cumais Uimhearthachta agus Litearthachta a Chur Chun Cinn i Suíomhanna Lán-Ghaeilge / Promoting Numeracy and Literacy Competence in Irish-medium Settings.
EDC7076	Gaeilge na Gaeltachta / Study of Native Irish Speech. (20-point module)
EDC7089	Sainchúrsa Gaeilge do mhúinteoirí: eolas agus inniúlacht / A Specialised Irish Language Course for teachers: knowledge and proficiency

Leaders in Catholic Schools

Leaders in Catholic Schools play a key role in fostering and sharing a holistic vision of education with the staff of the school. This module aims to explore, with both a local and an international focus, some pertinent themes which school leaders face today as they seek to develop and promote a Catholic ethos. They would include the distinctive calling of the Catholic educator to ministry and service in an increasingly secularised and materialistic society. The work of Catholic schools in fostering an inclusive, ecumenical vision that works to promote reconciliation in our traditionally divided society. The value of engaging with a theological vision which encourages and resources the Catholic school to be a place of welcome and inclusion in our increasingly multi-cultural and multi-religious society. Finally, addressing the work of social justice, tapping into the richness of Catholic Social Teaching and its vision of the human person and the importance of community and solidarity.

Option Aims
- To develop understanding of recent developments concerning leadership in the Catholic school as presented in Church documents and contemporary literature.
- To gain awareness of the specific nature of the role of leaders in fulfilling the aims of Catholic education.
- To develop the ability to research, analyse and critically interpret contemporary literature in the area of leadership in schools.
- To develop the ability to critically evaluate the significance of the role of school leaders.

List of modules
EDC7015	Leadership in Catholic Schools
EDC7041	Children and Young People in Crisis: Pastoral Responses

Leadership for Learning

Recognition of the importance of leadership at all levels in the promotion of school effectiveness and improvement is well established internationally. This pathway provides an opportunity to explore this relationship through a study of the principles and practice of educational leadership. The modules focus upon a range of management and leadership functions, as well as the roles and competence requirements of different professionals working in education. They draw upon both theoretical models and examples of good practice within local and international contexts and prepare students for conducting their own research into educational leadership.

Option Aims
- To investigate good practice in the management of education in Northern Ireland and facilitate reflection upon the skills necessary for such practice.
- To enable teachers to understand and reflect upon the concepts underlying good practice in the leadership and management of education so that they can develop and enhance their contribution to effective leadership and management in schools.
- To advance knowledge of the principles of good management and understanding of the administrative and statutory changes shaping the role of managers.

List of Modules
EDC7013	Contemporary Management Issues for the Effective School.
EDC7059	Contemporary Leadership Issues for the Effective School.

MEd/PG Diploma Specialist Options

Pastoral Issues

The experience of the pastoral care practitioner is both complex and challenging. This innovative option aims to develop teachers' competence in maintaining their own well-being and safeguarding the holistic well-being of children and young people.

Option Aims
- To provide participants with the opportunity to synthesise contemporary research and scholarship on proactive, reactive and developmental approaches to pastoral care provision.
- To develop the underpinning qualities, skills and empathetic responses that will empower teachers to look after their own well-being and to nurture effective and independent learners.
- To facilitate teachers in developing partnerships with the wider community and external support agencies in the promotion of social and emotional education.
- To assist participants in developing their pastoral care skills and competence in providing emotional and spiritual support to pupils and other members of the school community.
- To facilitate participants in fostering self-care techniques for the prevention of vicarious trauma and anxiety-related difficulties.
- To provide participants with opportunities to engage in personal and professional reflection on pastoral practices and the mechanisms and procedures used in response to critical incidents involving pupils and/or school personnel.

List of Modules

EDC7041	Children and Young People in Crisis: Pastoral Responses
EDC7053	Personal Development: Promoting the Health and Well-Being of Teachers and Pupils
EDC7089	Art for Wellbeing in Schools

Special Education

Within the field of education, attention remains firmly focused on the issues attending to special education. The modules within this option provide opportunities for teachers in mainstream and special schools to analyse, evaluate, and reflect on the policies, procedures and practices relating to special education in Northern Ireland.

Option Aims
- To develop critical awareness of the policies, procedures and practices attending to special education.
- To evaluate the possibilities for extending pupil opportunities to participate constructively in the teaching and learning environment in both mainstream and special school settings.
- To analyse and critically assess global debates, government initiatives, educational research and school practices which seek to address the diverse educational needs among pupils experiencing barriers to learning.
- To explore the roles of key stakeholders: pupils, parents, teachers and related professionals.

List of Modules

EDC7012	Behaviour Issues in the Context of Special Educational Needs
EDC7077	Building Capacity in Schools: Advancing Inclusivity to Raise Pupil Outcomes
EDC7079	Understanding, Supporting and Teaching Pupils with Specific Literacy Difficulties
EDC7082	Music Therapy in Education
EDC7085	Understanding and Supporting Autistic Children and Young People in Education
EDC7087	Autistic Voice and SEN Practice

MODULE INFORMATION

EDC7090	Designing the Wellbeing School
EDC7091	Leading the Wellbeing School
EDC7092	Education for Sustainable Schools
EDC7093	The ABC of numeracy and Maths: Accessibility, Boarders and Creativity

LIST OF 30-POINT MEd MODULES

Module Code	Module Title
EDC7004	Approaches to Education in the Early Years
EDC7006	Principles into Practice in the Early Years
EDC7012	Behaviour Issues in the Context of Special Educational Needs
EDC7013	Contemporary Management Issues for the Effective School
EDC7015	Leaders in Catholic Schools
EDC7021	Educational Research Methods (available as a taught or an online module)
EDC7041	Children and Young People in Crisis: Pastoral Responses
EDC7053	Personal Development: Promoting the Health and Well-Being of Teachers and Pupils (online module)
EDC7059	Contemporary Leadership Issues for the Effective School
EDC7069	Pupil Learning through Physical Education and School Sport
EDC7070	Developing Coaching Science and Physical Education in Schools
EDC7075	Promoting Numeracy and Literacy Competence in Irish-Medium Settings
EDC7077	Building Capacity in Schools: Advancing Inclusivity to Raise Pupil Outcomes (online module)
EDC7078	Current Issues and Future Directions in Physical Education and School Sport
EDC7079	Understanding, Supporting and Teaching Pupils with Specific Literacy Difficulties
EDC7081	Putting the Sting into STEM (A Thematic Approach to STEM Education)
EDC7082	Music Therapeutic Techniques in Education
EDC7085	Understanding and Supporting Autistic Children and Young People in Education
EDC7087	Autistic Voice and SEN Practice
EDC7088	Art for Wellbeing in Schools
EDC7089	A Specialised Irish Language Course for teachers: knowledge and proficiency

LIST OF 20-POINT MEd MODULES

Module Code	Module Title
EDC7023	Conducting Educational Research (available as a taught or as an online module)
EDC7076	Study of Native Irish Speech

LIST OF 10-POINT MEd MODULES

Module Code	Module Title
EDC7043	Eloquence and Accuracy of Expression in Irish

Directory of 30-point M-level Modules

EDC7004
Approaches to Education in the Early Years
Tutor: Deirdre Cree

This module will examine the nature of children and childhood with a focus on childhood stress and child development. Strategies that may alleviate such stress will be investigated with particular reference to the Early Years classroom. Issues surrounding attachment and separation will also be examined as will the relevance of these issues for helping children make the home to school transition.

EDC7006
**Principles into Practice in the Early Years**
Tutor: Deirdre Cree

This module examines the need to establish and adhere to a set of clearly defined and workable principles that should underpin education in the early years of school. How the principles inform good practice will be explored in terms of their significance for the work of Early Years professionals in the current educational climate. The nature of children and childhood will be examined in order to identify what characterises young learners. The question of how children's complex needs can best be met in the nursery and at Key Stage One will also be addressed.

EDC7012
Behaviour Issues in the Context of Special Educational Needs
Tutor: Dr Geraldine Parks

This module will address behaviour in the context of special educational needs within a framework of inclusive practice and entitlement in the mainstream school. Participants will have the opportunity to examine research that informs current thinking and debate in a number of areas including challenging behaviour, Autistic Spectrum Disorder and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. The module will support the development of pedagogical competence in the field of special educational needs.

EDC7013
Contemporary Leadership Issues for the Effective School
Tutors: Dr Martin Hagan and Dr Séamas Ó Donnghaile

This module will consider issues around managing school improvement to promote increasing effectiveness. It will trace the development of a range of school improvement initiatives through to 'Every School a Good School' (DENI 2008) and consider changing perspectives and understandings of the concept of the effective school and the nature and purpose of contemporary schooling. Issues surrounding organisational culture, school leadership and community involvement will be analysed and evaluated.
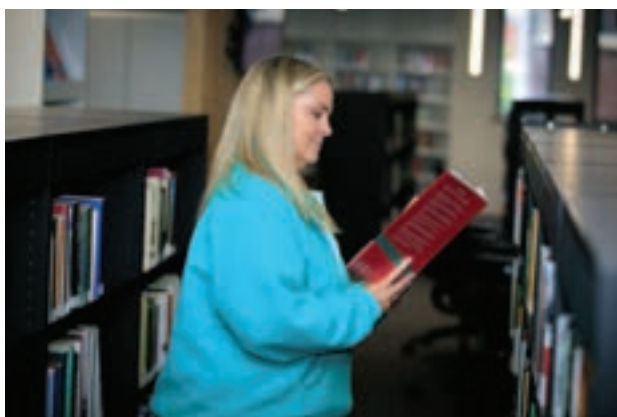
EDC7015
Leaders in Catholic Schools
Tutors: Rev Dr Edward McGee and Sharon Haughey

Leaders in Catholic Schools play a key role in fostering and sharing a holistic vision of education with the staff of the school. This module aims to explore, with both a local and an international focus, some pertinent themes which school leaders face today as they seek to develop and promote a Catholic ethos.

Themes include:
- The distinctive calling of the Catholic educator to ministry and service in an increasingly secularised and materialistic society.
- The work of Catholic schools in fostering an inclusive, ecumenical vision which works to promote reconciliation in our traditionally divided society.
- The value of engaging with a theological vison which encourages and resources the Catholic school to be a place of welcome, sharing and inclusion in our increasingly multi-cultural and multi-religious society
- The importance of social justice fostered by the richness of Catholic Social Teaching and its vison of the human person and the importance of community and solidarity.

EDC7021
Educational Research Methods
Tutors: Dr Martin Hagan (semester one) and Dr Matthew Martin (semester two)

The above research methods module will introduce teachers to the principles and methods of educational research. They examine common types of research in the social sciences and review the tools of the researcher. They consider issues with regard to the selection of research topics and the reporting of research. Students must successfully complete this module before commencing the dissertation. This module is available as an online module in Semester One or as a taught module in Semester Two.

EDC7041
Children and Young People In Crisis: Pastoral Responses
Tutor: Rev Dr Edward McGee

This module aims to support teachers in developing a critical knowledge and understanding of the key issues pertaining to the emotional, behavioural, social and psychological impact of continuous, post and intergenerational traumatic stress on children and young people. The influence and far-reaching implications of intergenerational trauma will be explored within the context of the Northern Ireland conflict while drawing on comparisons of intergenerational trauma in other international conflict zones. Structures and mechanisms that can be used to support pupils affected by a traumatic incident will be examined. A particular focus will be given to the development of strategies that promote safety, trauma prevention and resiliency. In addition, emphasis will be placed on fostering self-care techniques to help to minimize anxiety and counteract vicarious trauma.

EDC7053

Personal Development: Promoting the Health and Well Being of Teachers and Pupils
Tutor: Nóra O' Baoill

This module aims to provide primary and post-primary teachers with the opportunity to explore international research and scholarship on social and emotional education and its application to school and classroom practice. It seeks to develop teachers' understanding of the relationship between safeguarding, school life, school ethos and the Personal Development curriculum in nurturing a positive and sustainable sense of well-being and in raising standards across the whole school community. Areas to be addressed include; emotional literacy, circle time, consensual decision making, anti-bullying procedures and protocols including cyber bullying, suicide prevention, community engagement, spiritual development and peer mediation. Throughout the module teachers will be encouraged to reflect on their personal and professional functioning as individuals who are working in partnership with external agencies to promote validating, safe and person-centred learning environments.

EDC7059

Contemporary Leadership Issues for the Effective School
Tutors: Dr Martin Hagan and Dr Séamas Ó Donnghaile

This module addresses leadership practice and thinking in both historical and cultural contexts and provides an overview of the field of current leadership studies. Consideration is given to leadership theory, and problematizing leadership in a range of different school and educational settings. The module identifies the characteristics of successful school leaders and reflects on the extent to which leadership and management may be thought of as essentially different modes of practice. The module proposes that a move away from traditional managerialist styles of leadership towards more values based and learning centred leadership practice has greater potential for promoting more effective, 'intelligent' schools.

EDC7069

Pupil Learning through Physical Education and School Sport
Tutor: Ciaran Walsh

This course aims to support the continuing professional development of teachers interested in or specialising in Physical Education both at Primary and Post-Primary level. It will enable teachers to enhance their knowledge and skills, to critically evaluate new developments and theoretical perspectives in Physical Education and School Sport, to integrate new knowledge into their professional practice and to initiate new developments in their schools. The overall aim is to improve standards of teaching and learning in Physical Education and enhance pupils' experience and enjoyment.

EDC7070

Developing Coaching Science and Physical Education in Schools
Tutor: Kevin Niblock

An understanding of coaching science underpins all high-quality sports performance. This module is suitable for individuals seeking to further their professional development by expanding and deepening their knowledge about coaching science and physical education in the Primary or Post-Primary School. The course will integrate theory and practice, promote critical reflection, and explore issues about coaching effectiveness, managing coaching problems and performance enhancement. Participants will develop both their subject knowledge and the pedagogical skill of the modern scientific coach and sports instructor. Study will include topics such as coaching styles, coaching philosophy, child development, lesson planning and curriculum development.

EDC7075

Cumais Uimhearthachta agus Litearthachta a Chur Chun Cinn i Suíomhanna Lán- Ghaeilge
Teagascóirí: Dr Tomás Ó Ruagáin

Díreofar aird ar ghnéithe sainiúla de chleachtas Gaelscolaíochta: oilteacht teanga na múinteoirí; cumas uimhearthachta na múinteoirí ag an léibhéal cuí; agus eolas ar chleachtas tumoideachais mar a bhaineann le litearthacht agus uimhearthacht ar fud an churaclaim i ngach céim de sholáthar lán-Ghaeilge. Rinneadh an modúl a dhearadh le gur féidir le rannpháirtithe próisis taighde na meastóireachta a scrúdú agus an fhoghlaim a chur i bhfeidhm ar ghné éigin den chleachtas i gcomhthéacs sainiúil lán-Ghaeilge s'acu féin.

The module focuses on key aspects of IM practice: teachers' Irish language proficiency; teachers' competence in numeracy at the appropriate level; and knowledge of informed immersion practices related to literacy and numeracy across the curriculum in all phases of IM provision.

The module is designed to allow participants to examine evaluative research processes and to apply their learning to an aspect of practice in their specific IM context.

EDC7078

Current Issues and Future Directions in Physical Education and School Sport
Tutor: Dr Elaine Mc Laughlin

This module aims to provide participants with advanced knowledge and understanding of contemporary issues in Physical Education. Core areas of study include physiology, psychology, sociology, and child development. During the course of the module students will explore the challenges teaching and coaching encounter in today's social context. A range of issues

will be examined, for example, liability, mental health, participation and engagement. Teaching methodologies will include lectures, tutorials and discussion.
This module is suitable for both the specialist and non-specialist professional and working with all age ranges.

EDC7079

Understanding, Supporting and Teaching Pupils with Specific Literacy Difficulties
Tutor: Louise Hunt

This module aims to provide participants with the knowledge, understanding and competences needed to support pupils with specific literacy difficulties including dyslexia. Participants will be supported in engaging critically with current policy, legislation and research relating to the assessment, monitoring teaching and learning of pupils with specific literacy difficulties. The module will explore the principles and practices associated with effective practice within the context of an inclusive learning environment at classroom and whole school level. This course is suitable for the non-specialist or specialist educational professional working primarily in the primary sector with an interest in the field of special education particularly in the area of specific literacy difficulties.

EDC7081
Putting the Sting into STEM
Tutors: Dr Katrina Mulholland, Joe Hughes and John Prenter

This module is designed to explicitly promote both inter- and intra- disciplinary learning within STEM. It harnesses the thematic approach, acknowledging that it is an effective pedagogical vehicle for the promotion of connected learning. The distinguishing aspect of this module is the depth and expanse of its scope, incorporating a multitude of diverse concepts within STEM and demonstrating exemplary teaching in their delivery. It aims to illustrate how a bedrock of thorough conceptual understanding underpins the acquisition of STEM knowledge and skills while maintaining the sustained enthusiasm of the learner. Discovery and connective learning styles are modelled through a series of practical activities and investigations suited to Primary and early Post-Primary learners. The theme is that of the honey bee and the many aspects of STEM which govern its life. One of the key objectives of the module is to support the classroom practitioner in creating a 'buzz' about STEM in schools.

EDC7082
**Music Therapeutic Techniques in Education**
Tutor: Karen Diamond

The benefits of music therapy in supporting a diverse range of learning needs are well documented. This module explores the procedures, challenges and benefits of using music therapeutic techniques in a range of educational contexts. The aim of the module is to help primary and post-primary teachers understand how music therapeutic techniques have the ability to increase individuals' capacity for learning and for coping in the school environment. It provides teachers with practical strategies for implementation in their own educational

setting. Participants will develop knowledge and understanding of music therapeutic techniques through pedagogical exploration and experiential learning as they discover its role in supporting children and young people. Please note, while it is not compulsory to have a background in music, it may be beneficial if the participant has some musical knowledge. It is hoped to run the course over three intensive sessions.

EDC7085
Understanding and Supporting Autistic Children and Young People in Education
Tutor: Dr Craig Goodall

By the end of this module students will have developed a broad understanding of what autism is, the cognitive and sensory differences of autistic individuals and issues impacting on autistic children and young people within school. Students will gain expert knowledge and insight into the lived experiences of autistic individuals, particularly the educational experiences of autistic children and young people. This module aims to ensure that each student leaves with a mindset that prioritises personalisation and support for autistic children and young people through changes in practice and the education environment, rather than prioritising normalisation or changing the child to fit the education system. By appreciating the characteristics and learning styles of autistic young people we can not only make school more inclusive but more enjoyable for all pupils. Through critical reflection, practitioners will develop advanced knowledge and critical understanding of autism and how to better support the autistic population within their schools.
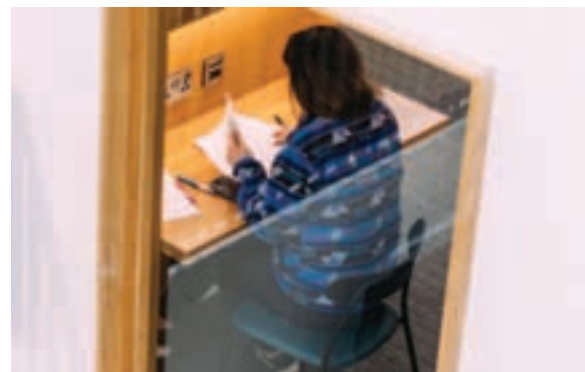
EDC7087
Autistic Voice and SEN Practice
Tutor: Dr Gillian O'Hagan

For many learners education can be a challenge. This course allows participants to explore new perspectives on the issue of autism that will make a real difference to learners' lives. It will be of interest to professionals working in all educational settings. Participants will further their knowledge and understanding of current autism theory, research, and policy. Students will reflect on the distinctive needs of the autistic learner, explore the social psychology of autism, and consider the challenges faced by autistic students in schools. A strong focus is placed on evidence-based practice for supporting learners on the autism spectrum, and in developing the skills and expertise required to meet the needs of autistic children and young people. Coursework is designed to enable students to apply learning to their own setting.

EDC7088
Art for Wellbeing in Schools
Tutor: Nora O'Baoill

This module aims to provide primary and post-primary teachers with the opportunity to explore international research and scholarship on principles of trauma-informed Art therapy and its application to school and to classroom practice. It seeks to develop teachers' understanding of the potential role of the curricular areas of Art, Personal Development and TSPC in nurturing a positive and sustainable sense of well-being and explore the practical application of the "five ways to wellbeing" framework through art experiential practice. Areas to be addressed include; establishing safety, building a triadic relationship and promoting positive attachment, emotional literacy and empathy development, an introduction to ACE aware and trauma informed art therapy, exploring different wellbeing models for schools, links to the NI curriculum (Art, Personal Development/PDMU and TSPC), art as a means of self-awareness and self-expression in the diverse inclusive classroom, working safely, tailoring to individual needs, referring on to specialist services, and using art based practice for self-care. Throughout the module participants will be required to engage in arts-based activities, but no artistic skill will

be required, indeed the emphasis will be on facilitating 'art for wellbeing' for all abilities and ages and dispelling anxieties about "being good at art". Module participants will be introduced to a variety of art materials and will use creative techniques to reflect on their personal and professional functioning as individuals who are working in partnership with external agencies to promote validating, safe and person-centred learning environments which promote personal and collective wellbeing.

Art Therapy is a protected state regulated profession and to be an art therapist, you need to be trained at MSc level and be on the statutory register of the Health and Care Professions Council, so this course is not a qualification to practise as an art therapist but will focus on 'art for wellbeing' activities suitable for use by teachers.

EDC7089

Sainchúrsa Gaeilge do mhúinteoirí: eolas agus inniúlacht
Teagascóirí: Dr Seán Mac Corraidh

Tabharfar aghaidh ar an chúrsa cumaisc seo ar riachtanais ghairmiúla mhúinteoirí Gaeilge agus gaelscolaíochta ag an bhunleibhéal nó ag an mheánleibhéal. Is iad na haidhmeanna atá leis an chúrsa eolas na rannpháirtithe ar chórais na gramadaí, na fóineolaíochta agus na comhréire sa Nua-Ghaeilge a fhorbairt trí théacsanna liteartha agus acmhainní closamhairc agus inniúlacht na múinteoirí ar labhairt agus ar scríobh na teanga a fhairsingiú.

This blended course will address the professional language needs of teachers of Irish and of those who teach through the medium of Irish, at both primary and post-primary phases. The aims of the course are to advance participants' knowledge of the grammatical, phonological and syntactic systems of Modern Irish through consideration of literary texts and audio-visual resources and to increase teachers' proficiency in the speaking and writing of the language.

EDC7090

Designing the Wellbeing School
Tutor: TBC

'Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire - but even fires need tending, rest, and care' (William Butler Yeats).

Designing the Wellbeing School is an exciting module for teachers across all sectors. It blends current wellbeing theory with real-world, practical implementable strategies. You will explore transformative ways to boost wellbeing for staff, students, and the wider community. Students will learn to design dynamic, whole-school wellbeing programmes aligned with key school aims. You will develop the personal skills to introduce and implement sustainable change in your school culture. Students will acquire a deep understanding of how wellbeing is the foundation of a thriving school.

The module aims to help students to:
- Understand and apply key wellbeing theories and frameworks
- Critically evaluate the role of whole-school approaches in promoting wellbeing
- Design a comprehensive school wellbeing plan aligned to international and local policy
- Integrate social and emotional learning (SEL) strategies within curriculum and school culture
- Engage multiple stakeholders - staff, students, families, and communities, in promoting a shared wellbeing vision

EDC7091

Leading the Wellbeing School
Tutor: TBC

'Leadership and wellbeing are not separate paths; the best leaders walk both at once' (Rasmus Hougaard and Jacqueline Carter, Authors of The Mind of the Leader).

Leading the Wellbeing School is a dynamic module that provides teachers with the knowledge, understanding, attitudes and values to lead a vibrant wellbeing ethos. The module will empower you to develop a strong vision for wellbeing centred on your school's aims. You will discover transformative leadership strategies and tools for sustainable, successful change. An integral aspect of the course is to provide the necessary and sufficient skills to overcome resistance, use data to drive improvement and embed school-wide evidence-based wellbeing and SEL programmes. As a confident advocate for wellbeing you will acquire the knowledge, understanding, skills and abilities to influence policy and practice.
The module aims to empower participants to:
- Develop a wellbeing-focused vision and align it with school mission and values
- Lead staff development and culture change to embed wellbeing
- Implement and scale evidence-based SEL and wellbeing programmes
- Navigate challenges and manage resistance during change processes
- Use data strategically to monitor, evaluate, and improve wellbeing initiatives
- Advocate for wellbeing priorities within broader educational policy and governance structures

EDC7092

Education for Sustainable Futures
Tutor: TBC

This module is suitable for educationalists across the school community. In the module participants will explore the educational aspects of sustainability in response to global challenges, integrating disciplines such as environmental science, philosophy, pedagogy, and policy. Key themes include sustainability literacy, systems thinking, pedagogical strategies, policy frameworks, digital innovation, and creating sustainable school cultures.

The module is structured around several core themes that address the theoretical, ethical, and practical dimensions of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and Global Citizenship Education (GCE). It emphasises teaching strategies that foster student agency while addressing eco-anxiety, encouraging experiential learning, and the evaluation of educational technologies. Participants engage in independent tasks, critical reading, and reflective tasks, as they apply learning to their own professional contexts.
Learning outcomes include developing critical awareness of sustainability concepts, teaching for agency, understanding policy contexts, and promoting sustainable practices in schools. Participants will gain skills in geo-literacy, ethical reasoning, and leadership for sustainability.

EDC7093

The ABC of Numeracy and Maths: Accessibility, Barriers and Creativity
Tutor: Dr Geraldine Parks and Julie Hamilton

This module will be of interest to practitioners who teach Numeracy and/or Maths in any educational setting. The module will use current theory and research led practice to enhance understanding of the barriers and challenges that pupils may face when learning Numeracy and Maths, including, but not limited to, links to other areas of SEN. Participants will explore the spectrum of difficulties from anxiety to dyscalculia and learn practical strategies for supporting struggling students. The module will also consider pedagogical approaches to making Numeracy and Maths more accessible and meaningful for all pupils and teachers. Students will explore the challenges and possibilities in teaching Numeracy and Maths, with a strong focus on accessibility, inclusive pedagogy, and creativity.

Directory of 20-point M-level Modules

EDC7023

Conducting Educational Research
Tutors: Dr Martin Hagan (semester one) and Dr Matthew Martin (semester two)

The above research methods module will introduce teachers to the principles and methods of educational research. They examine common types of research in the social sciences and review the tools of the researcher. They consider issues with regard to the selection of research topics and the reporting of research. Students must successfully complete this module before commencing the dissertation.

EDC7076

Gaeilge na Gaeltachta
Teagascóir: Pádraig de Bléine

Forbrófar tuiscint agus inniúlachtaí na mac léinn trí dheiseanna a sholáthar le hardchaighdeán labhartha agus scríofa sa Ghaeilge a bhaint amach. Tabharfar eolas ar na foinsí agus ar na toibreacha (idir thraidisiúnta agus leictreonach) le scileanna teanga a chur chun cinn. Beidh an bhéim ar bhinneas béil agus ar chruinneas scríofa. Déanfar staidéar ar réimse téacsanna (idir bhuntéacsanna agus aistriúcháin) a rinne cainteoirí dúchais Ghaeilge. Leagfar béim ar ghnéithe éagsúla de scríobh agus de labhairt nádúrtha na Gaeltachta. Beidh taifeadadh ar chaint agus ar chomhrá Ghaeltacht Dhún na nGall san áireamh. Beidh faill ag na mic léinn forbairt a dhéanamh ar inniúlachtaí sna réimsí seo a leanas: scileanna profléitheoireachta a thabhairt chuig leibhéal ard cruinnis; foinsí tairbheacha atá dírithe ar fhorbairt chruinnis agus saibhris a rochtain; agus cur i bhfeidhm rialacha na gramadaí trí obair i ngrúpaí.

This module aims to develop students' understanding and competencies by providing opportunities to promote and facilitate a high standard in oral and written use of the Irish language and to disseminate information regarding valuable sources (both traditional and electronic) for advancing language skills relating specifically to written and oral accuracy and eloquence. The course explores the study of texts including translations and original works by native Irish speakers in order to highlight aspects of the native speaker style of spoken and written language. This includes recordings with transcripts of native speakers from the Donegal Gaeltacht. Through completion of the module students should develop the following professional competencies: proof-reading skills in Irish to a high level of accuracy, the ability to access and use a range of essential sources aimed at linguistic enrichment an enhanced ability to apply grammatical knowledge with increasing accuracy.

Directory of 10-point M-level Modules

EDC7043
Saibhreas agus Cruinneas na Gaeilge
*Teagascóir: Pádraig de Bléine*

Is é aidhm an mhodúil seo barr feabhais a chothú i labhairt agus i scríobh na Gaeilge agus díreofar ar fhoinsí a thacaíonn le cruinneas labhartha agus scríofa. Tabharfar deis do rannpháirtithe scileanna profléitheoireachta a fhorbairt agus cuirfear ar an eolas iad faoi áiseanna tagartha a thacaíonn leis an fhoghlaim neamhspleách. Déanfaidh rannpháirtithe cnuasach áiseanna maidir le saibhriú na Gaeilge a fhorbairt.

This two-day course arises from the recommendations made in the Review of Irish Medium Education (DE, 2009) and the Chief Inspector's Report (ETI, 2009). The following are the key aspects of the course:

- Accuracy in the Irish language: both written (grammar) and oral (phonology).
- Enrichment in the Irish language: the development and improvement of general standards of linguistic competence through a focus on Gaeltacht-based texts as well as written and oral resources originating from the Gaeltacht.
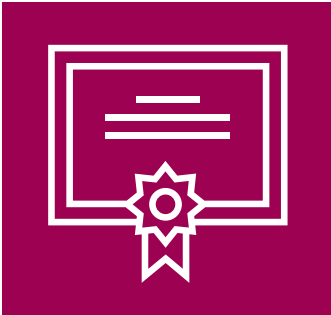
SEMESTER ONE AND TWO MODULES

30-Point Modules

Semester One: Commencing September 2025		Semester Two: Commencing January 2026	
Saturdays (four Saturdays September - October 10.00am – 4.00pm)		*Saturdays (four Saturdays January - February 10.00am – 4.00pm)*	
EDC7021	Educational Research Methods	EDC7077	Building Capacity in Schools: Advancing Inclusivity to Raise Pupil Outcomes
EDC7053	Personal Development: Promoting the Health and Well-Being of Teachers and Pupils	EDC7085	Understanding and Supporting Autistic Children and Young People in Education
EDC7069	Pupil Learning through Physical Education and School Sport	*Wednesday (5.15pm – 7.15pm)*	
EDC7082	Music Therapy in Education	EDC7041	Children and Young People in Crisis: Pastoral Responses
Wednesday (5.15pm – 7.15pm)		EDC7089	A Specialised Irish Language Course for teachers: knowledge and proficiency
EDC7075	Promoting Numeracy and Literacy Competence in Irish-medium Settings	EDC7091	Leading the Wellbeing School
EDC7090	Designing the Wellbeing School	*Work-Based Learning (Online Monday 7.00pm – 9.00pm)*	
Work-Based Learning (Online)		EDC7021	Educational Research Methods
EDC7087	Autistic Voice and SEN Practice	EDC7078	Current Issues and Future Directions in Physical Education and School sport
EDC7092	Education for Sustainable Futures		
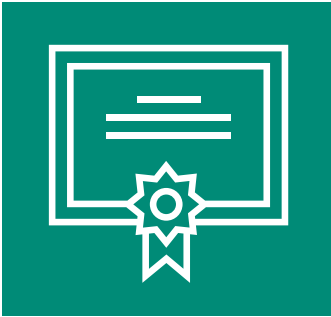
SUMMER SCHOOL JULY 2025 & 2026

MEd PROGRAMME SUMMER SCHOOL 2025

30-Point Modules

From Tuesday 1st July – Monday 7th July (10:00am – 4:00pm) (excluding weekend)

EDC7004	Approaches to Education in the Early Years
EDC7012	Behaviour Issues in the Context of Special Educational Needs
EDC7013	Contemporary Management Issues for the Effective School
EDC7015	Leaders in Catholic Schools
EDC7070	Developing Coaching Science and Physical Education in Schools
EDC7079	Understanding, Supporting and Teaching Pupils with Specific Literacy Difficulties
EDC7081	Putting the Sting into STEM (a thematic approach)
EDC7088	Art for Wellbeing in Schools
EDC7093	The ABC of Numeracy and Maths: Accessibility Barriers and Creativity

20 Point Module

Tuesday 1st July – Wednesday 2nd July (10:00am – 4:00pm)

EDC7076	Study of Native Irish Speech

10 Point Module

Thursday 3rd July (10:00am – 4:00pm)

EDC7043	Eloquence and Accuracy of Expression in Irish

MEd PROGRAMME SUMMER SCHOOL 2026

30-Point Modules

Wednesday 1st July – Tuesday 7th July (excluding weekend)

EDC7006	Principles into Practice in the Early Years
EDC7015	Leaders in Catholic Schools
EDC7059	Contemporary Leadership Issues for the Effective School
EDC7070	Developing Coaching Science and Physical Education in Schools
EDC7079	Understanding, Supporting and Teaching Pupils with Specific Literacy Difficulties
EDC7081	Putting the Sting into STEM (a thematic approach)
EDC7088	Art for Wellbeing in Schools
EDC7093	The ABC of Numeracy and Maths: Accessibility Barriers and Creativity

20 Point Module

From Thursday 2nd July – Friday 3rd July (10:00am – 4:00pm)

EDC7076	Study of Native Irish Speech

10 Point Module

From Wednesday 1st July (10:00am – 4:00pm)

EDC7043	Eloquence and Accuracy of Expression in Irish

INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

St Mary's University College Belfast has made all reasonable efforts to ensure that the information in this guide is accurate and up to date when compiled.

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