

# School of Physical Sciences

## Structured Doctoral Pathway 2021-22

### Overview

The School of Physical Sciences' structured doctoral pathway will lead to a PhD in one of the areas of research expertise within the School. The School's structured PhD programme is designed to align with the strategic direction of the University in terms of education, research excellence and translational focus. The programme provides core discipline-specific modules in advanced topics of modern physics centered on core areas of research in the School – including nanoscale physics (semiconductors, optical sensors, lithography and quantum technology), biomedical physics, plasma physics and astrophysics and physics/ STEM education research. For each of these modules, fundamental theory is taught along with relevant research methods and techniques. In addition, the programme also offers a range of modules which focus on students acquiring a broad range of generic and transferable skills – as desired in a modern professional environment. The programme offers flexibility so that each student can select the suite of modules most appropriate for their own specific needs and ambitions.

### Programme Structure

The School of Physical Sciences' assessment continues to be based solely on the student's original research work presented as a written thesis. To facilitate the greatest degree of flexibility for graduate students, a Physics structured master's pathway is also provided.

The PhD programme is based on students obtaining 270 credits for the research thesis plus between 35 and 55 credits from appropriate GTE modules – typically 20 credits from "Core Discipline/Specific Skills" modules and between 15 to 35 credits from "Generic/Transferable Skills" modules.

The MSc programme is based on students obtaining 180 credits for the research thesis and 20 credits from appropriate modules – typically 10 credits from "Core Discipline/Specific Skills" modules and 10 credits from "Generic/Transferable Skills" modules.

It is also School policy that all students who are assigned to teaching-related responsibilities must complete PS607 'Laboratory tutoring', a 10-credit module to be taken over at least two years. In order to best serve the needs of each individual student, modules can also be taken from the current GTE offering across the faculties in DCU, on both PhD and MSc pathways. Guidelines are issued to students, along with advice from their supervisory panel, to enable them to make suitable choices.

All first year research students must also take the Online Research Integrity Training Module (Natural and Physical Sciences stream).

Once approval from the supervisor has been granted, students should register for their approved Faculty GTE modules during the online registration process. However, if you wish to take a non-FSH GTE module you MUST first email the module coordinator listed to check that you are eligible to register for this module, then email [science@dcu.ie](mailto:science@dcu.ie) providing:

- confirmation and proof of approval from module coordinator
- module code and title
- student id number
- qualification code

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Core  
Discipline/  
Specific  
Skills

Generic/  
Transferable  
Skills

### PhD pathway (20 ECTS) / MSc pathway (10 ECTS)\*

- **PS607:** Laboratory Tutoring (10 ECTS) ★
- **PS522:** Microfluidics II (5 ECTS)
- **PS523:** Applied Spectroscopy II (5 ECTS )
- **PS525:** Nanotechnology & Surface Analysis II (5 ECTS )
- **PS520:** Computational Physics II (5 ECTS )

★ This module must be taken over at least two years, and should be started in year one.

### PhD pathway (15 ECTS) / MSc pathway (10 ECTS)\*

- **GS602:** Postgraduate Tutoring Principles & Practice (5 ECTS)
- **TP602:** Research Ethics (5 ECTS)
- **LC600:** English for Academic Purposes (5 ECTS)
- **NS5055:** Qualitative Research Summer School (5 ECTS) (Limited places. Students must also register for summer school sessions separately.)
- **MT610:** Qualitative Research Methods (5 ECTS)
- **CS608:** Strategies for Academic Writing (5 ECTS)
- Online Research Integrity Training Module (Physical and Natural Sciences stream) (non-accredited)

Doctoral Pathway - Select at least 15 ECTS  
Master's Pathway - Select at least 10 ECTS

Modules may be selected from above listing or other modules available on GTE listing.

All research students are required to attend the orientation and induction programme coordinated by the Graduate Studies Office. Students are also encouraged to engage with centrally-offered workshops & seminars that align with their development needs at a given time.