

# Stage 4 BSc.

## Mathematics, Science & Education

### Fitness to Practice Statement

#### **BSc. Mathematics, Science and Education Programme**

Students registered to EDUC42180 are required to read the programme's Fitness to Practise statement (see Appendix 1) and associated Teaching Council documentation. Students are also required to acknowledge in writing that they have read and understood the Fitness to Practise statement and to email a signed copy of the statement to the programme director Dr Aoibhinn Ni Shuilleabhain [aoibhinn.nishuilleabhain@ucd.ie](mailto:aoibhinn.nishuilleabhain@ucd.ie) and module coordinator Rachel Farrell [Rachel.farrell@ucd.ie](mailto:Rachel.farrell@ucd.ie) by the first week of the UCD academic term.

#### **UCD Statement Definition**

Fitness to Practise means students having the skills, knowledge, health and character necessary to undertake and complete a programme with professional practice, experiential learning or clinical work safely and effectively, fulfilling their responsibilities within their scope of practice in their chosen field.

#### **Purpose of the UCD Fitness to Practise Statement:**

- To protect the public, students, placement providers and the University.
- To instil in students the qualities and competencies required for professional practice and to support and guide students who experience issues that may affect their ability to practise.
- To provide a suitable framework for the effective management of Fitness to Practise issues that may arise, either prior to or during a student's programme of study.

#### **Fitness to Practise in Education**

Students on one of the BSc. Mathematics, Science and Education pathways (hereafter referred to as BSc.) which includes a mandatory school placement component must be Fit to Practise. The UCD College of Science and School of Education have a responsibility to ensure that students following a programme of study leading to a professional qualification which confers registration with a statutory regulatory body are suitable to enter that profession. It is the position of the UCD College of Science that its students conduct themselves professionally at all times in order to justify the trust the public places in them and in the teaching profession. A guide to Fitness to Practise for the BSc. has thus been developed using the principles of the Teaching Council Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers, as well as the central tenets of the Teaching Council's School Placement Guidelines. Fitness to practise is also subject to garda vetting.

## **Aims of the UCD School of Education Fitness to Practise Statement**

The Fitness to Practise statement aims to:

1. Ensure students understand the level of professional attitudes and behaviour required of them throughout their programme of study.
2. Safeguard pupils and the wider school community with whom the College's students have contact during their programme.
3. Meet the requirements of the UCD Fitness to Practise Statement and School Fitness to Practise procedures.

## **Equal Opportunities and Fitness to Practice**

University College Dublin is committed to equal opportunities and the support of students with disabilities. Students with disabilities are welcome and reasonable accommodation will be made where practicable. However, regrettably, it is possible that some persons otherwise qualified to undertake the BSc. may be unable or become unable, because of ill health or physical inability, to complete all elements of the programme required.

## **Fitness to Practice Principles**

Mapping to the Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers (Teaching Council, 2012), four core values underpin the College of Science and School of Education's Fitness to Practise statement, namely respect, care, integrity and trust:

<b>Respect</b>	Student teachers must act in a manner which promotes equity and equality and is respectful of the diverse needs, abilities and backgrounds of all pupils.
<b>Care</b>	Student teachers' practice is motivated by the best interests of all pupils and reflects empathy, concern and thoughtfulness.
<b>Integrity</b>	Student teachers act in a manner which reflects integrity, honesty, dedication to their professional commitment and responsibilities.
<b>Trust</b>	Student teachers' relationships with pupils, colleagues, parents, school management and all stakeholders they may encounter is based on trust which requires student teachers to act in a fair, open and honest manner at all times. Such responsibilities are necessary also in the engagement between student teachers, academic and administrative staff of the University.

## **Fitness to Practice Standards**

- **Professional Values and Relationships**

Student teachers should be caring, fair and committed to the pupils entrusted to their care; acknowledge and respect the uniqueness of each pupil and promote their holistic development; be committed to equity, equality and inclusion; seek to develop positive relationships with pupils, parents, school management and other stakeholders.

- **Professional Integrity**

Student teachers should act with honesty and integrity in all aspects of their work; respect the privacy of others and the confidentiality of any information afforded them in the context of their placement, unless a legal imperative requires disclosure or there is a legitimate concern for the well-being of an individual; represent themselves, their professional status, qualifications and experience honestly; avoid conflict between their professional work and private interests which could impact negatively on pupils, their placement school or on the profession.

- **Professional Conduct**

Student teachers should uphold the reputation and standing of the profession; take all reasonable steps in relation to the care of pupils under their supervision; work within the framework of relevant legislation and regulations; comply with national and school policies, procedures and guidelines which aim to promote the education and welfare of pupils as well as child protection; communicate effectively with pupils, colleagues, parents, school management and any relevant stakeholder in a manner which is professional, collegial and supportive, including communication *via* electronic media and social networking sites; ensure that they do not practise while under the influence of any substance which impairs their fitness to teach.

- **Professional Practice**

Student teachers should strive to attain the highest standards of practice in consultation with the advice of university personnel, in relation to pupil learning, planning, monitoring, assessing, reporting and providing feedback; apply their knowledge and experience in facilitating students' holistic development; create an environment where all pupils can become active agents in the learning process and develop lifelong learning skills; develop teaching, learning and assessment strategies which support differentiated learning in a way which respects the dignity of all learners; inform their professional judgement and practice by engaging with learning theory, pedagogy, curriculum development, ethical practice, educational policy and legislation; be open and responsive to constructive feedback and act in the best interests of their pupils.

- **Professional Development**

Student teachers should take responsibility for sustaining and improving the quality of their professional practice by reflecting and critically evaluating their practice, taking on board the advice of their supervisor, tutor and all relevant School of Education personnel. This also includes attendance at all lectures, seminars and tutorials.

- **Professional Collegiality and Collaboration**

Student teachers should work collaboratively with all colleagues in the interests of sharing, developing and supporting good practice in order to maintain the highest quality of educational experience for all learners.

Fitness to practise issues can arise at any stage during a student's time on the BSc. It is important to note that such issues may be temporary and/or satisfactorily dealt with during the programme of study. However, fitness to practise issues may affect the ability of students to complete the programme, gain the final qualification or register with the Teaching Council.

### **Student Declaration**

All students entering Stage 4 BSc. placement modules, as well as relevant academic and administrative staff, will be fully briefed on the Fitness to Practise Statement and references to the Teaching Council's Code of Professional Conduct. Students are required to read this Statement and acknowledge in writing that they have read, understood and accept the Programme's Fitness to Practise Statement and procedures prior to commencing Stage 4 of the BSc.

I \_\_\_\_\_ (enter name) have read and understood the Fitness to Practise statement for the BSc Maths & Science Education.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

## Student Checklist for Placement

Dear student,

Welcome to Stage 4 of the BSc. Mathematics, Science & Education programme. We wish you well on the programme and hope that you find the coming two years of the BSc. /MSc. both fruitful and enriching.

To ensure that you fully understand the requirements and demands of the elements of your teaching placements and where you can find important supports and information, we have prepared this checklist for your perusal.

We would like you to read this document carefully and, when signed, send it to your tutor, programme director and placement module coordinator (see page 4). We would also like to advise you of the necessity to complete TUSLA Children First eLearning Programme prior to commencing your school placement. This free online course is available at

<https://www.tusla.ie/children-first/children-first-e-learning-programme/>.

Further DES online training for teachers regarding opening of school is available at this link <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/dd7fb-induction-training-for-reopening-schools/>.

Please consider the following statements carefully:

### **I understand that:**

- The BSc./MSc. Science, Mathematics & Education programme is a full-time, rigorous, professional programme which awards me with a teaching qualification. Absences from lectures and/or placement must be explained to relevant lecturers/tutors as a matter of courtesy and professionalism and, if necessary, accompanied by documentation from a doctor or other medical professional. Students who regularly miss lectures and/or placement will be asked to meet with the Directors of the programmes to discuss their commitment to the course. Regular non-attendance, as defined by the course Directors, may put final accreditation in jeopardy.
- My student calendar is in line with the UCD calendar <https://www.ucd.ie/students/keydates/>. The academic year begins on September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021. However, all students are expected to attend the induction webinars in conjunction with their school placement.
- While my school placement module is aligned with the UCD academic year, my school may require me to commence my placement at the end of August and to be available until the end of the school year, with the exception of dates for UCD study week and examinations. It is important therefore that I establish the school's expectations prior to accepting my placement and if I make a commitment, I will honour it to the best of my ability.
- I am required to have my Garda Vetting (organised by UCD registry) in place before I begin my school placement. My school may also require me to be Garda vetted. (Note: The majority of Stage 4 students will already have undergone vetting for the programme during their undergraduate studies and this completed vetting will suffice for the duration of the BSc. /MSc. programme.)

- Placement schools must be no further than 100 kilometres from UCD. It is my responsibility to ensure that the distance between UCD and my placement school does not impact negatively on attendance and punctuality. It is critical that the location of my placement school, as well as my school timetable, allows me to attend college for lectures as outlined on my UCD timetable.
- I am required to teach a minimum of three and a half hours and a maximum of five hours each week during my school placement. At least one of my classes, where possible, should be in my second subject. It is important not to over rely on TY classes for my school placement.
- I am free to be timetabled by my schools for times outside of UCD commitments, as per my UCD timetable.
- It is my responsibility to request opportunities for observation and team-teaching (in my own and other subjects), especially in the first four weeks of placement but during the year also if possible. Due to COVID-19 restrictions there may be limits on these opportunities, but I will work with my school to get support as required during my induction period.
- If I am referred to the Supplementary Teaching Support Programme (STSP) by my tutor and/or supervisor, it is mandatory and therefore I must attend. The STSP is an additional module to support students on school placement.
- If I am experiencing any difficulties with my placement or my course work, it is my responsibility to communicate with the relevant personnel on the BSc. programme.
- While placements were arranged by UCD in conjunction with students for Stage 4 of the BSc., it is my responsibility to secure my own school placement for the MSc. I cannot take up my place on the course without a suitable school placement.
- I am aware that I can contact my **Student Advisor** James Ronan in the UCD College of Science if I require any support: [james.ronan@ucd.ie](mailto:james.ronan@ucd.ie)
- I am aware that information regarding the **UCD counselling service** is available <https://www.ucd.ie/studentcounselling/>
- I am aware that information regarding the **UCD health service** is available <https://www.ucd.ie/stuhealth/>
- I am aware that the **late submission of assignments** information is available <https://www.ucd.ie/englishdramafilm/study/undergraduatelinksandguidelines/submissionandlatesubmissionofassessments/>
- I am aware that information regarding **extenuating circumstances** is available <https://www.ucd.ie/students/studentdesk/extenuating.html>
- If I have any general queries regarding the BSc. or MSc. programme I will contact the relevant Programme Director.

- In all my dealings with School of Education & College of Science administrative and academic staff, as well as with staff on my school placement, I will behave in a professional and courteous manner.

Student signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_