

Agriculture

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- National Diploma in Agriculture
- National Certificate in Agriculture
- Level 3 Apprenticeship in Livestock Production
- Level 2 Apprenticeship in Agriculture
- Multi-Skilling Programme

Agriculture

The agriculture sector is one of the largest employers in Northern Ireland and produces a gross output of just over £1.2 billion each year. With the current issues facing the agricultural industry it is essential that those considering a career in this sector are capable of adapting to change and availing of market opportunities.

Agriculture courses at Greenmount Campus are highly practical and aim to develop students' skills to enable them to work effectively and efficiently in their chosen area.

Facilities

The Greenmount Campus Estate provides an outstanding natural resource and is used by students to undertake 'learning by doing' projects across all courses.

The Estate is made up of;

- The Farm Development Centre, a 152 hectare mixed lowland farm with 180 dairy cows and replacements, 200 ewes and 30 hectares of arable crops and potatoes.
- The Livestock Development Centre located at the Abbey Farm which is a 90 hectare lowland unit with 50 suckler cows and 200 finishing cattle and the Hill Farm a 1,000 hectare unit, comprising 110 suckler cows and 1,100 ewes.
- The Organic Unit, a 36 hectare lowland farm with 25 suckler cows, 75 ewes and 4 hectares of crops.



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“The three years I spent at Greenmount were great; giving me the chance to meet new people, make new friends, develop new skills...”

Career profile: Andrew Kennedy

Andrew Kennedy, from Ballymena, achieved his National Diploma in Agriculture at Greenmount Campus in June 2008. Andrew is passionate about dairying and works alongside his father managing their herd of 50 pedigree Holsteins and 30 pedigree Texel ewes. He is a member of the Northern Ireland Holstein Young Breeders Club and has won many awards at both local and national level. On completing his course, Andrew was appointed Breeding Adviser with Cogent Breeding Ltd, the UK's largest bull stud.

“I am really looking forward to this exciting challenge, especially sharing my knowledge of cows with other like minded dairy producers. The three years I spent at Greenmount were great; giving me the chance to meet new people, make new friends, develop new skills and grow up in a friendly and supportive environment. The National Diploma is an excellent qualification which has helped me gain many of the competences required for the world of work including communication, team working, written skills and the technical knowledge required to be a dairy breeding adviser.”

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National Diploma in Agriculture

The National Diploma course prepares young people through a broad-based programme of education and training, for a future in farming and equips them with the skills to deliver technical services to the industry.

Fact File

Course duration:

Three years full-time including 52 weeks work experience (Year 2).

Entry requirements:

Four GCSEs at Grade C or above which should preferably include Maths, English and a Science subject plus the equivalent of one years relevant industry experience which can be acquired prior to leaving school, or an NCA in Agriculture with a minimum of seven units at credit level, or where applicants are over 18, duration of relevant industry experience, performance in a multiple choice assessment and an interview may be used to determine suitability.

Progression opportunities:

Students may progress to an appropriate Foundation Degree / HND or onto the Degree in Agricultural Technology.

Course location:

Greenmount Campus.

Course Manager:

Kenneth Johnston
Telephone:
028 9442 6769
Email:
kenneth.johnston@dardni.gov.uk

Course content

First year units include:

- Animal health
- Livestock production
- Machinery operation
- Principles of plant and soil science
- Workshop and estate skills

In second year students are on placement and develop skills in:

- Commercial decision-making and
- Problem solving

Units in the final year include:

- Agriculture and the environment
- Business management plus four options from dairy, beef, sheep, organic, crop production and breeding and nutrition
- Business planning
- Pollution control and waste management

Career destinations

The majority of students find employment in practical agriculture. On completion of the course students also have the skills to work in a variety of businesses connected with farming, mainly in the feed, agrochemical and fertiliser sectors. Opportunities also exist in farm or enterprise management or in education.

Student profile

Diarmuid McCann



Having been brought up on a dairy farm in the Portglenone area, Diarmuid has always had an interest in agriculture.

" I am really enjoying the course which covers a wide range of practical skills across many husbandries. Facilities for students are excellent and there is always something for everyone to do once classes have finished. This is what I have always wanted to do and so far so good. The course is all that I was hoping for and more!"

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National Certificate in Agriculture

The main aim of the course is to develop the skills and knowledge associated with animal and crop husbandry. The course introduces production and management skills and while principles are taught in the classroom, the main emphasis is on practical application on the farm.

Fact File

Course duration:

One year full-time.

Entry requirements:

Two Grade Cs or three Grade Ds at GCSE plus the equivalent of one years relevant industry experience which can be acquired prior to leaving school.

Progression opportunities:

Students may progress to the Modern Apprenticeship or the National Diploma in Agriculture course.

Course location:

Greenmount Campus.

Course Manager:

Kenneth Johnston
Telephone:
028 9442 6769
Email:
kenneth.johnston@dardni.gov.uk

Course content

The emphasis is on the application of skills and knowledge and over half of the course is practical. Students study four core units:

- Crop establishment
- Effective working practices
- Livestock nutrition, health and welfare
- Tractor operation and maintenance

and a further six units from the following:

- Construction and estate skills
- Dairy/sheep/beef/arable crop husbandry
- Environmental protection and improvement
- Grassland and forage crop husbandry

Student profile

Adam Killen



Having been raised on a mixed enterprise farm near Newbuildings, Co. Londonderry, Adam has always had a keen interest in working outdoors.

" I am really enjoying the course especially the practical skills in beef and dairy production which I will be able to use on my home farm. The facilities at the College are excellent and I am making a lot of new friends."

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NVQ Level 3 Apprenticeship in Livestock Production

This Apprenticeship in Livestock Production provides education and training to NVQ Level 3. The course reinforces production and management skills in a chosen livestock enterprise and provides the flexibility to combine work and education.

Fact File

Course duration:

78 weeks day-release including work experience.

Entry requirements:

Level 2 Apprenticeship in Agriculture, NCA or equivalent plus two Grade Cs or three Grade Ds at GCSE or equivalent.

Direct entry from applicants over 18 will be considered on duration of industry experience, performance in a multiple choice assessment on agricultural knowledge and interview.

Progression opportunities:

Students who successfully complete this course may be able to progress to the Higher National Diploma in Agriculture.

Course location:

Greenmount Campus.

Course Manager:

Derek McKinstry
Telephone:
028 9442 6644
Email:
derek.mckinstry@dardni.gov.uk

Course content

Students study one of the following livestock enterprises:

- Beef production
- Milk production
- Poultry production

and three subsidiary subjects:

- Chainsaw: maintenance and crosscutting
- DIY artificial insemination
- Emergency first aid
- Pesticide application
- Use of the telescopic handler

and Essential skills in:

- Application of number
- Communication

and Key skills in:

- Information technology

Start earning now

Funding may be available under the ApprenticeshipsNI training initiative. As an apprentice you will be in paid employment with an employer from the beginning of the programme. The hours worked and the amount paid will be agreed with your employer before you start employment.

Career destinations

NVQ Level 3 students are employed in practical agriculture jobs. On completion of the course they will have the necessary skills to work in a variety of businesses connected with farming, mainly in the feed, agrochemical and fertiliser sectors.

Student profile:

Ian Telford



" After completing my NCA I was keen to gain a further qualification in Agriculture whilst working on the family farm. The NVQ Level 3 programme was ideal for this as I am able to work on the home farm and also attend classes one day per week. I have really enjoyed the programme to date and found it useful in developing my knowledge of subjects such as animal health, agri-environment and nutrition. It also gives me the opportunity to catch up with friends from my NCA year at Greenmount who come from other parts of the province."

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NVQ Level 2 Apprenticeship in Agriculture

This course places an emphasis on practical skills associated with livestock production, grassland husbandry and machinery. This is supported by a half-day of class each week where the underpinning knowledge and theory relating to the practices are taught.

Fact File

Course duration:

78 weeks. Students attend class one day per week with the other four days being spent on the work experience provider's farm. Students may have to attend Greenmount Campus for two weeks in the first year to complete additional training.

Entry requirements:

Two Grade Cs or three Grade Ds at GCSE plus the equivalent of one years relevant industry experience which can be acquired prior to leaving school. Applicants will also be required to pass a multiple choice assessment testing their agricultural knowledge at interview.

Progression opportunities:

Students who successfully complete the Level 2 Award can progress to the Level 3 Apprenticeship (in the enterprise of their choice) or onto a National Diploma course.

Course location:

Greenmount Campus, Enniskillen Campus and outcentres.

Course Manager:

Derek McKinstry
Telephone: 028 9442 6644
Email: derek.mckinstry@dardni.gov.uk

Course content

Basic skills include:

- Animal health and welfare
- Animal selection and breeding
- Feeding livestock
- Keeping farm records
- Milking (optional)
- Routine treatments, for example, dosing/pour on, injecting
- Tractor operation

and two subsidiary subjects:

- Emergency first aid
- Foundation module of pesticide application
- Good business sense
- Manual handling
- Sheep shearing

and Essential skills in:

- Application of number
- Communication

and Key skills in:

- Information Technology

Start earning now.

Funding may be available under the ApprenticeshipsNI training initiative. As an apprentice you will be in paid employment with an employer from the beginning of the programme. The hours worked and the amount paid will be agreed with your employer before you start employment.

Career destinations

Level 2 apprentices will remain on their home farm or be employed in practical agriculture. Additional management skills are gained on the Level 3 Apprenticeship course.

Student profile:

William McKeown



" I wanted to enrol on this course as I was seeking full-time employment on a farm and needed to learn more about livestock in general. I have learnt a lot about animal health, diseases, and how to spot and treat them. I can now stomach tube a calf, a skill I have learned on the course, which has been useful because the farmer didn't have time to teach me. I value the experience gained from working on other farms around the country. I came to the course not knowing anybody but have made friends with people who have similar interests to me."

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Multi-Skilling Programme

This programme aims to provide young people with the opportunity not only to gain a trade but also to train in agriculture. This means that they will have the necessary skills and knowledge to secure employment off the farm and to farm on a part-time basis.

Fact File

Course duration:

59-78 weeks (depending on the main programme category).

Entry requirements:

NVQ in Agriculture:
Two Grade Cs or three Grade Ds at GCSE plus the equivalent of one years relevant industry experience which can be acquired prior to leaving school. Applicants will also be required to pass a multiple choice assessment testing their agricultural knowledge at interview.

NVQ in trade area:

Applicants must meet the entry requirements for 'ApprenticeshipNI' or 'Training for Success' which are set by the Training Organisation which provides the training in their trade area.

Progression opportunities:

Students who complete the programme may be eligible to progress onto a Level 3 Apprenticeship in their trade area and the NVQ Level 3 in Agriculture.

Course location:

Greenmount Campus.

Course Manager:

Derek McKinstry
Telephone:
028 9442 6644
Email: derek.mckinstry@dardni.gov.uk

Course content

Students undertake two NVQ Level 2 courses, one in Livestock Production and the other in their chosen trade area for example, joinery, plumbing, plastering, bricklaying or motor mechanics. Training in the trade area will normally be delivered through day-release and work experience, organised by another training organisation.

Agriculture course delivery Students attend Greenmount Campus for six one-week blocks. Free on-site accommodation and bus transport will be provided (subject to approval).

Skills undertaken include:

- Grassland
- Health and safety
- Livestock husbandry and nutrition
- Machinery skills and maintenance
- Record keeping

Career destinations

Most trainees will be in work or will gain full-time employment in their chosen trade area and farm part-time.

Student profile:

Ryan McBride



" I come from a mixed farm with beef, suckler cows and poultry houses and hope to take over the running of the home farm sometime in the future. I joined the Multi-skilling course because I wanted to learn more about farming, especially how to dose and treat stock, the composition of meal and how much to feed. I have already met loads of new friends through this course. The last visit to a cereal farm was very interesting as I had never been on an arable farm before."