

Programme Specification: Post Graduate Taught

For Academic Year 2026/27

1. Course Summary

Names of programme and award title(s)	Pre-Master's in Biomedical Science (Graduate Diploma)
Award type	Graduate Diploma
Mode of study	Full-time
Framework of Higher Education Qualification (FHEQ) level of final award	Level 6
Normal length of the programme	1 year
Maximum period of registration	The normal length as specified above plus 3 years
Location of study	Keele Campus
Accreditation (if applicable)	n/a
Regulator	Office for Students (OfS)
Tuition Fees	UK Students: Full-time fee for 2026/27 is £7,800 International students: Full-time fee for 2026/27 is £12,100

How this information might change: Please read the important information at <http://www.keele.ac.uk/student-agreement/>. This explains how and why we may need to make changes to the information provided in this document and to help you understand how we will communicate with you if this happens.

2. Overview of the Programme

The Graduate Diploma in Biomedical Science provides a discipline-specific pathway (pre-master's year) into the taught Biomedical Science master's level programmes. It is a one-year full-time programme designed for both home and international students with life sciences' background who wish to study at postgraduate level for the MSc Biomedical Science (Blood Science) or MSc Biomedical Science (Medical Microbiology). The programme is open to science graduates who do not meet the academic criteria for a direct entry into the MSc. The overall aim is to provide the students with the academic background necessary for the master's programme and to enable them to develop and practise the subject specific academic skills required for the intensive pace of study at master's level.

3. Aims of the programme

The broad aims of the programme are to enable you to:

- provide students with core knowledge, understanding and skills relevant to Biomedical Science.
- produce skilled and motivated graduates who are suitably prepared for the MSc in Biomedical Science and for further study.
- cultivate interest in the biosciences, particularly at the cellular and molecular level, within a caring and intellectually stimulating environment.

- get an accurate insight into the role of Biomedical Scientists in the diagnosis, treatment and monitoring of disease.
- develop an understanding of the analytical, clinical and diagnostic aspects of Cellular Pathology, Clinical Biochemistry, Medical Microbiology, Blood Transfusion, Clinical Immunology and Haematology pathology laboratories.
- promote the development of a range of key skills, for use in all areas where numeracy and an objective, scientific approach to problem-solving are valued.
- provide students with a wide range of learning activities and a diverse assessment strategy in order to fully develop their employability and academic skills, ensuring both professional and academic attainment.
- promote the development of critical thinking, autonomous learning, independent research and communication skills to help prepare the students for the MSc in Biomedical Science and for a lifetime of continued professional development.

Distinctive features of this programme are:

- The programme provides an opportunity to be part of a culture of innovation and creativity at the cutting edge of biomedical science.
- The programme provides a unique pathway to the MSc in Biomedical Science (Blood Science) and MSc Biomedical Science (Medical Microbiology). Both routes of the Biomedical Science MSc are accredited and therefore recognised by the Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS).
- The programme draws on the resources and expertise of external practitioners from the University Hospital of North Staffordshire's Pathology Department and takes an integrated approach to studying the disease process from a biomedical practitioner's perspective.
- The programme offers the students an insight into the variety of techniques used from classical biochemistry through to more recent molecular pathological investigations, identification of person-based drug targets and to techniques and technologies currently under development.
- The programme allows international students to benefit from English language support that will help them to develop their academic English language skills.

4. What you will learn

The intended learning outcomes of the programme (what students should know, understand and be able to do at the end of the programme), can be described under the following headings:

- Subject knowledge and understanding
- Subject specific skills
- Key or transferable skills (including employability skills)

Subject knowledge and understanding

Successful students will be able to:

- Have developed an understanding of the analytical, clinical and diagnostic aspects of Cellular Pathology, Clinical Biochemistry, Medical Microbiology, Blood Transfusion, Clinical Immunology and Haematology pathology laboratories.
- Have explored the clinical, diagnostic and research implications within the fields of Clinical Biochemistry, Medical Immunology and Haematology.
- Have gained an appreciation of the major health issues affecting the UK.
- Have developed an appreciation of the pivotal role played by a modern pathology laboratory in the diagnosis and treatment of various diseases
- Be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the terminology and nomenclature of the discipline.
- Have developed the intellectual skills needed to research, extract and analyse relevant information from scientific literature and databases at an advanced level.
- Have developed knowledge of the scientific method, formulation and testing of hypotheses and understanding that scientific knowledge is complex, contested and subject to continuous advance
- Be able to analyse experimental data, present it in appropriate graphical format and interpret the results
- Have developed the ability to acquire, analyse, synthesise, summarise, present and communicate information and ideas from a wide range of sources

Key or transferable skills (including employability skills)

Successful students will be able to:

- Develop and sustain effective approaches to learning and study including time management, flexibility, creativity and intellectual integrity
- Acquire, analyse, synthesise, summarise and present information and ideas from a wide range of sources

- Process and present data using appropriate techniques
- Work effectively with a range of types of information technology
- Communicate effectively by written, spoken and graphical means using appropriate techniques
- Study independently and have organisational skills
- Work alone or with others to achieve an objective
- Motivate themselves and sustain that motivation over an extended period of time

We are committed to developing not only your intellectual, but also personal and professional skills. Alongside our innovative programme, Keele University offers a wide range of enriching activities that offer added value and aim to maximise your potential. Further information can be found at: <http://www.keele.ac.uk/journey>

5. How is the programme taught?

Diversity, flexibility and inclusivity is at the heart of our Education Strategy. Your Student Voice helps us to shape what we do and we include students and local employers in our decision-making process. The delivery of our programme will include the following types of activities

- **Digital material:** Traditional 'lectures' are often redesigned for online consumption, giving you more flexibility to decide how, when and where to study. This can include provision of short videos, directed reading, key learning outcomes and Forms that allow you to ask questions anonymously.
- **Live, campus-based seminars:** Delivered by experts in the field - and often external, guest speakers - seminars are ordinarily recorded on the day so you can focus better on the discussion during the live event. Live, campus-based tutorials and workshops: Often designed to support online lectures.
- **Tutorials and workshops** help promote social learning, develop a sense of community and give you an opportunity to deepen your understanding of core issues, ask questions and discuss content with other students and your tutors.
- **Live, case-based learning (CBL) tutorials:** In CBL, you will work in small groups to discuss patient cases that help you to contextualise much of the content taught across the programme and develop key skills such as leadership, communication and evidence-based problem solving.

Apart from these formal activities, students are also provided with regular opportunities to talk through particular areas of difficulty, and any special learning needs they may have, with their Academic Mentors, module lecturers or Programme Director on a one-to-one basis.

6. Teaching Staff

University life is not just about the content of your degree. It is also an opportunity to network, to speak to people working in fields that excite you. Here in Life Sciences, you will meet a diverse range of staff that you can see by using the following link: <https://www.keele.ac.uk/lifesci/people/>.

We will also invite speakers from the School of Pharmacy, Medicine and local NHS Trusts. Our staff include world-leading researchers, clinical practitioners and experts in learning and teaching. As part of their training, all staff complete post-graduate courses on learning and teaching. Some take this to Masters level and beyond, choosing to specialise in pedagogic research to ensure that our programmes are taught to the very highest standards.

The University will attempt to minimise changes to our core teaching teams, however, delivery of the programme depends on having a sufficient number of staff with the relevant expertise to ensure that the programme is taught to the appropriate academic standard. Staff turnover, for example where key members of staff leave, fall ill or go on research leave, may result in changes to the programme's content. The University will endeavour to ensure that any impact on students is limited if such changes occur.

7. What is the structure of the programme?

All the subjects taught on the Pre-Master's are also part of the undergraduate curriculum, being drawn from the Biomedical Science degree programme. All subjects on the Pre-Master's are compulsory. There are no optional subjects. There is, however, an opportunity to develop an area of individual research interest in the non-experimental project module. The diploma consists of a total of 90 credits where two of the modules are worth 30 credits each and all the others are worth 15. An additional English module (English for Academic Purposes) will be offered for non-native English speakers if required. This module will not form part of the overall award but successful completion is required for progression to the Masters' programme.

Module Lists

Level 6

Compulsory modules	Module Code	Credits	Period
Biochemistry Research Project (non-experimental) - ISP	LSC-30014	15	Semester 1-2
Academic and Professional Development in Bioscience	LSC-30096	0	Semester 1-2
Biomedical Blood Science	LSC-30098	30	Semester 1-2
Advanced Clinical Pathology	LSC-30100	30	Semester 1-2
Case Studies in Microbiology and Immunology	LSC-30078	15	Semester 2

Optional modules	Module Code	Credits	Period
English for Academic Purposes 3 (EAP 3)	ENL-90001	15	Semester 1-2
English for Academic Purposes 4 (EAP 4)	ENL-90002	15	Semester 1-2
English for Academic Purposes 2 (EAP 2)	ENL-90006	15	Semester 1-2

Please note: All new international students entering the university will provide a sample of Academic English during their registration. Using this sample, the Language Centre may recommend you take an optional English language module. *NB:* students can take an EAP module only with the approval of the English Language Programme Director and are not able to take any other Language modules in the same academic year..

Learning Outcomes

The table below sets out what students learn in the programme and the modules in which that learning takes place. Details of how learning outcomes are assessed through these modules can be found in module specifications.

Intellectual skills	
Learning Outcome	Module in which this is delivered
Develop an understanding of the analytical, clinical and diagnostic aspects of Cellular Pathology, Clinical Biochemistry, Medical Microbiology, Blood Transfusion, Clinical Immunology and Haematology pathology laboratories	Biochemistry Research Project (non-experimental) - ISP - LSC-30014 Case Studies in Microbiology and Immunology - LSC-30078 Biomedical Blood Science - LSC-30098 Advanced Clinical Pathology - LSC-30100 Assessment types: Reports, patient information leaflet and examinations
Explore the clinical, diagnostic and research implications within the fields of Clinical Biochemistry, Medical Immunology and Haematology	Case Studies in Microbiology and Immunology - LSC-30078 Biomedical Blood Science - LSC-30098 Advanced Clinical Pathology - LSC-30100 Assessment types: Essay, essay plan, reports, patient information leaflet and examinations
Develop the intellectual needed to research, extract and analyse relevant information from scientific literature and databases at an advanced level	Biochemistry Research Project (non-experimental) - ISP - LSC-30014 Assessment types: Essay, essay plan, reports, poster, data analysis, literature review, research portfolio, literature review, patient information leaflet and examinations
Analyse experimental data, present it in appropriate graphical format and interpret the results	Biochemistry Research Project (non-experimental) - ISP - LSC-30014 Assessment types: Literature review, data analysis and poster

Key or Transferable Skills (graduate attributes)	
Learning Outcome	Module in which this is delivered
Gain an appreciation of the major health issues affecting the UK	Case Studies in Microbiology and Immunology - LSC-30078 Biomedical Blood Science - LSC-30098 Advanced Clinical Pathology - LSC-30100 Assessment types: Essay, essay plan, clinical report, patient information leaflet and examinations
Have develop the ability to acquire, analyse, synthesise, summarise, present and communicate information and ideas from a wide range of sources	Biochemistry Research Project (non-experimental) - ISP - LSC-30014 Case Studies in Microbiology and Immunology - LSC-30078 Biomedical Blood Science - LSC-30098 Advanced Clinical Pathology - LSC-30100 Assessment types: Essay, essay plan, poster, data analysis, reports, literature review, research portfolio, patient information leaflet and examinations

Subject Specific Skills	
Learning Outcome	Module in which this is delivered
Develop an appreciation of the pivotal role played by a modern pathology laboratory in the diagnosis and treatment of various diseases	Case Studies in Microbiology and Immunology - LSC-30078 Biomedical Blood Science - LSC-30098 Advanced Clinical Pathology - LSC-30100 Assessment types: Essay, essay plan, clinical report, patient information leaflet and examinations

Subject Knowledge and Understanding	
Learning Outcome	Module in which this is delivered
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding the terminology and nomenclature of the discipline	Case Studies in Microbiology and Immunology - LSC-30078 Biomedical Blood Science - LSC-30098 Advanced Clinical Pathology - LSC-30100 Assessment types: Essay, essay plan, clinical report, patient information leaflet and examinations
Develop knowledge of the scientific method, formulation and testing of hypotheses and understanding that scientific knowledge is complex, contested and subject to continuous advance	Biochemistry Research Project (non-experimental) - ISP - LSC-30014 Case Studies in Microbiology and Immunology - LSC-30078 Biomedical Blood Science - LSC-30098 Advanced Clinical Pathology - LSC-30100 Assessment types: Essay, essay plan, poster, data analysis, reports, literature review, research portfolio, patient information leaflet and examinations

8. Final and intermediate awards

Graduate Diploma	90 credits	You will require at least 90 credits
Graduate Certificate	60 credits	You will require at least 60 credits

9. How is the Programme Assessed?

Our assessment strategy is designed to be authentic and diverse so that you can develop key skills that meet academic, professional body and employer expectations. Module managers will provide appropriate guidance for each assessment and the marking criteria that will be used to assess your work.

Our assessment strategy will help you to develop and evidence your ability to:

- **Provide evidence-based solutions** to current scientific problems: Most often this is assessed through a range of essays, portfolios and literature reviews.
- **Critically reflect on current issues:** Reflective writing is an increasingly important skill in the workforce, particularly to healthcare professions. It can help you to identify personal strengths and weaknesses so that you can learn from your experience and maximise your potential.
- **Present scientific findings:** Often these are reports or non- experimental projects that test your ability to pose scientific hypotheses, understand methodologies, present findings, analyse data and situate your work in the current literature.
- **Communicate effectively** with a range of audiences: These can include scientific posters, patient information leaflets, wikis, blogs or oral presentations.
- **Work professionally:** Your independent non-experimental project will give you an opportunity to demonstrate a range of professional skills such as leadership, innovation, time keeping, communication and the ability to work safely and ethically. Work effectively in a team: Most often this is assessed through a literature review and data analysis in the form of poster.
- **Solve problems in a time-limited fashion:** Often in the work environment we are asked to solve problems in a relatively short amount of time. Our online tests and end-of-semester, online, open-book examinations will help you to evidence these skills.

We aim to provide constructive feedback within 3 weeks of submission for all assessed work. This is often phrased in terms of strengths, weaknesses and ways to improve to help you focus on key areas that can improve the quality of your work in the future.

10. Accreditation

This programme does not have accreditation from an external body.

11. University Regulations

The University Regulations form the framework for learning, teaching and assessment and other aspects of the

student experience. Further information about the University Regulations can be found at:
<http://www.keele.ac.uk/student-agreement/>

If this programme has any exemptions, variations or additions to the University Regulations these will be detailed in an Annex at the end of this document titled 'Programme-specific regulations'.

12. What are the typical admission requirements for the Programme?

The programme is open to graduates who do not hold a degree in relevant qualifications for entry to the MSc in Biomedical Blood Science. It is intended to provide students with the academic background necessary for the master's programme in Biomedical Blood Science. The principal criterion for admission is successful completion of a Life Science Bachelor programme. Consideration will be given to candidates who do not meet these criteria, but can evidence appropriate, alternative professional qualifications and/or experience.

Applicants who do not have English as their first language must evidence an IELTS score of at least 6.0 or equivalent.

English for Academic Purposes

Please note: All new international students entering the university will provide a sample of Academic English during their registration. Using this sample, the Language Centre may allocate you to an English language module which will become compulsory. Students identified as requiring further systematic enhancement of their academic English skills will be enrolled on an English for Academic Purposes module in addition to their 90 study credits. The results for the EAP module will not form part of the overall award but successful completion is required for progression to the Masters' programme.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is considered on a case-by-case basis and those interested should contact the Programme Director. The University's guidelines on this can be found here:
<https://www.keele.ac.uk/qa/programmesandmodules/recognitionofpriorlearning/>

13. How are students supported on the programme?

The School of Life Sciences operates an open door policy. This means that you can contact any of our staff via email to request a meeting or discuss any problem that you may be experiencing.

In addition to the open door policy, you can also contact the following people across Life Sciences for help and support:

- Programme Director or Director of Education for programme-, discipline- or School-related issues
- Module Manager for module-related issues
- Academic mentors for academic help and guidance
- Student Experience and Support Officers for more personal or pastoral help
- Early Resolution Officer to help advocate for you, for example, if you would like to raise a concern
- Student Voice are a group of students from your programme that can advocate for you to the School

Student Services also offer a comprehensive range of specialist services that help you at any time from enrolment to graduation. The following link will provide more information:
<https://www.keele.ac.uk/students/student-services/>

14. Learning Resources

Workshops, tutorials and case based learning are delivered in modern teaching rooms across the University.

You will have access to an extensive collection of books and journals both at our library here on campus and the health library situated at the University Hospital of North Staffordshire.

You will also have access to a comprehensive range of ebooks, journals and published papers all available online.

We make extensive use of our virtual Keele Learning Environment (KLE) and Microsoft Teams to host a wide range of learning resources such as lectures and guidance materials and to facilitate live debates such as online discussions or Q&As

15. Other Learning Opportunities

Within the School of Life Sciences there are a wide range of seminar opportunities that attract a number of expert researchers from both Keele University itself, local hospitals or research groups and internationally from around the world. All Pre-Master's students are encouraged to take full advantage of the opportunities these seminars provide and are more than welcome to attend as many of these sessions as individual students feel appropriate. Such seminars are widely advertised around Life Sciences and may be published via the KLE noticeboard.

16. Additional Costs

As to be expected there will be additional costs for inter-library loans and potential overdue library fines, print and graduation. We do not anticipate any further costs for this programme.

17. Quality management and enhancement

The quality and standards of learning in this programme are subject to a continuous process of monitoring, review and enhancement.

- The School Education Committee is responsible for reviewing and monitoring quality management and enhancement procedures and activities across the School.
- Individual modules and the programme as a whole are reviewed and enhanced every year in the annual programme review which takes place at the end of the academic year.
- The programmes are run in accordance with the University's Quality Assurance procedures and are subject to periodic reviews under the Revalidation process.

Student evaluation of, and feedback on, the quality of learning on every module takes place every year using a variety of different methods:

- The results of student evaluations of all modules are reported to module leaders and reviewed by the Programme Committee as part of annual programme review.
- Findings related to the programme from regular surveys of the student experience conducted by the University, are subjected to careful analysis and a planned response at programme and School level.
- Feedback received from representatives of students on the programme is considered and acted on at regular meetings of the Student Staff Voice Committee.

The University appoints senior members of academic staff from other universities to act as external examiners on all programmes. They are responsible for:

- Approving examination questions
- Confirming all marks which contribute to a student's degree
- Reviewing and giving advice on the structure and content of the programme and assessment procedures

Information about current external examiner(s) can be found here:

<http://www.keele.ac.uk/qa/externalexaminers/currentexternalexaminers/>

18. The principles of programme design

The Pre-Master's in Biomedical Science programme builds on significant research and teaching strengths in the School of Life Sciences. The programme's structure reflects the University's commitment to interdisciplinarity and internationalisation and to providing flexible learning environments for students. It aims to develop varied skills and capacities in a dynamic learning environment, using multi-media and technology resources and drawing on significant research and teaching expertise. It was also designed in a way that meets and closely reflects the requirements of the Quality Assurance Agency's Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.

The programme described in this document has been drawn up with reference to, and in accordance with the guidance set out in, the following documents:

a. UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education:

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code>

b. QAA Subject Benchmark Statement: Biosciences (2023): https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/sbs/sbs-biosciences-23.pdf?sfvrsn=b570a881_6

c. Keele University Regulations and Guidance for Students and Staff: <http://www.keele.ac.uk/regulations>

d. Royal Society of Biology Degree Accreditation Handbook:

https://thebiologist.rsb.org.uk/images/RSB_Accreditation_Handbook.pdf

19. Annex - Programme-specific regulations

Programme Regulations: Pre-Master's in Biomedical Science

Final Award and Award Titles	Graduate Diploma in Biomedical Science
Intermediate Award(s)	Graduate Certificate in Biomedical Science
Last modified	n/a
Programme Specification	https://www.keele.ac.uk/qa/programmespecifications

The University's Academic Regulations which can be found on the Keele University website (<https://www.keele.ac.uk/regulations/>)[1] apply to and regulate the programme, other than in instances where the specific programme regulations listed below over-ride them. These programme regulations list:

- *Exemptions* which are characterised by the omission of the relevant regulation.
- *Variations* which are characterised by the replacement of part of the regulation with alternative wording.
- *Additional Requirements* which set out what additional rules that apply to students in relation to this programme.

The following **exemptions**, **variations** and **additional requirements** to the University regulations have been checked by Academic Services and have been approved by the Faculty Education Committee.

A) EXEMPTIONS

The clause(s) listed below describe where an exemption from the University's Academic Regulations exists:

For the whole duration of their studies, students on this Programme are exempt from the following regulations:

No exemptions apply

B) VARIATIONS

The clause(s) listed below describe where a variation from the University's Academic Regulations exists:

No variations apply

Additional Requirements

The programme requirements listed below are in addition to the University's Academic Regulations:

Additional requirement 1:

The pass mark for the Graduate Diploma is 40% and students must pass all modules to obtain the Graduate Diploma. An overall 50% mark is required to gain entry to the MSc Biomedical Science (Blood Science) and MSc Biomedical Science (Medical Microbiology) in line with the 2:2 degree category required for entry onto the MSc programme.

Non-native English speaking students enrolled on an English for Academic Purposes (EAP 1,2 or 3) module in addition to their 90 study credits are required to successfully complete the module for progression to the Masters' programme.

[1] References to University Regulations in this document apply to the content of the University's Regulatory Framework as set out on the University website here <https://www.keele.ac.uk/regulations/>.

Version History

This document

Date Approved: 09 June 2026

Previous documents

Version No	Year	Owner	Date Approved	Summary of and rationale for changes
1	2025/26	MIRNA MAARABOUNI	15 August 2025	
1	2024/25	MIRNA MAARABOUNI	26 June 2025	
1	2023/24	MIRNA MAARABOUNI		