

Bioinformatics

Pompeu Fabra University (UPF), Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB), Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya–BarcelonaTech (UPC) and the University of Barcelona (UB) offer a three-year Bachelor’s Degree in Bioinformatics taught entirely in English. The degree is managed by ESCI-UPF and most classes are taught on the Mar Campus.

Bioinformatics lies at the crossroads of computing, biomedical sciences and physics and chemistry. It is an area of research that applies computer sciences and information technology to process data from the field of biology.

TRIMESTER DATES 2022–2023

	First Trimester	Second Trimester	Third Trimester
Nomination deadline	14 May	1 October	14 January
Registration & Application deadline	25 May	8 October	25 January
Course enrolment deadline	31 May	15 October	30 January
Mandatory introductory session	19 September	9 January	TBA
Classes	From 20 September to 2 December*	From 9 January to 16 March	From 11 April to 21 June
Add-drop period	From 20 September to 30 September	From 9 January to 16 January	From 11 April to 18 April
Final exams	From 7 December to 16 December	From 17 March to 24 March	From 22 June to 30 June
Resit exams	From January 13 to January 14	From 14 April to 15 April	From 10 July to 13 July

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

1. The home university sends a nomination by email.
2. Nominated students receive the application materials and instructions by email.
3. Nominated students submit their online application through the SIGMA platform.
4. Accepted students receive an admission letter (PDF) through the online platform in Catalan and in English (for personal purposes only).
5. Non-EU accepted students receive an acceptance letter (PDF) with the approved subjects in Spanish (for **visa purposes only**).
6. Accepted students can apply for a student visa at a Spanish consulate (if applicable).

VISA REQUIREMENTS

Students who are citizens of an EEA country (which includes all EU countries) or Switzerland and have a valid identity document or national passport do not require a visa. Students staying for longer than three months will have to register with the Registry of European Union Citizens (Registro de Ciudadanos de la Unión Europea).

Students from a country outside the EEA (with the exception of Switzerland) planning to stay for longer than 90 days must obtain a student visa from the nearest Spanish embassy or consulate before leaving their home country. All foreigners who fall into this category must have a student visa to study in Spain. Students will require the acceptance letter from ESCI-UPF as part of the process of applying for a student visa.

Please bear in mind the following points:

1. A tourist visa does not grant permission for the holder to stay in Spain for study purposes.
2. For stays in Spain of longer than six months, students must ensure they obtain a visa that allows them to apply for a Spanish student residence permit (*Autorización de estancia por estudios*).
3. Students who obtain a 180-day student visa that allows only a single entry to the Schengen Area will not be permitted to extend their stay and will not be able to leave and re-enter Spain.

MEDICAL INSURANCE

Students must take out medical insurance valid in Barcelona for the entire period of their stay.

Students who are citizens of an EEA country or Switzerland and who are entitled to coverage under the social security system of their country should obtain a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) from the health authorities in their home country.

Although the EHIC gives EEA citizens access to medically necessary, state-provided healthcare during a temporary stay in Spain, it is not an alternative to travel insurance. It does not cover accidents, private healthcare or costs such as a return flight to students' home country or lost/stolen property. Moreover, the EHIC does not cover any costs incurred if the holder is travelling for the express purpose of obtaining medical treatment.

All international students, including those on the Erasmus programme, are required to have all-risks coverage during their stay in Spain. **ESCI-UPF will check that students have taken out at least accident and travel insurance to complement the coverage provided by the EHIC. These are the minimum requirements.**

It is strongly recommended that students consider other insurance packages available to UPF students at a special rate. These packages cover the cost of medical care up to a set limit.

Students who are citizens of non-EEA countries should find out whether there is a mutual health provision agreement between the social security system of their home country and Spain (this is the case for a number of Latin American countries). If such an agreement exists, students can obtain a document from the relevant authorities in their home country entitling them to free medical coverage in Spain. If not, before they leave their home country, students must take out private medical insurance for the duration of their stay at ESCI-UPF. ARAG insurance company offers packages to UPF students at a special rate.

For further information, click on the link below: <https://oncampus.es/en/segueros/oncampus-estudia/>

ACCOMMODATION

Students planning to look for accommodation on arrival in Barcelona should reserve a hotel or hostel room well in advance. Finding a room can prove very difficult without an advance booking.

Barcelona Centre Universitari–BCU (RESA HOUSING) is the accommodation service offered by all universities in the Barcelona area. It offers flats and rooms in Barcelona, in-home stays, residence halls, etc. with guaranteed quality, safety and cleanliness standards.

For more information and online registration, please contact:

Torrent de l'Olla, 219, 08012 Barcelona

Tel: +34 93 238 90 72 | Fax: +34 93 228 92 59

Email: info@resahousing.com

<http://www.resahousing.com/eng>

Office hours: Monday to Thursday, 9.30 am to 1.30 pm and 3.30 pm to 5.30 pm / Friday, 9.00 am to 2.00 pm

Additional accommodation options are listed in the Welcome Document sent to all nominated students.

APPROXIMATE COST OF LIVING (PER MONTH)

Accommodation:

(can vary substantially depending on the type of accommodation)

Renting a flat: €900–€1500

Renting a room in a shared flat: €400–€600

Student residence (depending on the food services included): €500–€900

Food: €350–€400

Transport: €100

Spending money: €250–€300

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Students may choose from the list of subjects taught as part of the programme of the Bachelor's Degree in Bioinformatics:

<https://www.esci.upf.edu/en/bachelors-degree-in-bioinformatics/bioinformatics-programme>

Note : the list of open courses will be provided by the home university

These subjects are taught jointly by the four Barcelona universities offering the degree (UPF, UAB, UPC and UB) and researchers of several research centers of Barcelona (CRG, BSC, IRB...)

Barcelona is a dynamic international research hub. Students will find a large number of internship opportunities in labs and SMEs in the city. The Bioinformatics Barcelona Association has an exhaustive list of potential hosts:

<http://bioinformaticsbarcelona.eu/research-groups/>

Note that courses on master's programmes are not open to exchange students.

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION

All classes are taught in English.

LEARNING EXPECTATIONS

- Class format. The course content is delivered through masterclasses, computing classes and lab work. There are also seminars, individual and group tutorials.
- Attendance: Attendance rules may vary from subject to subject, but are always clearly set out in the teaching plan for each subject. Students must attend 80% of practical classes to be graded for attendance and/or participation.
- Grading system. The Spanish grading system assigns numerical grades from 0 to 10. The minimum passing grade is a 5. The final grade is based on continuous evaluation marks—for midterm exams, presentations, exercises, projects, attendance, participation, etc.—and the final evaluation mark (final exam grade). The grading policy is indicated in the teaching plan (syllabus) for each subject.
- Examinations. At the end of term, students must take a final exam, which accounts for a specific percentage of the final grade.
- Class size. Classes range in size from 20 to 40 students, depending on the subject.
- Course load. There is minimum course load:
 - 20 ECTS for students staying 1 trimester
 - 30 ECTS for students staying 2 trimesters
 - 60 ECTS for students staying the whole year
- Level of subjects. Students can get an idea of contents and levels by consulting the syllabus and recommended reading for the subject in question (updated regularly and available at <http://www.esci.upf.edu/en/bachelors-degrees/bachelors-degree-in-bioinformatics/bioinformatics-programme/>). Recommended prerequisites are set out in the course catalogue documents for each term sent to all nominated students.

THE GRADING SYSTEM

The Spanish grading system is based on a scale from 0 to 10, where 5 is the minimum passing mark.

ESCI-UPF grading scale:

Matricula d'honor – 10 (A with honours)

This is the highest grade and is awarded to a small number of students whose performance is considered exceptionally good (maximum 5% of enrolled students).

Excel·lent – from 9 to 10 (Very good)

Awarded to students whose performance is considered very good.

Notable – from 7 to 8.9 (Good)

Awarded to students whose performance is considered good.

Aprovat – from 5 to 6.9 (Pass)

Awarded to students whose performance is considered adequate.

Suspens – from 0 to 4.9 (Fail)

Students awarded this grade have not passed the subject.

No presentat (Not attended)

Awarded to students who did not take their final exam and who therefore have no final grade. This grade blocks access to any re-evaluation of synthesis activities.

Convocatoria anul·lada (Cancelled call)

Awarded to students who opted out of assessment. In this case, students need to complete and return an application form before the last day of classes in each trimester.

STUDENT SERVICES

International Relations Office. This service helps exchange and visiting international students adapt to life at ESCI-UPF and in Barcelona.

Academic Counselling. Hafid Laayouni, BDBI Head of Studies, provides academic assistance to exchange and visiting international students.

Students will have access to the ESCI-UPF intranet, a roaming access service (EDUROAM) and the computer rooms in the ESCI-UPF building.

Students will have access to the main UPF library, in the Jaume I building (a 10-minute walk from the ESCI-UPF building). International students may borrow books from the library.

LAPTOP REQUIREMENTS

A personal laptop will be mandatory for all classes.

For the computer work we recommend using a PC with the following minimum requirements:

Screen: $\geq 15''$

RAM memory: ≥ 8 GB

Disk space: ≥ 500 GB

Most professors will ask the student to use Linux for all the computational work. We recommend using the Ubuntu distribution. In case the student doesn't have Linux installed, during the orientation session we will help him to install the Linux operating system on his computer.

STUDENT SUPPORT

Buddy Programme

Exchange students can apply for a "buddy" to help them get through the first few weeks. Buddies are ESCI-UPF students who have volunteered to help one or more exchange students.

ESN-UPF

ESN-UPF is made up of local students who have volunteered to help exchange students settle in. It runs all kinds of social, cultural and non-university-related activities. Most volunteers have been exchange students themselves in the past, so they know firsthand what students need when they first arrive in Barcelona.

ESN-UPF is part of the Erasmus Student Network (ESN), set up in 1989 to promote student exchanges across Europe and now one of the largest interdisciplinary associations in Europe.

In Barcelona, we work closely with volunteers from the other three public universities in the city (UB, UPC and UAB) to provide the best activities, trips and projects our city and country has to offer.

<http://esnupf.org/>

Spanish Programme

The UPF's language programme offers intensive Spanish courses (see the website below for fees). The programme provides intensive Spanish training at beginner, intermediate, advanced and proficiency level. Students can also take optional complementary modules on Spanish for Academic Purposes, Fluency Skills, the History of Barcelona, and the Catalan Language.

<https://www.upf.edu/web/idiomesupf/spanishprogram>

Language Volunteer Service (VL)

The Language Volunteer Service is available to students and teachers from non-Catalan-speaking areas who are studying or teaching at the University. It focuses on two areas: (1) a linguistic and cultural activity programme, which organises leisure and cultural activities to help students and teachers settle in socially and hone their Catalan language skills; and (2) a support programme for non-Catalan speakers, which aims to promote linguistic and cultural exchange with students and teachers from outside Catalan-speaking areas.

<https://www.upf.edu/web/voluntariat-linguistic>

Inclusion service

As part of its commitment to society, ESCI-UPF's Inclusion Office works to ensure that all students can develop their potential by valuing educational diversity and guaranteeing the rights of high-performance athletes and people with disabilities or at risk of socioeconomic exclusion.

At ESCI-UPF we understand inclusion in terms of universal accessibility, as a key condition for promoting people's autonomy based on equality and non-discrimination. Not only do we ensure that all our services, activities and spaces are physically accessible, we also guarantee that all members of the university community can play their part under the same conditions. Our aim is to safeguard all students' rights to university access, course progression and employment options.

The Inclusion Office welcomes and supports students with special educational needs from the moment they arrive at the school. Any student can apply for support by submitting proof of their special educational needs. They will receive guidance throughout their time at university and the school will make any necessary adaptations to the course programme to offer them the required support and resources.

<https://www.esci.upf.edu/en/students-services/inclusion-office>

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OFFICE CONTACT DETAILS

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