

2027 - 28

Master of Science

PE and Sport for Young People

PROSPECTUS

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

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WELCOME

On behalf of the Physical Education Team at St Mary's, I am very pleased to introduce our new full-time MSc in PE and Sport for Young People. We believe that the distinctive child centred ethos of St Mary's provides a platform for the highest standard of learning which will enhance the lives of children and young people through Sport and PE. Our ethos also emphasises high levels of pastoral care and individual attention for the learner, and we know this is important for postgraduates as they engage in professional career development. Please take a look at what our programme offers you and contact e.mclaughlin@smucb.ac.uk if you have any queries.

Dr Elaine McLaughlin



GENERAL INFORMATION

St Mary's University College seeks to provide advanced learning opportunities for graduates in this particular field of PE and sport for young people.

The programme is delivered in a full-time study mode over a ten month period (September to June) with flexible scheduling of classes allowing students to maintain their professional development while studying full time.



ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS



Candidates for admission to the MSc in Physical Education and Sport for Young People should normally hold:

A good honours degree (2.2 or higher) or equivalent qualification in a related field

Postgraduate Tuition Fee Loan

Students starting a postgraduate course are able to apply for a Post graduate Tuition Fee Loan (PG TFL) of up to £6,500. 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:

Email: studentfinance@smucb.ac.uk or Telephone: 028 9026 8234

Information can also be sought at https://www.studentfinanceni.co.uk/types-of-finance/postgraduate/northern-ireland-student/

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Application for the full time MSc course can be made online at www.smucb.ac.uk/app/mlevel/Masters.ASPX?Prog=MSc

Application forms for entry to the MSc should be submitted to the Academic Registry Office by Friday 25th June 2027.

Late applications will be considered subject to the availability of places. Email e.mclaughlin@smucb.ac.uk

Finance

Students wishing to complete a course do so on a self-funding basis. A full MSc amounts to 180 M-Level points.

In the academic year 2027-2028 the following fees will apply: £7,300

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

The Masters Level programme aims to develop and enhance in students the following academic and professional skills:

- To critically engage students in the pursuit of meeting the needs of children and young people through PE and sport in NI while reflecting on their own professional development for employability and career enhancement.
- To promote in our students the professionalism, knowledge, understanding, leadership and pedagogical skills indispensable for the achievement of the best practice in the service of children and young people through PE and sport.

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PROGRAMME AIMS

- To empower students to reflect on and critically analyse, using a range of applied scientific approaches, rapidly emerging challenges to contemporary society, education and community sport, including the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic to children and young people, and evolve new strategies to overcome these challenges.
- To utilise their advanced knowledge and understanding of working with and for children and young people in PE and sport to deal with complex issues systematically and creatively, identify and overcome barriers, and solve problems and communicate their conclusions clearly.
- To develop originality in the application of knowledge together with a practical understanding/application of applied scientific methods and research skills necessary to create and interpret knowledge in PE and sport for young people.
- To support a culture of self-reflective study, critical inquiry and scholarship through workshops, practical classes and lectures to enhance preparation, planning and practical skills.
- To educate participants in knowledge transfer strategies and enhance their awareness of networks for disseminating new knowledge.
- To further develop their key and vocational relevant skills and independent learning ability required for continuing professional and personal development through professional practice in working in PE and sport for young people.
- To enhance skills in gathering and providing evidence, the application of appropriate scientific methodologies for analysis, and engaging in the submission of evidence and analytical review in a supportive and critical framework of their work in leading change.
- To seek opportunities to achieve greater recognition of their work in PE and sport for young people in the form of publications, leading innovation and change among practitioners in their work setting and advanced qualifications at Masters level.

MSC ACCREDITED COURSE



MSc in Physical Education and Sport for Young People (180 credits)

MSc in Physical Education and Sport for Young People is awarded to students who have accumulated 180 M-level credit points which includes a dissertation, either as a consultancy-based project or an academic research paper.
The dissertation is equivalent to 60 M-level credit points. The MSc may be completed within one academic year of three academic semesters, but can be extended over a period of up to six academic semesters. The award of the MSc in Physical Education and Sport for Young People requires the successful completion of three core modules, in module options allowing students to specialise in Sociology, Pedagogy or Psychology of PE and Sport for Young People by choosing the appropriate pathway.

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ASSESSMENT

Assessment

All accredited modules are assessed by coursework and practicals. 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 Science, 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 Science candidates who achieve at least 70% in the dissertation, no less than an average of 65% in each of the other modules and an overall average of at least 70%.



Credit Accumulation & Transfer Scheme

CREDIT ACCUMULATION AND TRANSFER AND ACCREDITATION OF PRIOR LEARNING

The University College is a member of the UK wide Credit Accumulation and Transfer scheme. Applications for the transfer of credits towards the award of a MSc in Physical Education and Sport for Young People will be considered on a case-by-case basis, in the first instance, by the College Academic Registrar in accordance with Academic Regulations. In line with the University regulations, St Mary's operates a Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme (CATS) under which each module is assigned a level and a number of credit points reflecting the value of the module or unit.

The scale, which is based on 180 credit points for each academic year of post graduate full-time study is widely accepted in universities throughout the United Kingdom and is intended to facilitate transfer between institutions. It is also compatible with the European Credit Transfer Accumulation System (ECTS) which uses a scale of 60 credit points for each academic year of study. CATS points are converted to ECTS points by dividing the Queen's points by two. ECTS points are converted to Queen's points by multiplying the ECTS points by two.

Credit is awarded on successful completion of a module.



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Some Questions and Answers

1. What does CATS actually mean in practice?

Probably the most straightforward way to view CATS initially is to separate the two aspects “credit accumulation” and “credit transfer”. Credit accumulation refers to the fact that the majority of taught postgraduate courses are designated as M-level with certificates, diplomas and Masters degrees being distinguished by the number of M-level points gained. The credit ratings are as follows:

MSc Degree 180 M-Level points
PG Diploma 120 M-Level points
PG Certificate 60 M-Level points

Students who accumulate the requisite number of M-level points are entitled to the appropriate award. Credit transfer refers to the process whereby a student holding a relevant award of a recognised Higher Education Institution may, on application, be permitted to transfer credit for that award to the M-level programme.

2. How do I apply for Credit Transfer?

Students who accumulate the requisite number of M-level points are entitled to the appropriate award. Credit transfer refers to the process whereby a student holding a relevant award of a recognised Higher Education Institution may, on application, be permitted to transfer credit for that award to the M-level programme.

Those students who are currently studying or have already studied on an M-level programme at another UK university or recognised institution and who wish to transfer to the St Mary’s programme are required to pay a CATS 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.

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Some Questions and Answers

3. 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. From the introduction of the CATS scheme, a successful MSc 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 MSc you wish to study for an PG Certificate or PG Diploma, you must begin a new cycle of study.



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MODULE INFORMATION

CORE MODULES

MPE5001

Leadership and Professional Development in PE and Sport working with and for Young People
Tutor: Dr Elaine McLaughlin

This module aims to provide participants with advanced knowledge and understanding of develop self-reflective skills through engagement with key theories and literature within critical issues in PE and youth sport, while meeting the aims of Sport NI strategy to facilitate better provision for the children of NI. Students will initiate the process of tracking and documenting the skills, knowledge and experience gained in reflection of their experiences to date, while reflecting on areas requiring development. Specifically, students will critically review the structures of leading children's learning through and surrounding the paradigms of Physical Education and Sport.

MPE5002

Research Methods in PE and Sport working with and for Young People
Tutor: TBC

This module aims to extend students' existing understanding of methodological issues and the relevance of different research methods and associated ethical considerations relevant to physical education and sport scholarship, with a specific focus on research on sport for young people. This module will also encourage students to adopt a creative approach to problem-solving in the context of active practitioner and independent academic research. Focusing on the 'real-world' research opportunities in the domains of PE and Sport for young people, priority will be given to evaluative, problem and change-based research and methodologies. This module will provide context and understanding of the options available for students selecting the consultancy-based project or the academic research project.

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MODULE INFORMATION

OPTIONAL MODULES

MPE5003

PE and Sport and the Social Sciences
Tutor: Mr Oisin Maclomhair

This module aims to encourage students to think critically about sport and its place in society and in education. In particular, subjects such as the stratification of society (i.e. by race, sex, religion, class, age, ability etc.) and the sporting experiences of different social groups in the community and in schools, will be investigated. Furthermore, this module aims to develop students' practical, oral and communication abilities, independent and analytical thinking skills, and intellectual curiosity. The content of the module will include communication and listening skills in working with children and young people ensuring knowledge share and application of safeguarding, equality and inclusion in practice.

MPE5004

Cognitive Development and Pedagogy through PE and Sport
Tutor: Mr Ciaran Walsh

This module offers participants an opportunity to develop specialist, in-depth knowledge of children's cognitive development within the field of physical education and school sport. This module will further seek to enable students to extend their professional competence and advance their knowledge and ability to examine the factors that contribute to high-quality teaching, coaching, progressing and learning in this field.

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MODULE INFORMATION

MPE5005

Psychology: Culture, Coaching and the Young Person
Tutor: Dr Ciaran Kearney

This module will enable students to provide a foundation for understanding principles of applied sport psychology and standing and evolution of the discipline of sport and exercise psychology for children and young people. The module will also aim to foster effective communication and groupwork skills in the development and delivery of sport psychology to children and young people in practice. Topics covered will include team culture, developing resilience in sport, transcending from youth to adult participation, creating leaders from youth sport and psychological safety in youth sport.

RESEARCH PATHWAY OPTIONS

MPE5006

Consultancy based project
Tutors: Dr Elaine McLaughlin, Mr Ciaran Walsh, Dr Ciaran Kearney, Mr Oisin MacIomhair.

The consultancy-based project module is a learner-centric professional development approach where students design and implement professional and personal development plans with the support of an academic coach and experienced professional advisers. The consultancy-based project aims to provide students with opportunities to apply analytical tools and critical thinking to “real world” issues to enhance the lives of children and young people through PE and sport. This module will provide external organizations or clients with opportunities to advance their objectives by means of such a consultancy-based project, while allowing students to draw on their range of knowledge and leadership skills to provide solutions for a relevant sporting or educational institution

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MODULE INFORMATION

MPE5007

Dissertation or Academic Paper with Presentation
Tutors: Dr Elaine McLaughlin, Mr Ciaran Walsh, Dr Ciaran Kearney, Mr Oisin MacIomhair.

The aim of this active research module is to enable participants to research a topical problem that impacts on professional practice in PE and Sport for young people. The students will analyse a selected contemporary physical educational or sports related issue, and present an academic paper of between 10,000 to 12,000 words, explaining the student's claims to new knowledge relating to researching and reporting on findings PE and sport for young people.



SEMESTER ONE & TWO MODULES

SEMESTER ONE COMMENCING SEPTEMBER 2027

Aspect	Details	Days Delivered
Core Module	Leadership & Professional Development in PE & Sport working with and for Young People	Wednesday Friday
Optional modules: select TWO	Cognitive Development & Pedagogy through PE & Sport	Wednesday
	PE & Sport & the Social Sciences	Friday
	Psychology: Culture, Coaching and Young People	Thursday

SEMESTER TWO COMMENCING JANUARY 2028

Aspect	Details	Days Delivered
Core Module	Research Methods in PE & Sport working with and for Young People	Wednesday Friday
Research Pathways Options: select ONE	Consultancy Based Project	Placement dependent
	Academic Research Paper	Self- directed learning

CALENDAR

Dates	Aspect	Details	Days Delivered
September Week 1	Induction	Non-credit bearing induction programme and academic writing course for all postgraduate students at St Mary's	Wednesday Thursday Friday
September Week 2-4	Core Module	Leadership & Professional Development in PE & Sport working with and for Young People	Wednesday Friday
October Week 1-2	Assessment		
October Week 3- November Week 4	Optional modules: select two	PE & Sport & the Social Sciences	Friday
		Cognitive Development & Pedagogy through PE & Sport	Wednesday
		Psychology: Culture, Coaching and Young People	Thursday
December Week 1-3	Assessment		
January Week 1-3	Core Module	Research Methods in PE & Sport working with and for Young People	Wednesday Friday
Jan Week 4 Feb Week 1	Assessment		
February Week 2+	Dissertation Options: select one	Consultancy Based Project	Placement dependent
		Academic Research Paper	Self-directed learning
June	Assessment		
June Week 3	Presentation	Conference	Wednesday
June Week 4	Assessment		
December	Graduation		

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Information for Applicants

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

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