

## BSc Biotechnology

UCAS code: J701

Awarding Institution: The University of Reading  
Teaching Institution: The University of Reading  
Relevant QAA subject benchmarking group(s): Agriculture, Forestry, Agricultural Sciences, Food Sciences and Consumer Sciences and Biosciences  
Faculty of Life Sciences  
For students entering Part 1 in Autumn 2003  
Programme Director: Dr P Jauregi  
Programme Adviser: Dr P Jauregi  
Board of Studies: Undergraduate Programmes in the School of Food Biosciences  
Programme length: 3 years  
Date of specification: May 2004

### Summary of programme aims

The programme aims to provide a degree-level education from which graduates can enter a career in the biotechnology-based industries (or other areas of applied biology or processing) as scientists or technologists in production, research and development and to develop their capacity to undertake research into problems relating to the biotechnological products. The testable learning outcomes will be the ability to:

- integrate the scientific disciplines relevant to biotechnology
- apply and communicate scientific knowledge to meet the needs of industry and the consumer for the production and marketing of safe and quality biotechnology products.

### Transferable skills

The University's Strategy for Teaching and Learning has identified a number of generic transferable skills which all students are expected to have developed by the end of their degree programme. In following this programme, students will have had the opportunity to enhance their skills relating to career management, communication (both written and oral), information handling, numeracy, problem-solving, team working and use of information technology.

### Programme content

The profile which follows states which modules must be taken (the core Biotechnology modules) and, for Part 2 and 3, lists of modules from which the student must make a selection (the optional modules). For the optional modules, students are free to select any module that is not a compulsory module so as to make 120 credits in each Part.

#### Part 1 (three terms)

##### Compulsory modules

<i>Mod Code</i>	<i>Module Title</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Level</i>
AM1M11	Fundamental Microbiology	10	C
AM1M12	Important Microbes	10	C
BI1C10	Cell Biology and Biochemistry	10	C
BI1C11	Genetics and Molecular Biology	10	C
CH1C	Foundation Chemistry	20	C
FB1EPH	Physical Aspects of Biological Systems	20	C
FB1GSB	Science in Biotechnology	20	C
FM1EM1	Mathematics and Computing for Life Sciences	20	C

#### Part 2 (three terms)



### **Summary of teaching and assessment**

As indicated above, teaching is organised into modules – each module will consist of lectures, practicals, or a combination of these. Students are assessed on each module, usually by a formal examination, although modules consisting only of practicals (or similar coursework) may not have a formal examination. All coursework is assessed and the assessment contributes towards the modular marks. The Part 3 project is an individual study requiring the submission of formal report for assessment.

### **Admission requirements**

Entrants to this programme are normally required to have obtained:

GCSE: Grade C or better in Mathematics and English in GCSE; and achieved

Advanced Level (AS and A2):

- A core science at A2 level with either a core or related science subject at AS level (where ‘Core Science’ is defined as: mathematics, chemistry, physics and biology, and ‘Related Science’ is defined as: food technology, environmental science and human biology)
- A UCAS Tariff of 240 with 80 obtained in at least one core science

International Baccalaureat:

Irish Leaving Certificate:

Admissions Tutor: Dr R Frazier

### **Support for students and their learning**

University support for students and their learning falls into two categories. Learning support includes IT Services, which has several hundred computers and the University Library, which across its three sites holds over a million volumes, subscribes to around 4,000 current periodicals, has a range of electronic sources of information and houses the Student Access to Independent Learning (S@IL) computer-based teaching and learning facilities. There are language laboratory facilities both for those students studying on a language degree and for those taking modules offered by the Institution-wide Language Programme. Student guidance and welfare support is provided by Personal Tutors, the Careers Advisory Service, the University’s Special Needs Advisor, Study Advisors, Hall Wardens and the Students’ Union.

### **Career prospects**

In recent years, demand for biotechnologists has increased through the many developments in the industrial application and exploitation of biochemical processes, like the manufacture and use of enzymes, medical diagnostic reagents and therapeutic agents, and agricultural applications. Biological waste treatment is becoming increasingly important as legislative requirements become more stringent. Graduates are capable in assisting the industry in all of these issues and have a role in production, technical sales and research and development. In addition to the career opportunities in the biotechnological industries, the academic training our graduates receive equips them for positions in other industries, commerce and Government service.

### **Opportunities for study abroad or for placements**

The School participates in a number of exchange programmes under the EU Socrates scheme which includes the opportunity to take industrial training in another European country. Students have, as a result, been to a number of countries including Germany, France, Spain and Italy. Although not common, industrial training attachments have also been arranged in other countries including the United States of America and Australia.

## Educational aims of the programme

The Biotechnology programme aims to:

- Provide a programme of education which will enable its graduates to enter a career in the biotechnology-based industries as scientists or technologists in production and research and development.
- Provide a broadly based scientific and technological education whose graduates can also enter a career in other areas of applied biology or processing.
- Provide students with an opportunity to experience the application of their course work through a short placement in industry.
- Provide undergraduates with opportunities to develop their inter-personal and communication skills.

## Programme Outcomes

### *Knowledge and Understanding*

<p><b>A. Knowledge and understanding of:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. the fundamental concepts and techniques used in the production of bioproducts from living organisms,</li><li>2. bioprocessing and bioengineering,</li><li>3. the criteria used to select, specify and establish an overall process design and operating schedule for bioprocesses,</li><li>4. the technical and economic criteria used to choose the necessary equipment for bioprocessing.</li></ol>	<p><b>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</b> Lectures and practical classes provide the basic knowledge. A variety of coursework gives opportunities for extending knowledge and techniques. Individual and group projects reinforce techniques and give experience of practical applications.</p> <p><i>Assessment</i> Most knowledge is tested through a combination of coursework and unseen formal examinations. Project work, reports, oral presentations and computer-based exercises also contribute to the final assessment.</p>
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### *Skills and other attributes*

<p><b>B. Intellectual skills – able to:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. analyse and solve problems,</li><li>2. critically evaluate scientific literature,</li><li>3. assess problems and design experiments to test hypotheses,</li><li>4. apply knowledge to new problems,</li><li>5. plan, conduct and report on an individual research project.</li></ol>	<p><b>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</b> Topics 1 and 2 are essential components of the programme and are embedded in many parts of the programme. Topics 3 and 4 are introduced in Part 2 course-work. Topics 3, 4 and 5 are fully developed during the individual research project in Part 3 of the programme.</p> <p><i>Assessment</i> Coursework is structured to assess topics 1, 2, 3 and 4. Topics 3, 4 and 5 are assessed as components of the individual research project.</p>
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<p><b>C. Practical skills</b> – able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. quantitatively evaluate the performance of bioprocessing equipment,</li><li>2. perform chemical, physical and microbiological laboratory tests to assess the quality bioproducts,</li><li>3. establish, screen and sub-clone from, a gene library,</li><li>4. produce and isolate an enzyme,</li><li>5. participate in, and help develop, research and product development programmes relating to bioproducts,</li><li>6. monitor and evaluate process operation,</li><li>7. establish, evaluate and operate control procedures for safe process operation.</li></ol>	<p><b>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</b> All topics are introduced by lectures but are developed fully by appropriate laboratory exercises during all Parts of the programme.</p> <p><i>Assessment</i> All topics will be assessed by coursework.</p>
<p><b>D. Transferable skills</b> – able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. work as an individual, in a small group or as part of a larger team,</li><li>2. prepare reports and make presentations that effectively present the results of investigations carried out,</li><li>3. critically assess and present data using appropriate statistical techniques,</li><li>4. make effective use of information technology,</li><li>5. consider and manage career choice.</li></ol>	<p><b>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</b> The development of transferable skills is integrated into many parts of the programme. Students are required to work both as individuals and as part of groups. Career skills (topic 5) are introduced in a Part 1 module and reinforced by the industrial experience period between Parts 2 and 3..</p> <p><i>Assessment</i> All topics are assessed both by coursework within the modules and in formal examinations.</p>
<p><i>Please note:</i> This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably expect to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in module and programme handbooks.</p>	