

## **Your Degree in Herbal Science....What Next?**

Herbal Science is the Science of Herbal Medicinal Products, Functional Foods and Natural Products applied to Healthcare and Medicine.

The programme focused on the production, characterisation and applications of herbal extracts and natural products. The herbal extracts and natural products are used as ingredients in the medicinal, pharmaceutical, cosmetic and food industries.

Herbal science is a field with many specialisations, including plant based medicine and healing.

### **What skills have I gained from my Herbal Science degree?**

You will gain experience in laboratory work during your degree and this will equip you with the skills you need to plan, conduct and evaluate experiments. It will also enable you to comply with health and safety regulations and research and interpret scientific literature.

Pursuing a Science career, your degree will have helped you develop a range of transferable skills that you can bring to many jobs. These include:

- analytical, data collection and problem-solving skills
- communication and presentation skills, e.g. the ability to reason clearly and to communicate complex ideas, develop and write research proposals
- computational and data-processing skills
- data analysis using a range of appropriate statistical methods and packages
- identify and predict trends and patterns
- interpret and evaluate events, information, and ideas
- strategic thinking
- problem solving skills
- report writing
- research skills
- teamwork, e.g. by working on projects in a group
- technical skills, e.g. use instruments and identify and classify materials
- time-management and organisational skills

### **What Career Options Will I Have?**

Career opportunities in herbal sciences vary from the commercial to the scientific. Career fields in herbal sciences include herbalist, manufacturing consultant, industry representative or entrepreneurial grower. You may wish to pursue research projects sponsored by either pharmacological commercial interests or university research grants.

***Graduates can expect to work in a variety of sectors including***

Healthcare/Cosmetic Industry  
Food Industry/ Nutraceutical Industry  
Biopharmaceutical Industry  
Quality Control/Analysis  
Medicinal Plant Production  
Herbal industry representative, consultant, formulator, manufacturer or manager  
Production and processing specialist  
Researcher  
Herb cultivator or wild crafter  
Work in the health/wellness/supplements/cosmetics industry

***And following further study:***

Dietician  
Teaching  
Clinical Herbal Medicine  
Organic Horticulture  
Natural medicine  
Ethnobotany, acupuncture and Oriental medicine  
Phytotherapy  
Botany  
Horticulture  
Pharmacognosy  
Pharmacology  
Medicine  
Nursing  
Nutrition

***Graduates can also look for employment in the following relevant areas:***

Quality control/quality assurance  
Sales  
Market research  
Technical support  
Careers in pharmaceuticals, biopharmaceuticals, biotechnology, agriculture, food, horticulture, retail, educational, research.

Another subfield in herbal science is ***herbal medicine***, which is a type of complementary and alternative medicine. Herbal medicine is also an important part of traditional Chinese medicine.

The Herbal Science degree gives the educational foundation necessary to pursue a career as a medical herbalist. The IIMH accepts and recognises this BSc Honours degree programme as constituting Part I of its professional training requirement for qualification as a medical herbalist/practitioner in Ireland. (Further study/training is required to achieve Part II of the IIMH professional requirements – see post graduate study section below for further info)

**Naturopath**

Practicing naturopathic physicians treat patients seeking herbal remedies and other alternative treatments to various ailments, mental health disorders or nutritional concerns.

**Disclaimer:** Information is provided in good faith by the CIT Careers Service. CIT, the Careers Service, and any contributing third party shall have no legal liability or responsibility for any individual's decision made on the basis of this information.

## **Oriental Medicine and Acupuncture Practitioner**

Oriental or Chinese medicine is the overall category for a variety of therapeutic disciplines that originated in the Far East. Acupuncture is perhaps the most well-known of these, but breathing techniques and particular herbal therapies are also classified Oriental medicine.

## **Self-Employment**

In order to develop a successful career, you will need to be prepared to dedicate time and energy to the initial establishment of a practice. Acquiring new patients, which is crucial to career development, can take some time, especially as new patients are often attracted by word of mouth.

Developing a business often involves raising public awareness of the benefits of herbal medicine. Other ways of developing a practice include giving presentations and lectures, running workshops and making use of networking opportunities.

After successfully qualifying and setting up a practice, many herbalists develop their skills and offer other complementary therapies to patients. These may include:

- aromatherapy;
- homeopathy;
- massage;
- osteopathy;
- bach flower remedies.

Diversifying into other areas is also likely to increase the number of patients and, therefore, the size of the practice.

Some herbalists work with other providers of complementary therapies at complementary health centers'. It may also be possible for herbalists with experience to move into teaching or training.

Research into the medical applications of herbal remedies is another possibility. Consultancy and public relations work may be available with companies involved in the natural health product industry.

## **Employers**

*Some examples of companies who may offer work experience to herbal science students.*

<b>UK</b>		
Manufacturing	Bulk herbal products Quality Assurance/ control	Herbs in a bottle
Manufacturing	Bulk organic herbal products	The Organic Herb Trading Company
<b>France</b>		
Research	Varies	IUT - Université d'Angers
Research	Pharmacy – Separation and isolation	University of Burgundy – Dijon

<b>Finland</b>		
Research	Plant Biotechnology	VTT-technical research facility
<b>Ireland</b>		
Manufacturing	Cosmetics	Bia Beauty
	Animal feed	Nutribio
Pharmaceutical	Conventional Quality Assurance	Novartis Ringaskiddy
Pharmaceutical	Quality assurance/ control	Icon engineering
Research	Varies	Teagasc - Ashtown
Research	Varies	Teagasc - Moorepark
Research	aquaponics research	UCC - BEES
Hospital	Lab	Portiuncula
Horticulture		Kylemore Abbey

## Graduate Employment

### *Careers in the Herbal Science Industry*

If you are interested in working in industry, the following websites will provide lists of companies in Ireland.

Enterprise Ireland has lists of Irish employers across all industry sectors, including up-to-date sector profiles. Check out; [www.enterprise-ireland.com](http://www.enterprise-ireland.com). Click on 'Source a Product or Service from Ireland' and 'Sector and Company Directories'.

**Tip:** The Industrial Development Agency (IDA) has a comprehensive list of all multi-national companies in Ireland. Companies who employ Science graduates are listed. Check out; [www.idaireland.com](http://www.idaireland.com). Click on 'Business in Ireland', select from the list of sectors and then click on 'Search Company Database' for a full list of companies.

- Register with gradireland to get email alerts on employment opportunities as well as job search advice; [www.gradireland.com](http://www.gradireland.com)
- Pick up free copies of the **Gradireland Directory** for Ireland (north and south) and, 'Ireland's 100 Leading Graduate Employers', which is available at CIT's Careers Service, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Student Centre.

## Postgraduate Study

Gaining a postgraduate qualification brings with it many benefits. It enables you to gain further, more specialized knowledge in your field of study. It can give you a specific technical, vocational or professional qualification and facilitate you in developing a range of key skills including; research, analysis, evaluation and written communication.

Or if you are looking for a change in direction there are many 'conversion' post graduate courses which are worth exploring. You can use [www.qualifax.ie](http://www.qualifax.ie) and type in 'conversion' and use the 'postgraduate' filter.

**Disclaimer:** Information is provided in good faith by the CIT Careers Service. CIT, the Careers Service, and any contributing third party shall have no legal liability or responsibility for any individual's decision made on the basis of this information.

For further information, go to the 'Further/Postgraduate Study' link on the Students page of our website; <http://www.mycit.ie/careers>.

Other websites include; [www.postgradireland.com](http://www.postgradireland.com) and [www.prospects.ac.uk](http://www.prospects.ac.uk)

For further information please contact the Careers Service on 021 4335772.

### **Post graduate clinical training:**

The clinical training programme developed by the Irish College of Traditional and Integrative Medicine (ICTIM) is accredited by the IIMH (The Irish Institute of Medical Herbalists). Graduates of this programme are eligible to apply for membership of the IIMH. This programme is open to all graduates but is especially relevant to all health care practitioners. It is a rigorous programme and requires commitment. More details regarding this programme may be found at <http://www.irishcollegeoftraditionalandintegrativemedicine.com>

### **Further Resources**

For career opportunities in Nutrition\Dietetics in the UK see [www.targetjobs.co.uk](http://www.targetjobs.co.uk)

**Tip:** If you are unsure about what direction to take after your degree, the gradireland Careers Report is a useful tool for matching your personal information and preferences to potential careers. Log on and register at [www.gradireland.com](http://www.gradireland.com) to use the report.

**Tip:** If you want to find out more information about what is involved in any of the job titles listed in this document, check out the *A to Z Occupation List* on [www.careersportal.ie](http://www.careersportal.ie)

### **Websites**

- [www.idaireland.com](http://www.idaireland.com)
- [www.enterprise-ireland.com](http://www.enterprise-ireland.com)
- [www.holisto.com](http://www.holisto.com) (Practitioner Training)
- [www.iimh.org](http://www.iimh.org) (The Irish Institute of Medical Herbalists)
- [www.iammh.com](http://www.iammh.com) (The Irish Association of Master Medical Herbalists)
- [www.gcwhite.co.uk/nimh.htm](http://www.gcwhite.co.uk/nimh.htm) (The National Institute of Medical Herbalists)
- [www.associationofmasterherbalists.co.uk](http://www.associationofmasterherbalists.co.uk) (Association of Master Herbalists)
- [www.ehtpa.eu](http://www.ehtpa.eu) (European Herbal & Traditional Medicine Practitioners Association)

### **Further Study**

- [www.prospects.ac.uk](http://www.prospects.ac.uk)
- [www.gradireland.com](http://www.gradireland.com)
- [www.studyabroaduniversities.com](http://www.studyabroaduniversities.com)  
Search for 'Biotechnology' or 'Pharmaceutical' courses if interested in that field.  
Google courses in Switzerland, the UK and USA in particular.
- [www.naturopathy-uk.com](http://www.naturopathy-uk.com)