



Department of Geography

POSTGRADUATE HANDBOOK

2024-25

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WELCOME TO THE DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY

Dear Geography Postgraduate Research students,

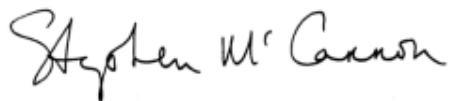
I am truly delighted to welcome you to Maynooth University and its Department of Geography. We have one of the oldest and most successful postgraduate research programmes in the University, an achievement we are extremely proud of. You are the next generation of those to embark on ground-breaking research supported by that tradition and our depth of pastoral care and understanding. The entire Department wishes you every success in your research, in developing exciting collaborations with my colleagues and the many cognate researchers outside these University walls and across the world. Each one of you is in the beautiful business of discovering important new knowledge and ideas across a very broad spectrum of research, and I hope that opportunity excites you greatly

As the representative of an ever expanding group of research active Departmental staff, I know you will have many chances along the way to learn from the University's teaching and research staff. However, and most critically, much of your development of ideas will come from your engagement with your fellow research students from across the Department. The Departmental Seminar Series is an important part of this ideas exchange process, and I encourage you all to take part as fully as possible in each seminar and the attendant discussions at all the upcoming talks, whether directly in your research field or not. Cross-disciplinary research is vital to many aspects of modern society, and I encourage everyone to sample widely and develop empathy for the multiple approaches to observing the world.

To help this, and your profile as an important new researcher, also look out for externally hosted events and symposia to attend in addition to your Maynooth-based events. We will always try to support your research and engagement outside the Department as you are a vitally important active part of the University, promoting it as a place to undertake research by promoting your own work. These events may also provide opportunities to understand the connectivity of all aspects of Geography and to try to engage in issues from many perspectives.

To stay abreast of this active and creative Department, you may want to follow us on Twitter and also to sign up for notifications from our blog. You may also want to do some writing of your own either for one of our blogs or for our staff-student journal, *Milieu*. But, most of all, do talk to us about your research and consider how we all link together to aid our understanding of the Earth, our shared and crisis-ridden home, and how we can live on it better, together.

Best regards, and best wishes in your studies,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen M^r Carron". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Dr. Stephen McCarron,
Head of Geography, Maynooth University.

WHO'S WHO IN GEOGRAPHY AT MAYNOOTH UNIVERSITY

Academic Staff	Research interests	Email (add @mu.ie)	Phone	Room
Boyle, Mark	Social, cultural, political geography; urban planning, migration	mark.g.boyle	3756	R22
Bresnihan, Patrick	Environmental, cultural, political	patrick.bresnihan	3756	R18
Cahalane, Conor	Remote Sensing, GIS	conor.cahalane	3748	R7
Charlton, Ro	Fluvial geomorphology, hydrology, water resources	ro.charlton	3679	R23
Fealy, Rowan	Climate dynamics, Land-atmosphere	rowan.fealy	4562	LH2.3
Fraser, Alistair	Land reform, cultural economies	alistair.fraser	6156	R18
Gilmartin, Mary	Social, cultural, political; migration	mary.gilmartin	6617	R09
Kavanagh, Adrian	Political geography, Environmental Politics	adrian.p.kavanagh	6014	R06
Kearns, Gerry	Empire, AIDS/HIV, Irish identity, race	gerry.kearns	6153	R23B
Kelly, Sinead	Urban, Political geography	sinead.m.kelly	3938	R20
Mateus, Carla	Historical climatology, climate adaptation, mitigation, Sustainability	carla.mateus		
McCarron, Stephen	Quaternary climatic change, Irish geomorphology	stephen.mccarron	6147/ 6839	R14
McCarthy, Gerard	Atmosphere-ocean interaction	gerard.mccarthy	6550	LH2.7
Murphy, Conor	Climate change, water resources	conor.murphy	3494	LH2.6
Orme, Lisa	Global environmental change	lisa.orme	3769	LH2.4
Roche, Martina	Medical/Health geography	martina.j.roche	6617	R09
Shaw, Helen	Long-term landscape and ecological change; Palaeo reconstruction	helen.shaw	7574	R07
Sa Ferreira, Carla	Ecological change; Palaeo reconstruction	carla.saferreira		
Thorne, Peter	Climate detection and attribution	peter.thorne	6469	LH1.11
Till, Karen	Memory politics; urban design/planning;	karen.till	4550	R19
Van Egeraat, Chris	Economic geography; regional development and planning	chris.vanegeraat	4714	R10
Administrative and Technical Staff				
Bolger, Mick	Technician	michael.bolger	4762	RG
Curran, Michelle	Technical Officer	Michelle.curran	7680	1.1/R14
Hogan, Neasa	Administration	geography.department	3610	R23C
O'Driscoll, Catherine	Administration	geography.department	4760	R11
Voces, Corinne	Program Manager/Admin ICARUS	corinne.voces	3862	LH1.10
Academic staff on secondment/in other departments				
Kitchin, Rob	Human geography, crime	rob.kitchin	3372	IO2.23
Brunsdon, Chris	Geocomputation	christopher.brunsdon	6149	
Credit, Kevin	Spatial data science, Urban geography	kevin.credit		

Key: R=Rhetoric House RG=Rhetoric Ground Floor RA=Rhetoric Annex LH=Laraghbryan House
IO=Ionatas Building

More details and departmental staff biographies are available at <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/geography/our-people>

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION FOR POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS AT MAYNOOTH UNIVERSITY

The Graduate Research Academy at Maynooth University looks after all issues that relate to postgraduate study. Their website has detailed information for current students, and it is important that you become familiar with this website and with relevant policies and initiatives. Here, we highlight some of the essential information and what to do if you experience any issues. We also highlight supports and services available and point out some of the expectations that the Department of Geography has of you as a postgraduate student and as a member of the Department.

GETTING INVOLVED

As a postgraduate student, it is important that you get involved in the life of the Department and the University. There are a number of ways to do this.

Keeping in touch: Most communications occur through email, so ensure that your contact details are up-to-date and that you check your Maynooth University email regularly. Check the Department's webpage (<https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/geography>) and blog (<https://maynoothgeography.wordpress.com/>) for latest news and comments. You will also be subscribed to the Department of Geography postgraduate listserv.

Seminar series: The Department of Geography runs a seminar series throughout the year, and all postgraduate students are **expected** to attend – notification of upcoming events is generally through email. In addition, there will be a variety of talks and events during the year, and you should make every effort to participate in these. Talks and seminars are typically held in the Rocque Lab. Additional seminars may also be arranged, and these will be announced through the Department's listservs.

Representing postgraduate students at Department and University levels: Postgraduate students have a representative who attends regular staff meetings, and it is important that you make your concerns known through this representative. In addition, you should ensure that you are represented on the **Graduate Feedback Council** and that you attend the **Postgraduate Researchers' Forum**.

Conferences: Attending conferences and presenting conference papers is an important part of the postgraduate experience. From their second year, all research students are encouraged to present a paper on their work at the Conference of Irish Geographers and/or other relevant professional conferences. The Department is supportive of student conference presentations, particularly at the annual Conference of Irish Geographers. In addition, the University has some funds available to support conference presentations. Check out the Graduate Research Academy website for more details.

Teaching-related duties: The Department regularly employs postgraduate students in a variety of posts, including teaching, tutoring and exam supervision. If you are interested in tutoring, please complete the Tutor/Demonstrator Application Form on the Department webpage under Info for Current Students.

GRADUATE RESEARCH ACADEMY

Focussed on you, the postgraduate researcher, the Graduate Research Academy (GRA) offers supports for training, development and mentorship throughout your postgraduate career. The Academy is the central support for prospective, new and existing postgraduate researchers.

The Academy has been set up to create a better holistic experience for our students throughout their Maynooth journey through to graduation. For general queries please contact us at gra@mu.ie and we can arrange an appointment for you with one of the members of the team.

The Graduate Research Academy's website, available at <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/graduate-research-academy>, has information on a wide range of topics relevant to whatever stage of the journey you are on. You can also find a link to the MU Research Student Handbook at <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/graduate-research->

[academy/stipend-and-fees-forms-research-students](#) in addition to other relevant forms and information.

The GRA also has responsibility for the Research Skills Development Programme, the aim of which is to draw on the expertise of the Graduate Research Academy and Research Development Office, in conjunction with faculties, departments and professional units within the university, to support MU researchers in acquiring the skills and experience necessary to become independent academic researchers and to develop their careers in multiple settings beyond academia. For further information on the Research Skills development Programme, please see <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/graduate-research-academy/research-students>

WHAT TO DO IF PROBLEMS ARISE

If you experience academic or personal difficulties during the year, there are a number of ways in which you can get help. More general issues may be raised within the Department at monthly staff meetings, or through the Graduate Feedback Council at university level. Your first point of contact for academic difficulties should be your supervisor (MLitt, PhD). If this is not satisfactory, you should contact the Director of Research Postgraduate Studies and/or the Head of Department. If your concerns are not addressed within the Department, you should then bring the matter to the attention of the Director of Graduate Research. In the case of personal difficulties, your supervisor, the Director of Research Postgraduate Studies and the Head of Department are all available to assist you.

The University has a number of support services, including a Counselling Service, a Chaplaincy, a Mature Students Office, a Disability Office and a Students' Union that may also be of assistance. Please see <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/student-services> for further details.

- **Student Services** comprises a number of departments, whose aim is to provide committed and dedicated on-campus services, designed to support and assist students throughout their time at University.
- **Chaplaincy** is a support for all students throughout their University journey. Chaplaincy offers a place for conversation, compassion, contemplation & community. Chaplaincy offers a 'drop-in' telephone and video service - <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/student-services/chaplaincy>.
- Students who find themselves struggling with college finances can avail of help from the **Student Budgeting Service**. This service offers advice and help with Budgeting, SUSI, fees etc. and is a confidential service and is located on the ground floor, Student Services Centre. There is a weekly advice clinic available and booked appointments are available at all other times by visiting the webpage <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/student-services/student-budgeting-advice-service>
- **Counselling** provides a one-to-one opportunity for students to discuss any issues or concerns impacting on their academic performance or personal well-being. It is a confidential and free of charge service. For details on how to access counselling or book an appointment, please see <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/campus-life/student-wellbeing-support/counselling>.
- The **Health Centre** is located on the ground floor of the Student Services Centre and offers a free, friendly, caring and confidential health service during the Students time in University. Both a drop-in clinic and booked appointments are available. Check out the webpage <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/student-services/student-health-centre> for clinic times.
- The **Student Support Service** offers a safe and welcoming space for students to seek personal and practical support and guidance, including wellbeing and financial budgeting advice. The Student Support Officer offers one-to-one meetings with students and can be reached by emailing student.services@mu.ie for appointments.

Key contact details are as follows:

Name	Email	Telephone
Dr. Stephen McCarron, Head of Department	Stephen.mccarron@mu.ie	01-708 6147
Prof Rowan Fealy, Director of Research Postgraduate Studies	rowan.fealy@mu.ie	01-708 4562
Dr Conor Cahalane, Course Director, MSc GIS/Remote Sensing	conor.cahalane@mu.ie	01-708 6024 01-708 3748
Dr Patrick Bresnihan Course Director, MA Geography	patrick.bresnihan@mu.ie	01-708 3756 01-708 4550
Prof Conor Murphy & Dr Lisa Orme, Course Directors, MSc Climate Change	conor.murphy@mu.ie lisa.orme@mu.ie	01-708 3494 01-708 3769
Prof. Karen Till, Postgraduate Development Director	karen.till@mu.ie	01-708 4550
Director of Graduate Research	fiona.lyddy@mu.ie	01-708 6183
Graduate Research Academy	gra@mu.ie	01-708 6018
Student Counselling Service		01-708 3554
Chaplaincy	chaplaincy@mu.ie	01-708 3469
Mature Students' Office	emer.sheerin@mu.ie	01-708 3307
Disability Office	access.office@mu.ie	01-708 4600
Students' Union	students.union@mu.ie	01-708 3669
International Office	international.office@mu.ie	01-708 3868
Postgraduate Feedback Council	pgstudies@mu.ie	01-708 3467

Contact details for all of the support services listed can be found at <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/student-services/hub> or by telephoning 01-708 4729 for assistance or guidance or call in to the Student Support Hub, ground floor, Student Services centre for assistance.

The earlier we know about difficulties that have arisen, the more we can do to address them.

STUDENT HELPDESK

You are welcome to contact the Student Helpdesk and they will assist you with any query. If the query is of a complex nature, the Desk will guide you to the area you should link in with and how to contact that area. The contact details are:

- Phone 01 474 7444 or e-mail studenthelp@mu.ie
- Information and guidance on various topics is available on <https://maynoothuniversity.ie/studenthelp> Of course, you are free to contact the existing support and information services directly.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Maynooth University is committed to being a university community that promotes and advances equality, respects and values diversity, and develops a collegiate environment of excellence with equality, in which the human rights, the responsibilities and diversity of all students and staff are recognised and respected.

The University values the enrichment that comes from a diverse community of students and staff and seeks to promote equality and prevent discrimination in the access, experience, progression and achievement of all students and staff through developing and implementing clear policies, processes, practices providing effective support to help realise equality in student experience and in employment.

The Maynooth University Equality and Diversity Policy has been developed to realise the University's core values of equality, inclusiveness, social justice, dignity and respect, and in the context of fulfilling its significant obligations in these areas. The Policy, which is available at

<https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/human-resources/policies/statement-policy-equality> provides a framework for the University to meet its obligations as an equal opportunities employer and public service provider.

The Maynooth University Equality and Diversity Policy seeks to:

- promote a culture of excellence through mainstreaming the principles of equality and diversity into all University activities, policies and planning;
- promote equality and ensure non-discrimination for all staff in relation to all aspects of employment;
- take positive action where appropriate to assist in advancing equality in employment and University activities to address under-representation;
- promote equality in education for all students across the education cycle, providing an excellent education for all, and enabling all students to maximise their potential; to take positive action in education to address widening participation and under-representation as appropriate;
- protect the human rights of all staff, students, associated persons and visitors;
- ensure compliance with legislation and adherence to standards of best practice and to eliminate unlawful discrimination; and
- provide processes for complaints and investigation.

Each member of Staff is responsible for:

- actively addressing equality and diversity issues in practical ways in their day-to-day work;
- making sure their own behaviour is appropriate in face-to-face and digital interactions;
- upholding a standard of behaviour which respects human rights and the principles of equality and diversity;
- providing an education, research or other public service which respects and takes account of diverse needs and backgrounds of student, staff and members of the wider community;
- meeting any equality and diversity targets agreed in their work plan or departmental plan; and
- contributing towards the University's overall performance on equality and diversity.

Each member of the Student body is responsible for:

- actively addressing equality and diversity issues in practical ways in their day-to-day lives on and off the campus;
- making sure their own behaviour is appropriate in face-to-face and digital interactions;
- upholding a standard of behaviour which respects human rights and the principles of equality and diversity;
- respecting and taking into account the diverse needs and backgrounds of students, and making efforts to be inclusive of all students; and
- working with the officers of the Maynooth Students' Union to improve the University's overall performance on equality and diversity.

To raise any complaints or to raise equality issues, students can contact the following supports:

Name	Location	Phone	Email
Vice President Academic and Registrar	3rd Floor, TSI Building	01 7083579	registrar@mu.ie
Vice President for Welfare and Equality Maynooth Students' Union	MSU Building, North Campus	01 708 6808	welfare@msu.ie
Student Services	Student Services Centre, North Campus	01 708 3554	student.services@mu.ie
Maynooth University Access Office	MAP Lodge, North Campus	01 708 4600	access.office@mu.ie

ATHENA SWAN

The Athena Swan Charter is a national strategy to promote gender equality in higher education and was launched in Ireland by the Higher Education Authority in 2015. The Department of Geography has committed itself to the Athena Swan process of critical self-assessment and after a rigorous application, we were one of the first departments at Maynooth to earn 'bronze status' two years ago. We are committed to this process of advancing gender equity and opportunity, which means that during the year we will offer workshops that you can participate in. You will certainly be asked to let us know how we are doing through the end of semester and year questions about the modules and teaching we offer. The responses are anonymised by the University Athena SWAN officer and then passed back to the Department where they are considered by our Athena SWAN Committee. Recommendations are then passed to the Head of Department, and discussed in our Undergraduate, Postgraduate and Research Committees, and at Staff Meetings.

In this, we are supported by the University with its policies addressing: the under-representation of women in higher administrative and academic offices in the university; the need to make campus a place where diverse gender identity and expression are respected, including for our transgender and gender diverse staff and students; and a data collection and analysis system that alerts us to the many complex dimensions of equality, diversity, inclusion and interculturalism. We know that gender and sexuality intersect with other forms of discrimination in society, including around race, class, physical and mental challenges, citizenship-status, and nationality. You know it too, and with your help we will learn how to make Maynooth University a leader in recognising the needs and sustaining the flourishing of the diverse community of our state. If you have questions or would like to participate, please contact the Athena Swan Committee Chair.

Athena SWAN in the Department [Video]

<https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/geography/athena-swan>

And university info here

<https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/athena-swan>

WORKPLACE BULLYING, HARASSMENT & SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Bullying and sexual misconduct are unacceptable at Maynooth University. Bullying is where repeated mistreatment of a person undermines their capacity to thrive at university. In a university setting, this includes, but is not limited to, ridiculing a person or making abusive remarks. Sexual misconduct includes any sexual contact that is unwanted or to which someone did not or was not able to give consent. Workplace bullying, harassment and sexual harassment constitute real threats to the safety, health and welfare of people in the workplace.

Maynooth University is committed to providing a workplace in which bullying, harassment and sexual harassment are not tolerated and in which the dignity of all staff and students is protected. The aim of the *Maynooth University Policy & Procedures for the Protection of Staff against Workplace Bullying, Harassment & Sexual Harassment* is to identify examples of unacceptable behaviour and provide a mechanism for dealing with any such issues should they arise and to facilitate the return to a positive working environment. Staff of the University must, therefore, be aware of their responsibilities not to place the safety, health and welfare of colleagues at risk by engaging in bullying, harassment or sexual harassment and, if in a position of authority, should take appropriate steps to stop such behaviour if they become aware of it. Those who feel that they are currently being, or have been, bullied, harassed, sexually harassed or otherwise treated in breach of the policy, should use this policy and procedures for their protection. Complaints of workplace bullying, harassment and sexual harassment will be treated seriously by the University with due regard to the rights of the complainant (the person making the complaint) and of the respondent (the person

against whom a complaint is made). Complaints by employees of bullying at work will be treated with fairness, sensitivity, respect and confidentiality for all parties concerned.

Maynooth University Policy & Procedures for the Protection of Staff against Workplace Bullying, Harassment & Sexual Harassment is available for download at the following link
<https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/human-resources/policies/bullying%20%26%20harassment>

In full confidence of your complaint being received respectfully, seriously, and in confidence, you may contact the Head of Department, Dr. Stephen McCarron, stephen.mccarron@mu.ie; or you may contact the Maynooth Student Union Vice President for Welfare and Equality, welfare@msu.ie, (01 708 6808; 087 630 6433); the Student Services Centre (01 708 3554); or Maynooth University Access Office, access.office@mu.ie, (01 708 4600). There are also support services for victims of sexual violence including the 24-hour Rape Crisis Centre, counselling@rcc.ie (1 800 77 8888); the Student Health Centre, healthcentre@mu.ie (01 708 3878); and the Student Counselling Service, (01 708 3554).

We want Maynooth University to be a place where our students can fulfil their potential and to do that we must treat other with respect. We must address the situations in which bullying and harassment can occur. We have committed ourselves to following the strategies offered as part of the National Consent Framework of the Department of Education and Skills. To make Maynooth a place that is safe, respectful, supportive and positive, there are a number of initiatives now underway. First, the university will host workshops about what consent really means. These will be offered to staff and to students over the coming years. These are based on a programme developed at National University of Ireland Galway. Second the University will host a training programme to help us all learn how to intervene effectively when we see others suffering bullying or harassment. This programme is based on one developed by University College Cork. Staff and students can help our community by taking advantage of these workshops so that we all develop our awareness and make our commitment to a safe, respectful, supportive, and positive environment more effective. If you would like to be more pro-active still, you can volunteer for training to become a Facilitator for the either the Consent Workshops or the Bystander Intervention Workshops by emailing equality@mu.ie.

RESEARCH ETHICS AND PROFESIONAL STANDARDS

All research projects must be conducted in accordance with University guidelines on ethical research and research integrity. In some cases, the research project may need to be considered by University Ethics Committees. You should discuss the ethical implications of your research with your Supervisory Committee. For more information, check out the ethical review and research integrity policy at: <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/research/research-development-office/research-ethics>

Details of how to apply for ethical approval are available through the Research Ethics website: <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/research/research-development-office/research-ethics>

A statement on professional ethics and standards in research, endorsed by the Council of the American Association of Geographers, is available at http://www.aag.org/cs/about_aag/governance/statement_of_professional_ethics.

MU LIBRARY

Whether you are doing a research Master's, PhD or further study, MU Library will be essential to you in finding the physical and virtual spaces that you need, including:

- accessing physical books, journals, and Special Collections & Archives
- 24/7 access to our electronic collections online (eBooks/eJournals/databases)
- exceptional digital collections, including extensive digital primary sources for your research

- a dedicated PG study room with swipe access; a quiet zone in the library for you
- bookable group study-rooms
- relevant PG training during the year (online & in-person) that will support your study
- inter-library loans/document-supply and access cards to other libraries (This service is free for 2024-25. More information can be found here: <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/library/using-library/inter-library-loans>)
- dedicated staff who provide information and research support to all PG levels

The MU Library homepage is: <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/library> where you can explore the range of our collections, and services that we provide.

MU Library is located on the South Campus beside the Kilcock road in an iconic building. The library homepage will always have up-to-date information about accessing the library, using services and classes (including remotely) and connecting with the library to get the support you need for your studies.

You can borrow a laptop to use within the Library or logon to one of our many PCs. The Library is wireless so you can use your own laptop here. IT Services have a dedicated helpdesk, located behind our Admissions Desk. We have a 3D printer available (ask at the Library desk) as well as a colour photocopier, in addition to numerous black and white photocopiers. You may wish to use the swipe-access Postgraduate Room on Level 2 for your research, a quiet area in the library.

Our energy-pods on level 1 are a great option if you need to re-charge. Use bookable group study-rooms (see links at the end of this piece) for your group project-work. We host exhibitions and events in the foyer (and virtually) during the year, so there is nearly always something new to view.

We provide a webpage for each department that we recommend as a starting point in your studies; it is a great source of relevant subject-specific material and resources: <https://nuim.libguides.com/?b=q&d=a>

Upskill in your own time using our LIST Online short tutorials. <https://nuim.libguides.com/list-online>

Our Research Support Librarian provides a wide range of services to Research Master's students, up to Post-doctoral level. Look at his webpage here: <https://bit.ly/2NTvCgk>

Research students and staff (research support) contact: Ciarán Quinn, ciaran.quinn@mu.ie

STUDENT SKILLS AND SUCCESS: ACADEMIC WRITING SUPPORT

Student Skills and Success is here to partner with you on your MU journey, understand your experiences and opinions, and guide you in navigating the complexities of university life. We want you to develop a sense of belonging as you embrace all the opportunities Maynooth University has to offer and thrive as you make the most of your time here.

For more information see <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/student-success>

Our Academic Writing Support (formerly known as the Writing Centre) offers free, friendly, non-judgemental writing help to any student, undergraduate or postgraduate, regardless of course, degree or level. Our support is primarily through one-to-one appointments, where students can discuss their writing with peer/expert tutors. In addition, the academic writing support team offer writing workshops, support writing groups, engage in discipline-specific work, and research in academic writing and related fields.

We offer appointments face-to-face and online; where you have a face-to-face appointment that will take place in our new home in the Arts Building when the 23/24 semester commences.

For details, see <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/student-success/your-academic-journey/writing-support>

GEOGRAPHY COMPUTING FACILITIES

The Department of Geography provides 35 computers available for taught postgraduates in Rhetoric House. The computer labs are also available to some undergraduate students at certain times of the year. All research postgraduates will have a computer for their individual use. You will be provided with codes for access to computer facilities. Make sure you backup any work you do on these computers.

If you are new to Maynooth University, you will be provided with a log on user name, password and email address when you register. This will give you access to the university network and to your personal storage space.

GEOGRAPHY POSTGRADUATE DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES

Professor Karen Till is the Department's Postgraduate Development Director and organises professional supports for all PhD students that also include some socialising opportunities. She will be sending an email soon (with some 'Forms' to complete), but these will include:

The Geography Department's Postgraduate Welcome and Reception

8 October, Tuesday, 4pm, Rocque Lab

Meet new Postgraduate Diploma, Masters (GIS/RS, Climate Change, Spatial Justice), and new and continuing PhD students in Geography! This is a great time to meet people and make new friends!

The Geography PhD Buddy System

Our **informal PhD Buddy system** pairs incoming and second year students with third and fourth year students, and third and fourth year students with early career research staff. You meet your buddy at the start and end of each semester to ask questions and get feedback. You can also contact your buddy (pending their availability) throughout the year via email, Teams, and/or in person. We piloted it last year and it was really successful. All people providing feedback gave really positive reviews. If you are interested, **please complete [this Form](#)** using your MU email account and Karen will be in touch in October with possible pairings.

Postgraduate Development Workshops (with lunch)

We will have two to three lunch-hour **Postgraduate Development Workshops** on various topics, depending on student interest. Sandwiches are provided! Last year we started with 'Building Confidence' and ended with a staff/student panel on 'Preparing for your Viva!' Let us know what topics you would be interested in learning more about [using this Form](#) (again please use your MU email to complete).

Staff and PhD Student Writing Group

A **weekly hybrid Geography Writing Group** on **Tuesdays 9:15-11am**. We meet online via [Teams at this link](#) and in person in the Waddington Tutorial Room (ground floor Rhetoric). We typically do a brief hello and check-in, write for 90 minutes, and do a brief check-out. If you are on campus, you can join the department for coffee in the Kildare Room afterwards. It is a great way to meet Geography research including academic and research staff, and other PhD researchers.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION FOR RESEARCH POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

Maynooth University, in common with other Irish universities, provides a programme of structured support for research postgraduate students, including generic skills training, training in research methodologies, and advanced discipline-specific and interdisciplinary modules. Since September 2010, the Department of Geography has required all full-time research postgraduate students to directly enrol in a Graduate Education Programme (GREP), to register for structured PhD programmes, and/or other skills/training modules at Department or Faculty level which are recommended by supervisors. Details on the structure of the GREP is available in **Appendix 2**, and information on modules running over the current year is provided in **Appendix 3**.

The Graduate Research Academy at Maynooth University provides a **mandatory** Research Student Induction and Welcome session for Research Postgraduate Students every Autumn. In the case of Research students joining Maynooth University during the academic year, there is a 2nd session held early in the New Year. Please contact gra@mu.ie for further information. The department also provides an Induction session for new research students each year, normally in the first few weeks of term.

For non-EU students commencing study at Maynooth University, the international office offers a range of induction activities to support the beginning of your postgraduate study, including advice on visa and immigration. Please contact international.office@mu.ie for further details.

As a research student, you are subject to Maynooth university regulations and therefore are required to read all policies relating to Graduate Research Academy, which can be found here: <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/university-policies/academic-policies-procedures>

The Graduate Research Academy have dedicated web pages for research students. Please see <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/graduate-research-academy>

A BRIEF NOTE ON ATTENDANCE AND COVID

There is an official university position on teaching and Covid which you should read. You can keep up to date at <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/health-safety/staff-health/covid-19-information>.

RESEARCH STUDENT REGISTRATION

MU operates two standard registration times for research students, in September and January. Student fees are applied for the entire semester in which the first registration occurs.

Students register on either a full-time or part-time basis.

All PhD students initially register on the PhD track; progression is subject to annual review.

Students who are deemed to have progressed following review are required to re-register for their programme of study on an annual basis in September. Students who register in January or outside of standard registration times must re-register in the following September. Deadlines for registration apply and students who fail to re-register by the relevant deadline will be subject to a late registration penalty.

A student who is registered for and pursuing a research master's degree may petition to transfer to the PhD register. The student must submit the transfer request along with the signatures of supervisor and the DRSPC to the Graduate and International Education Committee for approval.

SUPERVISION, ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

At the beginning of your programme of study, you will be assigned a Provisional Supervisor. In consultation with your Provisional Supervisor, you are expected to complete an Initial Meeting Record (IMR) (available from <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/graduate-studies/stipend-and-fees-forms-research-students>), which outlines your planned programme of study for the year, including a list of proposed modules and meeting dates. Details of the agreed programme, recorded in the initial meeting record (IMR), is then subject to approval by the departmental research student progress committee (DRSPC). The IMR is forwarded by the DRSPC to the Graduate Research Academy (GRA) by the end of October/February, or within four weeks after first registration for students registering outside of standard registration times, for inclusion in the student record system. The IMR informs the annual progress review subsequently carried out by the student's DRSPC.

You are also expected to identify a definite research topic by the end of your first semester. You will be expected to make a seminar presentation on your proposed research topic early in the second semester.

In discussion with your Provisional Supervisor, you need to identify a formal Supervisory Committee consisting of a Primary and Secondary, or Co, Supervisor. In certain circumstances, a Supervisory Committee, comprised of a Primary and Secondary Supervisor, may be assigned by the department. The Secondary Supervisor may be based outside the Department (with that Supervisor's agreement). Alternatively, where the circumstances warrant it, a Third Supervisor based outside the Department/University may be appointed. The appointment of Supervisors from outside the University must be approved by Faculty.

Supervision by a primary and secondary supervisor

The primary supervisor has the main responsibility. The secondary supervisor has a clearly-defined role, usually related to an important aspect of the research. The secondary supervisor advises the student in relation to the defined aspect of the research and liaises with both student and primary supervisor. Normally a joint meeting involving primary and secondary supervisor together with the student will be convened once per semester.

Co-supervision

Co-supervision involves two equal supervisors within a department who work with the candidate via individual and joint meetings and correspondence, ensuring that decisions on the direction, scope and quality of the research are agreed and coherently supported. In the case of co-supervision, one of the supervisors will take the lead in managing the administrative arrangements for the candidate and this role will be clarified with the student before registration by the relevant department.

Supervision by a supervisory team

A supervisory team comprises more than two supervisors. Team members may have expertise in different aspects of the research. One member of the team should be designated to take overall responsibility for the supervision of the work.

Joint supervision across departments in Maynooth University

Following registration, the department to which the application was made must notify the Records Office of the joint supervision arrangements. Joint supervision is recorded on the student record system which allows the student to register for modules within both departments/institutes.

Where it is appropriate for a student to be supervised by a team comprised of members of more than one academic department or institute, there shall be due co-operation between the departments involved and the following requirements apply:

- a) One department should be designated as the administrative lead. The administrative lead will be responsible for the reporting of progress and coordination of submission and assessment;
- b) The supervisory team should work together to review progress and decide on progression;
- c) The progress should be reported to both (or all) the academic units involved.

In the event of a disagreement between departments which cannot be resolved by the heads of department, the matter should be referred to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

External co-supervisors

In justified cases, typically in the case of research projects involving cooperation with another academic institution, an external co-supervisor can be appointed.

The external co-supervisor is expected to:

- Agree the scope and frequency of involvement in the supervision with the student and the lead supervisor;
- Keep written records of supervision and to copy these to the lead supervisor;
- Discuss the progress with the lead supervisor at least annually.

Where an external co-supervisor is appointed, the internal supervisor is required to:

- Fulfil the roles and duties outlined in the roles and responsibilities of the supervisor;
- Ensure that the external supervisor is carrying out her/his responsibilities to the student and to the university; this includes contributing to progress monitoring reports and ensuring that they are presented at the required time;
- Meet the student with the external supervisor to discuss the research project at least once a year.

The student will work under the general direction of the internal supervisor whether the research is being carried out at the university or elsewhere.

Conditions of appointments must be agreed in advance. Normally, no payment will be made to the external supervisor. The head of department submits the relevant form to faculty for approval of the appointment.

Where supervision is based on a Primary and Secondary Supervisor, the Primary Supervisor will have overall responsibility for the direction of your research. You should work out a programme for regular consultation with your Primary Supervisor. This programme should provide for a minimum of two hours consultation per month between September and June (inclusive). The Primary Supervisor may request regular written work or research results, and should return this work in reasonable time, with comments as necessary. In addition, the Primary Supervisor should provide you with accurate information in relation to his/her own research and professional/administrative leave, as well as any retirement plans for the period of your studies. Access to your Secondary Supervisor will be by informal agreement. The formal responsibilities of the Secondary Supervisor include participation in agreeing student work programmes and reading/commenting on written material submitted by students.

The responsibilities of the Primary Supervisor include giving guidance about appropriate modules to attend, the standard of research expected, the planning of your research programme, and evaluating your progress.

Throughout the course of the PhD, the supervisor should:

- maintain contact through regular supervisory meetings with the student; request regular written work or results of research to date and provide constructive evaluation and feedback in a reasonable time;
- ensure that progress of the student is formally evaluated as applicable;
- seek to ensure that the work reported in the dissertation is the student's own;
- bring to the student's attention perceived lack of progress and any issues without delay and encourage the student to rectify deficiencies/solve issues in a timely manner. If the supervisor feels obliged to recommend a student's studies be discontinued because of unsatisfactory progress, he/she must make this recommendation to the head of department/departamental research student progress committee (DRSPC) who will inform the student accordingly;
- encourage the publication of the results of the research where appropriate, provided that any relevant published work is coherently incorporated into the thesis;
- assist and advise on career path and professional opportunities;
- facilitate the student meeting other researchers and encourage attendance at research seminars, meetings or conferences as appropriate;
- seek to ensure that the student is aware of all relevant funding opportunities open to him/her and actively encourage the student to apply;
- complete the annual progress report and participate in formal annual progress reviews undertaken by the DRSPC where required;
- ensure that the student has either registered for the current academic year, has submitted their thesis for examination, has agreed suspension of registration, or has formally withdrawn from studies;

Close to completion of studies, the supervisor should advise on the form of thesis presentation, its examination, agree the nomination of external examiner(s) with the head of department, and where applicable oversee corrections and revisions following the examination. The supervisor should be available for consultation with the examiners prior to the examination.

Research students' rights and responsibilities are governed by MU policies as published on the university website.

Specific responsibilities of research students include the following:

- to comply with all departmental policies and procedures;
- to advance the progress and complete her/his research study;
- to maintain a professional relationship at all times with the supervising academic members and other university staff;
- to follow the plan of study and research as agreed with the supervisor, and to maintain regular contact with the supervisor;
- to document the progress of work as agreed with the supervisor and present written or other material as requested and on time;
- to inform the supervisor of any proposal to publish or make a presentation in connection with the work;
- to inform the supervisor promptly of any impediment to their work;
- to notify the supervisor of his/her intention to submit at least three months prior to the proposed date of submission; and to take the initiative in identifying problems and seeking solutions to them.

Students who are not satisfied with the service being provided by their Supervisor should make this known to the Director of Research Postgraduate Studies (or, where the latter is the Supervisor in question, to the Head of Department). This can be done at any point throughout the year by appointment with the Director of Research Postgraduate Studies or as part of the annual

progression meetings. Depending on the nature of the issue(s), the Director of Research Postgraduate Studies may consult in confidence with the Head of Department, the supervisor in question or any other university services, as necessary, to ensure the issue is resolved in a sensitive and supportive manner. Any issues or concerns raised will be treated in as confidential a manner as possible, subject to confidentiality limitations as necessitated by the issue/concerns raised.

Where draft thesis chapters have been read and returned by Supervisory Committees, students are not entitled to submit further individual chapter drafts, except by prior agreement with their Supervisory Committees. Complete final drafts of theses must be submitted for approval by Supervisory Committees and the Head of Department prior to submission for examination by the National University of Ireland.

Maynooth University has a detailed PhD Research Student Supervisory Policy. Please contact gra@mu.ie if you have not received a copy of this policy. Some of the key aspects of the policy include the roles and responsibilities of students, supervisors and departments. Please make sure you are familiar with the policy, and with your roles and responsibilities as a PhD student, available under Graduate Research Academy on the following links.

Regulations for Postgraduate Research Degrees:

<https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/university-policies/academic-policies-procedures>

Roles and Responsibilities:

<https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/university-policies/academic-policies-procedures>

Useful Information:

<https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/graduate-research-academy>

ACADEMIC PROGRESSION

A student's progress is monitored continuously by their supervisor(s) and formally evaluated on an annual basis by the departmental research student progress committee (DRSPC).

DRSPC's decisions regarding progression of postgraduate research students are ratified by the relevant Examination board each year.

Continued registration for a research degree is subject to successful progress. Progression must be recorded on a student's record in order for the student to be able to register for the following year.

Your progress as a research postgraduate student is evaluated in a variety of ways, depending on year of registration and stage in the programme. All PhD candidates registered since September 2019 are required to undertake a substantive review of progress prior to the second year Annual Review of Progress (at/before month 18). For existing MLitt/PhD candidates, registered prior to September 2019, the Annual Progress Review outcomes have been modified from the existing Progress/Not Progress to now include five outcomes.

First year

Within four weeks of first registering, you are required to complete an Initial Meeting Record (on forms supplied by the Department), which will be reviewed by a Departmental Committee, which generally comprises the Head of Department and the Director of Postgraduate Studies.

Annual Progress Review (First and subsequent years)

In May of each year of your programme of study, you must prepare a Progress Report (on forms supplied by the Department) detailing your work during the year. Each MLitt/PhD

candidate writes a report of their progress; the supervisor reads this report and provides comments on progress, which the candidate sees. Copies of this report signed by the MLitt/PhD candidate and their supervisor should be sent to the Director of Postgraduate Studies. The MLitt/PhD candidate also provides a review of their supervisor (which is not seen by the supervisor).

All progress reports will be reviewed by the Head of Department, the Director of Postgraduate Studies and/or one other member of departmental staff. In the case of either of these being supervisors of theses under review, alternative staff members will be nominated for the review.

As part of the annual review of progress, MLitt/PhD candidates are also required to meet with the departmental research student progress committee (DRSPC) to discuss and review their progress over the previous reporting period(s). These meetings take place at the end of May every year.

Substantive Review (Second year; at/before month 18)

Since 2019-20, transfer from the initial phase of the PhD programme to the latter phase is subject to a substantive review and is contingent on the candidate demonstrating progress according to *disciplinary* and *departmental* norms. Transfer to the latter phase of the PhD will be assessed via a 'Progression paper' to be submitted to a Progress Review Committee (PRC) at/before month 18.

The Progression paper, of approximately 5,000 words in length (not including the bibliography), should include the following

- a draft review e.g. review of the relevant literature;
- clearly identified research questions;
- an outline of methodology, methods and data (including data sources);
- an overview of results to date (if any); and,
- a plan for future work (e.g. including a timeline- Gantt chart).

As part of the review, a candidate will also be required to give an oral presentation (~ 10-15 mins) to the committee and answer questions afterwards.

The primary supervisor has responsibility for forming the Progress Review Committee (PRC) which will be an ad hoc committee comprised of a minimum of three members: two qualified topic experts and a neutral chair. The neutral chair will *normally* be a staff member drawn from the department and may/may not have expertise in the specific topic area. The role of the neutral chair, similar to that of a viva, is to ensure the process is fair and to report on the agreed recommendations and outcomes from the PRC. The qualified topic experts will normally be from the department, but can include suitably qualified external member(s), where relevant. A member of a candidate's supervisory committee, outside of the primary supervisor(s), can act as a topic expert on the PRC subject to a candidate's consent. A candidate can also request that their supervisor(s) be present at the Substantive Review meeting, but only in an observer capacity and at the candidate's behest.

The PRC chair will be required to make a recommendation on the outcome of the substantive review to the DRSPC prior to the second year annual review. The DRSPC are responsible for making the final decision on progression to the PhD register. The PRC chair will inform the candidate and the supervisor of their recommendation to the DRSPC but clarify that the final and formal decision will be made and communicated to the candidate by the DRSPC. A supervisor can appeal the recommendation of the PRC, through a written or oral submission, to the DRSPC prior to the subsequent Annual Progress Review.

If the PRC recommend that a student does not meet the requirements to transfer to the PhD register (i.e. *Progress with conditions* or *No Progress: Revise and Resubmit*), the PRC will provide to the DRSPC details about these conditions and indicate clear, concrete objectives that the candidate will need to meet, in order to progress. The DRSPC will provide the candidate with the conditions/objectives to be met by the subsequent annual progress review, in the case of a *Progress with conditions* recommendation, or within a specified period, in the case of a *No Progress: Revise and Resubmit* recommendation. Where a student who receives a *No Progress: Revise and Resubmit* recommendation is deemed by the primary supervisor to have met the conditions as set out by the PRC prior to the September Examination Board, they will be allowed to progress into the subsequent year (*Progress on PhD Track*). In such cases, a student will be required to resubmit an updated Progression paper to the PRC prior to the next annual review.

If the PRC recommends that a student does not meet the requirements to transfer to the PhD register, but recommends transferring to a research masters, the PRC will communicate their recommendation and provide appropriate feedback, outlining their reasons, to the DRSPC who will communicate the final recommendation to the student following the Annual Progress Review.

If the PRC recommends that a student does not meet the requirements to transfer to the PhD register, and recommends exiting the PhD without an award, the PRC will communicate their recommendation and provide appropriate feedback, outlining their reasons, to the DRSPC who will communicate the final recommendation to the student following the Annual Progress Review.

A student can appeal the recommendation of the DRSPC through a written submission, outlining the reasons and grounds for their appeal. Written appeals must be received by the DRSPC at least four weeks prior to the September Examination Board meeting.

For reporting purposes, the thesis outline and Progression paper submitted as part of the Substantive Review will form the primary contribution to *Section 4. Thesis* of the subsequent annual progress review forms.

Outcomes of the Annual DRSPC Review

- Progress on the PhD Track [*Can only be awarded in Year 1 and Year 2 (FT), and in Years 1,2, and 3 (PT)*]
- Progress on PhD [*Can be awarded in Years 2, 3, 4 and subsequent years up to 6 (FT) or Years 3, 4, 5, 6 (PT) and subsequent years up to 9. This result is not available in Year 1*]
- Progress with conditions
- Not Progress: Revise and Resubmit
- Not Progress
- Transfer to research master's degree

Outcomes for upload to the September Examination Board

- Progress on the PhD Track [*Can only be awarded in Year 1 and Year 2 (FT), and in Years 1,2, and 3 (PT)*]
- Progress on PhD [*Can be awarded in Years 2, 3, 4 and subsequent years up to 6 (FT) or Years 3, 4, 5, 6 (PT) and subsequent years up to 9. This result is not available in Year 1*]
- Progress with conditions

- Not Progress
- Transfer to research master's degree

For part-time students, the substantive review will normally take place by the end of Year Three.

It is also possible to delay the substantive review *once* for a further year.

Outcomes of the Annual Progress Review (pre September 2019 registrations)

To align with the new outcomes from the Annual DRSPC Review and upload to the relevant Examination Board, the department's annual progress review outcomes have been modified (for existing students registered prior to September 2019) from the existing Progress/Not Progress to now include five outcomes.

Annual Progress Review outcomes

- Progress on PhD [*Can be awarded in Years 2, 3, 4 and subsequent years up to 6 (FT) or Years 3, 4, 5, 6 (PT) and subsequent years up to 9. This result is not available in Year 1*]
- Progress with conditions
- Not Progress: Revise and Resubmit
- Not Progress
- Transfer to research master's degree

Outcomes for upload to the September Examination Board

- Progress on PhD [*Can be awarded in Years 2, 3, 4 and subsequent years up to 6 (FT) or Years 3, 4, 5, 6 (PT) and subsequent years up to 9. This result is not available in Year 1*]
- Progress with conditions
- Not Progress
- Transfer to research master's degree

If the DRSPC recommend that an existing student does not meet the requirements to *Progress on PhD* (i.e. *Progress with conditions* or *No Progress: Revise and Resubmit*), the DRSPC will provide the candidate with the conditions/objectives to be met by the subsequent annual progress review, in the case of a *Progress with conditions* recommendation, or within a specified period, in the case of a *No Progress: Revise and Resubmit* recommendation. Where a student who receives a *No Progress: Revise and Resubmit* recommendation is deemed by the primary supervisor to have met the conditions as set out by the DRSPC prior to the September Examinations Board, they will be allowed to progress into the subsequent year (i.e. *Progress on PhD/Progress with conditions*). In such cases, a student will be required to demonstrate that sufficient/significant progress has been made at the subsequent annual progress review.

If the DRSPC recommends that a student does not meet the requirements to continue on the PhD register, but recommends transferring to a research masters, the DRSPC will communicate their recommendation and provide appropriate feedback, outlining their reasons to the student following the Annual Progress Review.

If the DRSPC recommends that a student does not meet the requirements to continue on the PhD register, and recommends exiting the PhD without an award, the DRSPC will communicate their recommendation and provide appropriate feedback, outlining their reasons to the student following the Annual Progress Review.

A student can appeal the recommendation of the DRSPC through a written submission, outlining the reasons and ground for their appeal. Written appeals must be received by the DRSPC at least four weeks prior to the September Examination Board meeting.

The Substantive Review Form, to be submitted by the chair following the Substantive Review, is available under the Handbooks Section on the Departmental website.

PERIOD OF TIME FOR COMPLETION

Normal, minimum and maximum duration for postgraduate research programmes are as follows:

	Normal duration	Minimum duration with approval from head of dept.	Minimum duration with approval From Academic Council	Maximum duration
PhD full time	4	3	2	6
PhD part time	6	4.5	3	9
Research master's full time	2	1	1	3
Research master's part time	3	2	2	5

Students may be granted an extension beyond the above specified maximum period with the permission of their head of department and also the Registrar or Dean of Graduate Studies. Before applying for an extension, students should discuss the matter with their supervisor. The relevant form is available on the university website. If the thesis is not submitted for examination within the extended time period, students will be required to apply for a further registration extension and pay the associated fee.

An academic extension does not create a corresponding extension to any scholarship funding that students might be in receipt of. Students must approach the relevant funding body directly in relation to possible extensions of their funding.

Full-time registration

The normal duration of a PhD degree is four years of full-time study. Where a student completes the degree early, the head of department, in conjunction with the supervisor, may approve an early submission after three years of full-time study.

In exceptional circumstances, Academic Council may approve submission in a period shorter than three years of full-time study, but no less than two years. In such cases, the student will be required to pay the full-time fee for the minimum three-year period. After three years, a student may be permitted to progress one semester at a time, so that a student who submits in three-and-a-half years is liable for three-and-a-half years of fees.

After the normal period of registration (four years), the fee is normally adjusted to a reduced continuation fee equivalent to the part-time fee.

Part-time registration

Part-time status for students wishing to undertake a PhD may be granted on the recommendation of their head of department.

For part time students, the normal duration of the degree is six years. Where a student completes the degree early, the head of department, in conjunction with the supervisor, may approve an early submission after 4.5 years of part-time study.

In exceptional circumstances, Academic Council may approve submission in a period shorter than 4.5 years part time study, but no less than three years. In such cases the student will be required to pay the part-time fees for the minimum 4.5 year period.

After 4.5 years, a student may be permitted to progress one semester at a time.

Transferring from full-time to part-time registration and vice versa

A student may transfer from full time to part time and vice versa, where this reflects a genuine change in the time devoted to the research. Where a student has a combination of full-time and part time registration, the minimum period is calculated on the basis that one year part time is equal to two-thirds of a year full time. Students must pay the equivalent of three years full-time fees.

To transfer from full to part time, or part time to full time, the head of department should request a transfer from full time to part time (or vice-versa) in writing to the Student Records and Registration Office.

SUSPENSION OR WITHDRAWAL FROM RESEARCH PROGRAMMES

In circumstances where there is an unavoidable disruption in studies, the university may allow a student to suspend registration for a specified period of time. While suspended, the student is not a registered student of the university, is not expected to work on the research project, and does not pay fees. During a period of suspension, a student should not be engaged in advancing the research project and should not expect supervision or guidance from the supervisor, or access to university services such as computing facilities, teaching, Library, and other support services. In exceptional cases, a request can be made to the Registrar for continuing access to the Library.

Periods of suspension are not considered for the purposes of calculating minimum or maximum durations.

Request for suspensions must be approved by the Head of Department and by the Registrar and must be sought prior to the commencement of the academic year. Should a student require a break in their studies, the student must complete the relevant form (*R1 Postgraduate suspension/withdrawal request*) to request a permission to suspend their studies and submit the form to the Head of Department together with appropriate documentary evidence in advance of the intended break.

Suspensions can only be obtained for a minimum of one semester and maximum one year. Should a student request a further suspension, a new request must be made. Suspension requests should normally be granted at the annual progress review.

Suspensions should not exceed three years cumulatively over the course of the programme. Should a student request a suspension exceeding cumulatively three years, the department may ask the student to reapply to the programme.

Suspensions will not be applied retrospectively. Students returning after an unauthorised suspension should request permission to re-join their programme. They can do this by completing and returning a Research and Taught Postgraduate Re-Registration request form, available on the university website. Any outstanding fee liabilities must be settled before a re-registration request will be considered.

Withdrawal is where a student leaves their programme of study and ends all activity associated with their studies before they have completed the programme for which they are registered. A student should complete the relevant form and submit to the Head of Department and the Registrar for approval.

The *R1 Postgraduate suspension/withdrawal request* form is available online at <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/records/withdrawing-deferring-or-suspending-registration>.

Information on Returning after a Deferral is available at: <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/records/withdrawing-deferring-or-suspending-registration>

Any student who wishes to resume their programme after having withdrawn or if registration has lapsed will be required to re-apply for admission. The *R2 Re-registration request* form is available for download at <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/records/withdrawing-deferring-or-suspending-registration>.

PHD SUBMISSION OPTIONS

For the PhD, students may submit a dissertation of unpublished work or may apply to be examined on published papers. Any application to be examined on published papers will be reviewed by the Departmental Committee. For examination on published papers, the student will submit to the examiners a thesis consisting of an Introduction, the papers in question, and a Discussion/Conclusion. Details of the PhD by Publication option are provided in **Appendix 4**.

If, as part of your PhD, you publish your research please complete the Authorship Declaration Form, available at <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/geography/handbooks>. One form per publication should be included in the Appendix of your submitted thesis

GUIDELINES FOR THE PREPARATION OF THESES

There are no regulations concerning the minimum or maximum length of theses submitted for the MLitt and PhD degrees. However, normally an MLitt thesis should be of the order of 50,000 words in length and a PhD thesis should be between 80,000 – 100,000 words in length. PhD theses must, in the view of the examiners, be worthy of publication, in whole or in part, as a work of serious scholarship.

Content

Most theses should include the following basic elements which may be modified or adapted to suit the particular needs of the project:

- An Introduction, setting out the aims and scope of the thesis and the material to be covered in each chapter.
- A review of literature relevant to the thesis subject matter. This should summarise the main findings of the literature reviewed, and conclude by identifying themes and/or hypotheses to be explored in the thesis.
- A detailed methodological statement, setting out the methods/sources employed in both acquiring and analysing information. The statement of methodology should be sufficiently clear to enable possible future researchers to replicate it in order to be able to either corroborate or refute the findings.
- Analysis of data/information. It is important that all findings should be reviewed in the context of the themes and hypotheses derived from the initial literature review.
- A conclusion, which should recall the initial aims of the thesis, summarise the main findings, and (where appropriate) make recommendations (e.g. of a policy nature, or for future research).

- A bibliography of the works consulted in the preparation of the thesis. This may consist of a list of references and an additional bibliography.

Format and layout

The thesis should be typed, with double or one-and-a-half spacing, on good-quality A4 paper. Indented quotes and footnotes should be single spaced. The left margin should be at least 4 cm, and all other margins should be at least 2cm. Page numbers should be located centrally at the bottom of each page, around 1cm above the edge. Pages should be numbered consecutively, including appendices, but excluding photographs and/or diagrams which are not embodied in the text.

There should be a separate **title page** containing the following in this order:

- The full title (and sub-title) of the thesis.
- The total number of volumes if more than one, and the number of the particular volume.
- The full name of the author, followed, if desired, by any qualifications and distinctions.
- The qualification for which the thesis is submitted; the name of the institution to which the thesis is submitted; and the department, faculty or organisation in which research was conducted.

For example:

Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the MLitt/PhD degree, Department of Geography, Faculty of Social Sciences, National University of Ireland, Maynooth

- The month and year of submission
- Name of the Head of the Department concerned.
- Name of the Supervisor of the research.

The title should describe the content of the thesis accurately and concisely.

The thesis should be bound within boards, with a fixed binding. If the cover has the title of the work, it should be in at least 24pt (8 mm.) type. The name and initials of the candidate, the qualification and the year of submission may also be shown. If the cover material bears any design, the design shall be clear of any lettering.

If practicable, the spine of the work should have the surname and initials of the candidate, the qualification for which the work is submitted and the year of submission, in at least 24 pt (8 mm.) type. If the work consists of more than one volume the spine shall also bear the number of each volume.

Headings

Each chapter should have a number and title, centred at the top of the page. Use sub-headings where there are significant changes in theme in the text. This also helps to break up the monotony of continuous text and improves the presentation. Be consistent in the use of different orders of heading.

For example, for the major sections of a chapter, you could place the heading on a separate line, in block capitals (i.e. upper case), at the left margin of the page. Where major sections are divided into sub-sections, you could place the sub-heading on a separate line, in lower case, at the left margin of the page, and underline it. If using a third order of sub-heading, underline it and place it at the beginning of the line, with text continuing on. The passage below outlines a correct usage of headings and sub-headings.

CHAPTER 2: THE STUDY AREA

AGRICULTURE

Agriculture is an important activity in the study area. It will be discussed under three headings: main agricultural enterprises, the impact of modernisation, and food processing industries.

Main Enterprises

The main enterprises in the study area are:

Dairy Farming: This is mainly found in the northern part of the study area, where farms are of medium size...

Alternatively, you could use a slightly different sized fonts for different levels of heading, possibly using bold and /or italics, and different spacings before and after the heading. However, whatever you decide, the most important thing is to remain consistent. Most word processors allow you to define styles. Using these will ensure a consistency of style for different levels of heading.

Illustrations

Original maps and diagrams, whether computer-generated or hand-drawn, should be of acceptable cartographic standard. Maps from secondary sources should be copied neatly, and the source should be stated at the bottom as for an ordinary reference e.g. "Source: Haughey, 1992: 46". The source(s) of information upon which original illustrations are based should also be given e.g. "Source: *Census of Population*, 1996, 2002".

All maps and diagrams should have a title and should be numbered sequentially, including the number of the chapter in which they appear as follows: "Fig. 2.1, Fig 2.2", etc. All maps should include a scale.

Photographs should have an accompanying caption, should be labelled "Plate" and should be numbered as for maps and diagrams ("Plate 2.1", etc.).

All tables should be presented as neatly as possible. Each table should have a title and be numbered as for maps ("Table 2.1", etc.).

All illustrations should be placed as close as possible to the relevant text and should be referred to and discussed in the text.

Quotations

Direct quotations should be used sparingly and should generally be confined to particularly well-stated or telling passages. They should be enclosed in double quotation marks (with quotations within quotations enclosed in single quotation marks) and should be followed by (in parentheses) the surname(s) of the author(s), the date of publication and the page number from which the quotation has been taken, as follows: "...forever and ever." (Kitchin and Bartley, 1998: 109). Where a quotation exceeds a single sentence it should begin on a separate line, and should be indented (i.e. have wider left and right margins than the main text). Lengthy quotations should be avoided. Superfluous passages in a quotation may be omitted and replaced by three spaced periods. Words may be added for grammatical completeness but should be enclosed in square brackets.

Bibliography and References

You will be provided with a handbook detailing the Department of Geography's preferred referencing system. Alternative systems may only be used with the permission of the Senior Supervisor.

N.B. University regulations governing the preparation of theses change from time to time, so please confirm the accuracy of the above information.

SUBMITTING THE THESIS FOR EXAMINATION

When it is time to submit your thesis, the following are the necessary steps:

- Prior to submitting your thesis for examination
 - Details of examiner(s) for the MLitt/PhD thesis must be approved by the Faculty of Social Sciences, using the appropriate form. These forms are available at <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/exams/extern-examiners>
 - You must also complete the relevant thesis submission forms, available at <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/exams/postgraduate-information>, which must be signed by the Student, Principal Supervisor and Head of Academic Department
- Students are required to submit an electronic copy of their thesis in one pdf file with completed Submission Forms to research.theses@mu.ie. (Submission forms are available on the link above – see under the relevant research tab for the respective forms).
- The thesis should be password protected. The password should be forwarded to research.theses@mu.ie in a separate email. Forms should be signed electronically by the Student, Supervisor and Head of Department.

For 2024-25, the meeting dates for the Faculty of Social Sciences are as follows:

16 September 2024
21 October 2024
02 December 2024
27 January 2025
10 March 2025
12 May 2025

** While you may submit your thesis at any time, there are certain dates that you need to bear in mind as fees are applicable at the beginning of each semester.*

Each copy of the PhD thesis must be accompanied by a Summary of the contents, not exceeding 300 words in length. Work for which a Degree in this University, or elsewhere, has already been obtained will not be accepted as the main work for a PhD degree. A confirmatory statement to this effect must accompany the submission.

N.B. University regulations governing the submission of theses change from time to time, so please confirm the accuracy of the above information.

VIVA VOCE EXAMINATION

The viva is held following the submission of the PhD thesis. The Examination Board for the viva normally consists of two examiners: one internal and one external to Maynooth University. Maynooth University appoints an independent chair to oversee the process. The aim of the viva is to question you on aspects of the thesis, and to assess the quality of the thesis. Your Primary Supervisor may attend the viva with your permission, but may not examine or question you and does not participate in the final decision. The examiners must find the PhD worthy of publication, in full or in part, as a work of serious scholarship, in order to recommend that you are awarded the degree.

Following the viva, the Examination Board may recommend one of the following options:

- That you are awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy without further examination or amendment.
- That you are awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy without further examination, subject to making the minor changes specified which must be subsequently carried out to the satisfaction of the Internal Examiner.

- That you are awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy without further examination, subject to making the changes specified by the examiners which must be subsequently carried out to the satisfaction of the Internal and External Examiners.
- That you are not awarded the degree, but that you are permitted to re-submit the thesis in a revised form for re-examination by the same Examiners.
- That you are not awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy and not permitted to submit for re-examination.

For more information on the Viva Voce, see

<https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/exams/postgraduate-information>

SUBMITTING THE FINAL VERSION OF THE PHD

When Examiners recommend that the PhD Degree be awarded, you must submit one hard bound copy of the PhD thesis, plus an electronic copy (on CD/USB) of one PDF file mirroring the hard bound copy embodying any changes prescribed by the Examiners, where recommended, incorporating the recommended changes and confirmed by the Internal (External) Examiner, to the Examinations Office before the Examiners' report is considered by Faculty. When you submit the final version, the electronic copy will be deposited in the Maynooth University eTheses Archive. That copy will be publicly available, unless you apply for permission to withhold access. Information on this process is available at: <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/exams/postgraduate-information>

The Department of Geography would welcome a hardbound copy of the thesis to store and display in the department, should you wish to deposit a copy with the Department.

IMPORTANT DATES

September	Graduate Research Academy Research Student Induction and Welcome
October	Submission of thesis
	Registration deadline for Research Modules (S1)
February	Submission of thesis
March/July	Substantive Review (18 month) meeting for September/January start
May	Annual Progress Reports for submission
May	Submission of Module Assessment Records
End of May	Annual Progress Meetings
October	IRC Government of Ireland Scholarships deadline

Appendix 1: Department of Geography Research Seminar Series 2024-25

Notification of all upcoming seminars for the academic year 2024-2025 will be through email.

Seminars are normally held in the Rocque Lab, Rhetoric House, but may change from time to time.

Appendix 2: Graduate Education Programmes (GREP)

Since September 2010, all PhD students registered in the Department of Geography are required participate in the GREP. Key details of the programme are below. Details of modules available during the academic year will be provided separately.

	GREP
Core Department	Geography
PhD Assessment	Based on dissertation only
Taught Programme	30 (60) ECTS
Composition of Taught Programme	15 (30) ECTS Professional Development (Block 1) <i>and</i> 15 (30) ECTS Substantive Knowledge (Block 2) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 5 (10) Theory ▪ 5 (10) Methods ▪ 5 (10) Advanced Specialist
Timing of Taught Programme	30 (60) ECTS over 3 years 15 (25) ECTS in Year 1 (recommended)
Pass mark	40%

The credit requirements outlined in the above table refer to students who have already completed a Master's degree prior to entering the programme. For direct entrants from undergraduate programmes/those who have not completed a Master's degree, the credit requirements are indicated in brackets. The credit requirements outlined in the table indicate the **minimum** requirements to complete the degree.

The MLitt degrees are awarded on the basis of a research thesis. To support the completion of the research thesis, all MLitt students are required to participate in a Graduate Education Programme (GREP). Students take a variety of taught and other modules to enhance their substantive knowledge and their professional development, in a programme of study that is designed to suit a student's individual needs. MLitt students are required to complete a minimum of 10 credits of taught modules over Years 1 and 2 comprised of 5 credits from transferable modules and 5 credits from subject specific modules.

There may be exemptions for appropriate prior learning (see Credit waivers and course variations section below).

Appendix 3: Structure and Module Choices

MODULE CODES	MODULES	ECTS	SEMESTER
Block 1: Professional Development			
GST1	Personal Development and Employability Module	5	
GST2	Finding Information for your Thesis	5	1
GST3	Academic Writing Module	5	2
GST4	Research Practice and Integrity	5	1
GST5	Creative Thinking and Problem Solving	5	1
GST6	Social Entrepreneurship: Making a Real Difference	5	2
GST8	Grant Management and Compliance	5	1 & 2
GST10	Innovation and Research Commercialisation		
GST11	Professional Skills – Thesis Completion and Career Development		
GST13	Research Funding Application		
GST15	Ethics and Academic Practice for Research Students		
CTL1*	Professional Certificate in Postgraduate Teaching & Learning	5	1 & 2
FM801	Conference Organisation		
FM802	Work Based Placement		
FM803	Research Placement		
FM804	Engaging with the community: Research, Practice and Reflection		
FM805	Outreach and Communication		
FM806	Advanced Communication Skills (Conference Presentation)		
FM807	External Short Course		
FM808	Seminar Series		
FM809	Advanced Communication Skills (Publication)		
SO802A	The Craft and Logics of Social Research I	10	1
SO803A	Craft and Logics of Social Research II	10	1
SO858	Innovation in Qualitative Social Research	5	2
SO859	Quantitative Methods and Data Visualization	5	2
GY841	Professional Development III	5	
GY819	Workshop/Training in Specialised Equipment	5	
GY820	Field and Laboratory Based Research	5	
Block 2: Substantive Knowledge			
Theory modules			
GY801	Key Concepts in Geography I	5	1
GY802	Key Concepts in Geography II	5	
Methods modules			
GY811	Methods I	5	
GY812	Methods II	5	
GY813	Methods III	5	
GY814	Methods IV	5	
FSS1	Quantitative methods in the social sciences	5	1 & 2
Advanced Specialised modules			
GY881	Thematic Module I – Topic changes every year	5	
GY882	Thematic Module II – Topic changes every year	5	
GY883	Thematic Module III – Topic changes every year	5	
GY884	Thematic Module IV – Topic changes every year	5	

*** CTL1: Professional Certificate in Postgraduate Teaching & Learning**

CTL1 has a separate application process with closing dates. Please see <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/centre-teaching-and-learning/staff-teaching-and-learning/professional-certificate-teaching-and-learning>

For a comprehensive list of available modules, please refer to Course structure available at

http://apps.maynoothuniversity.ie/courses/?TARGET=QS&MODE=VIEW&QUALIFICATION_CODE=PHDA&QLINK=

Subject-specific modules

Subject-specific modules involve advanced specialist doctoral level courses provided by a department/research institute or other 4th level institutions. Subject specific modules may also include master's level taught modules in the discipline area or in a cognate discipline area.

For the academic year 2024-25, the following taught modules are available from within the Department as PhD GREP modules. Please make sure **to request permission from the course instructor prior to attending** and **make sure to register for the relevant GY8**** (e.g. Concepts, Methods or Advanced Specialist GY codes) when taking these courses as GREP modules.

Semester 1:

GY607, Field School, Fri 2-4pm. Please contact module coordinators: Prof. Gerry Kearns

GY801, Key Concepts - Reading Geography, Fri 9:30-11:30 am. Please contact module coordinators: Prof. Mark Boyle

GY625a, Understanding Digital Society, Thurs 11-1pm. Please contact module coordinators: Prof. Rob Kitchin, Dr. Alistair Fraser

GY652 Applied Climate Sciences, Monday 10-12 (although several weeks of variation to account for international obligations) Please contact module coordinator: Prof. Peter Thorne

GY655 Impacts, Adaptation and Mitigation, Tuesday, 11.00-13.00 Please contact module coordinator: Prof. Conor Murphy.

GY668 Climate Research in Action – workshop based. Details provided in the MSc Climate Change Handbook. Please contact module coordinator: Prof. Conor Murphy.

Module overview and learning outcomes for these modules are available in the respective handbooks (MA/MSc), available under the Postgraduate Handbooks on the departmental web page.

Semester 2:

GY619 Public Engagement, Friday, 2-4pm. Please contact module coordinator: Prof. Karen Till

GY621 Dublin Urban Laboratory, Thursday, 11-1pm. Please contact module coordinator: Dr. Lousie Sarsfield-Collins

GY629, Spatial Justice & Environmental Change, Fri 9-11am. Please contact module coordinator: Dr. Patrick Bresnihan

GY643 Marine Remote Sensing - INFOMAR, Intensive one week block in January, 9am to 5pm. Weekend trip in February. Please contact module coordinator: Dr. Conor Cahalane in advance of registration.

GY664 Palaeoclimate, Tuesday 12.00-14.00. Please contact module coordinator: Dr Helen Shaw.

GY667 The Ocean and Climate Change, Wednesday, time to be confirmed. Please contact module coordinator: Dr Gerard McCarthy

Module overview and learning outcomes for these modules are available in the respective handbooks (MA/MSc), available under the Postgraduate Handbooks on the departmental web page.

Graduate Skills modules

A list of the Research Skills Development Programme (RSDP) modules (GST and CTL) and course details are available at:

<https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/graduate-research-academy/research-students>

Modules are typically assessed by the supervisor, module coordinator or Research Development Office as specified by the specific module.

Flexibly Defined modules

Flexibly defined modules are not defined as subject specific or transferable. This distinction is at the discretion of the department. Flexibly defined modules are provided to research students by their department/supervisor. Departments/supervisors assess FM modules. Please refer to the [Course Structure](#) to see the list of available FM modules.

Transferable skills modules

Transferable modules include modules offered in disciplines other than primary research areas that would enhance the student's skills development. These modules are designed to assist the student to develop and manage their research and future careers across a broad range of employment sectors, including academia.

To register for a transferable module that is available within the university but has not been listed under your Department, you and your supervisor should complete the Form for registering for transferable modules and return it to the module coordinator before submission to the Student Records Office.

A list of Transferrable modules open to research student at Maynooth University is available at <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/study-maynooth/postgraduate-studies/information-research-students/modules-available-other-departments>

The **GSF3 form for registering for transferable modules** is available at <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/graduate-research-academy/stipend-and-fees-forms-research-students> under the Modules available outside of your home Department (Transferable modules)

Inter-University and external modules

A range of inter-university modules and external modules are available for research students. These are usually subject specific modules. Details of the specific registration process should be sought from the module/programme coordinator, where the particular module is being taught.

In the case of the student undertaking an external module as part of their departmental structured programme: when the module is completed, the student should bring the transcript to their Maynooth University module/programme co-ordinator for processing.

In the case where the module is not listed as part of the departmental structured programme, the student must seek the approval of the supervisor(s) before attending such a module. After completing a module the student should complete the **GSF4 Gain Accreditation for Inter-Institutional Modules** form and forward it together with the results to Registry (Student Records Office) for processing.

The **GSF4: Gain Accreditation for external Modules** form is available from <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/graduate-research-academy/stipend-and-fees-forms-research-students>

Credit waivers and course variations

The credit waiver and course variation form GST5 should be completed by students who wish to receive a waiver for a module they have already completed or students who wish to change the balance of minimum credits required i.e. take 20 subject specific credits and 10 transferable credits instead of 15 credits in subject specific and generic modules (total of 30 credits).

The **GSF5 Research Masters and PhD Credits Waivers and Course Variations Form** is available from <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/graduate-studies/stipend-and-fees-forms-research-students>

Module Assessment Record (MAR)

To ensure marks are recorded for all geography (GY module codes) subject specific and professional development modules taken as part of the structured programme, it is your responsibility to ensure that a completed, signed Module Assessment Record [form](#) is submitted upon module completion and prior to the exam upload dates in May. The form is available at <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/geography/handbooks> and here



Appendix 4: PhD by Published Work

Eligibility

- All PhD students are admitted to the traditional PhD route.
- PhD students may apply to do a PhD by Published Work, generally after successful completion of the first year of a PhD by the traditional route. PhD students may apply up to the end of the second year of study (3 year full-time PhD), the third year of study (4 year full-time PhD) or the fourth year of study (part-time). The application process will include the submission of a publication strategy, to include details of planned publications and publication outlets. This application must be supported by the student's Supervisory Committee, and must be agreed by a Departmental Committee.
- Applicants for the PhD by Published Work must have reached the minimum threshold of one paper under review at the time of application.
- Students who are not making adequate progress in meeting their publication targets will be routed back to the traditional PhD option. Student progress will be reviewed by the Supervisory Committee on a six-monthly basis, and by the Departmental Committee on an annual basis.
- Students may apply, at any stage, to return to the traditional PhD option. This application must be supported by the student's Supervisory Committee, and must be agreed by a Departmental Committee.

Form

Specific publication strategies will be agreed for individual students, in conjunction with each student's supervisory committee and subject to approval by the Departmental Committee. However, the following general rules will apply:

- The general format of the PhD submission will be a collection of related publications contextualised by both Introduction and Discussion and/or Conclusion sections.
- There should be a minimum of three publications. It is expected that publications included in the PhD submission will have been peer-reviewed. Acceptable forms and places of publication will vary depending on the student's research area.
- At least two publications should be single or lead authored.
- At least two publications should be accepted for publication at the time of submission of the PhD thesis. The student should be lead author on at least one publication.
- In the case of joint-authored publications, all authors (including the student) will be required to sign a statement outlining their contribution to any publication submitted as part of the PhD submission. The student must make a significant contribution to each publication.
- The publications will be framed by an Introduction and a Discussion and/or Conclusion that contextualise the work (provide information on research design and methodology, and show how the publications represent an original, coherent and cohesive contribution to knowledge and demonstrate how it makes an original contribution to knowledge). The Introduction and Discussion and/or Conclusion should be between 15,000 and 25,000 words in total.
- The publications must be based on original research carried out since the student registered for a PhD.
- A viva voce examination by an External and Internal examiner will be required to be passed to award the PhD degree (as in the traditional route).

Disputes

- Disagreements between the Supervisory Committee and the Departmental Committee will be mediated by the Head of Department.
- A student may appeal any decision of the Supervisory Committee to the Departmental Committee. If a satisfactory resolution is not reached, the dispute may be referred to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

Proposed rules and procedures for submission and examination of a PhD by publication

https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/sites/default/files/assets/document/MU_GRA_PhDPublication.pdf

Maynooth University Department of Geography
National University of Ireland Maynooth
Maynooth
Co Kildare

Ollscoil Má Nuad Rionn na Tíreolaíochta
Ollscoil na hÉireann Má Nuad
Má Nuad
Co Chilldara