

BA Local Studies  
BA Community Studies  
**MH803 (Part-time, Evening Degrees)**



**Department of Adult & Community Education**

## **Why is the BA in Local Studies or Community Studies for me?**

**You might want to enroll if you are interested in:**

- Taking a part-time evening degree delivered over a 5 year cycle to allow for the maximum amount of flexibility**
- Recognition of Prior Learning**
- History, geography, Irish culture and heritage, archaeology**
- Adult education, social studies; community development, social policy, youth work; addictions**
- Anthropology, sociology, identity, politics, gender, power, culture**
- Developing training and communication skills, group skills, facilitation skills, consensus building and mediation skills**

## **The BA Local Studies and BA Community Studies (MH803) have been specifically designed to provide learning opportunities for mature students on a part-time basis. These broad ranging interdisciplinary programmes bring together eight of the University's academic departments from the Faculties of Arts and Social Sciences to create the only degree of its kind in Ireland.**

If you are curious about how people interacted with their environment in the past and how this impacted on their culture and identity in ways that are still felt today then the following pages outlining the BA Local Studies should be of interest to you.

If, on the other hand, you would like a deeper understanding of the world around us and consider participation and critical engagement with issues of Social Justice, Democracy, Sustainability then Community Studies will be more to your liking.

Students from both streams will have the opportunity to learn together through our Common Modules where history, geography, adult education, sociology, anthropology bring their unique disciplinary insights to bear on culture, society, landscape, politics, etc.

Many adults have previously taken courses or have achieved other learning in some of the subject areas that this degree covers. This means that people may apply for Recognition of Prior Learning and if successful then this previous work will be offset against the degree, again you will find more information on RPL in the following pages.

Finally the Department of Adult and Community Education coordinates this degree on behalf of the eight academic departments involved. We provide a dedicated support team to help our students to meet the academic standards expected of a level 8 honours degree. However, we also recognise the other demands that life places upon mature students and we put the appropriate supports in place in order to make this as an enjoyable and rewarding experience as possible. I hope you will find this prospectus interesting and that you will join us on this exciting learning journey.

**Dr Derek Barter**  
Degree Manager



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## Choosing a path through the degree

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Students on the degree may choose to follow either the Local Studies programme or the Community Studies programme. However, students are not required to make a final decision on which programme they wish to follow until they have completed Semester 1.

### Semester 1

In Semester 1 a student must successfully complete the common obligatory modules:

**CM1** Study Skills & Student Support;  
**CM04** ICT for Research and Learning Part A;  
**CM5** Introduction to Programmes: Local Studies & Community Studies.

Please note the following:

- The ICT for Research and Learning Part A module assumes that students have basic IT/word processing skills.
- Students who have previously completed the NUI Return to Learning Certificate post 2018 are fast tracked into the Continuing Student Timetable.
- Students who have achieved the award of Diploma in Arts or a higher award may apply for an exemption in Study Skills.

### Programme Selection: BA Local Studies or BA Community Studies

In order to complete the degree students are expected to:

- Choose sufficient modules from either the Local Studies programme OR the Community Studies programme to accumulate 180 credits for award of the degree;
- Complete a Thesis (20 credits) as part of their programme.

Students must have completed 120 credits before registering for Thesis.

### Structure of the Degree Programme

Over a five year cycle of delivery the following two programmes are provided:

#### Programme 1 Local Studies Programme 2 Community Studies

Students on the degree may choose to follow either the Local Studies programme or the Community Studies programme. It is not possible to attend modules from both programmes, except where Common Modules are offered.

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### **Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)**

Recognition of prior learning is a process by which an individual may have the learning they have acquired prior to entering their chosen programme of study in university formally identified, assessed and acknowledged. The learning gained may have been acquired through formal, non-formal or informal routes.

Formal learning is defined as learning that takes place through programmes of study or training that are delivered by education or training providers and which attract awards such as certificates, diplomas, etc. This is also known as accredited prior learning.

Non-formal learning takes place alongside the mainstream systems of education and training. It may be assessed but does not normally lead to formal certification. Examples of non-formal learning are: learning and training activities undertaken in the workplace, voluntary sector or trade union and in community-based learning.

Informal learning takes place through life and work experience and is sometimes referred to as experiential learning.

The process for recognition of prior learning is available at Maynooth University for awards at Level 8 upwards and carrying a minimum of 60 credits i.e. Diploma or Degree awards. Awards are not granted on the basis of RPL alone.

### **BA Local and Community Studies**

You may submit an RPL claim for module exemptions or credits to a maximum of 60 credits once you have accepted your place on MH803 through the CAO. For further information please contact the BA office at: 01 708 4587/708 3948 or visit <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/mu/graduate-studies/recognition-prior-learning> .

## Local Studies

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### **Why study Local Studies?**

To understand the world in which we live we need to understand the places that helped to make us what we are as both individuals and communities. How did this street, town, village, city, parish come to be what it is. What did this place look like before?

Who shaped this place and how did they interact with their environment? We can begin to answer these questions by reading and interpreting the past from the myriad different sources and techniques made available to students in this unique interdisciplinary degree.

### **Why study Local Studies at Maynooth?**

Maynooth University offers a singular opportunity to undertake local studies at your own pace in this flexible, part-time evening degree. The interdisciplinary nature of the BA in Local Studies combines the expertise in research and teaching of the Ireland's leading history department for the study of local history, with one of the foremost geography departments in the country. In addition, the Centre for Irish Cultural Heritage and the Departments of Nua Ghaeilge and Ancient Classics provide the platform for a deeper understanding of the social forces that helped to shape both people and place.





## Meet some of the team



**Dr Eoin Grogan**  
Early Irish (Sean-Ghaeilge),  
Centre for Irish  
Cultural Heritage

Teaching staff on the BA Local Studies are drawn from a range of academic departments including History, Geography, Classics, Nua Ghaeilge, Sociology, Anthropology, Adult & Community Education. Dr Eoin Grogan is a landscape archaeologist, who specialises in prehistoric settlement and social organisation, with particular expertise in Bronze Age landscape studies. Eoin is a lecturer in Irish and European archaeology in the Centre for Irish Cultural Heritage, School of Celtic Studies, Maynooth University. Eoin has directed several excavations including Mooghaun hillfort and Clenagh hilltop enclosure, Co. Clare. Eoin's publications include *Irish prehistory: a social perspective* (1994, with Gabriel Cooney), *The North Munster Project* (2 volumes), *The Bronze Age landscapes of the Pipeline to the West* (2007) and *The Rath of the Synods, Tara, Co. Meath* (2008).

## What can I do with my degree?

The BA Local Studies gives people the chance to develop research and writing skills to the highest level. Analysis and interpretation of information and the ability to communicate the result in as succinct and accurate manner as possible is an invaluable and much sought after skill in many areas of employment.

In some cases students from the Local Studies degree have published their research. Some have used their newly acquired knowledge and skills within education, tourism, hospitality and leisure industries.

Some graduates opt to proceed into postgraduate study in fields of interest such as history, geography, archaeology and folklore.

## What are my options for studying Local Studies at Maynooth?

Options	What you study	Apply	Points 2023
Local Studies as a part-time (evening) interdisciplinary degree	History, Folklore, Geography, Archaeology, Anthropology, Sociology	Through the CAO course code MH803	Mature applicants only. Eligibility is 21 years or over on January 1st of the year of entry

# Community Studies

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## **Why study Community Studies?**

Government, public sector, private sector and voluntary sector are becoming increasingly aware of the power of community, and informed community leaders are an increasingly vital source of social capital. By studying the community, we enhance our ability to understand our world. By understanding the origins and the dynamics of both the local community and the global community, through Community Studies, we will be better placed to play a role in the development of our communities and shaping our future.

## **Why study Community Studies at Maynooth?**

Maynooth University has a particular strength in relation to community studies. The diversity of interests in both our academic staff and student body is reflective of the diversity of our 'lived in' community. The University is not an ivory tower - rather it is a hive of activity and interactivity. Its location on the edge of the capital city, within a peri-urban setting, and supporting a rural hinterland, makes it a unique location to study community studies. University departments interact with communities for research and teaching on an ongoing basis. Academics spend time in communities often giving of their expertise freely. The scholarly traditions of the University combined with a deep commitment to civic and social engagement present a wholeness applicable to community studies.

The mode of teaching, the nature of research being undertaken, and the diverse student learning groups combined is the reason why Maynooth University is the best location to undertake Community Studies.

## Meet some of the team



**Michael Kenny**  
Adult and  
Community  
Education

The BA Community Studies is an interdisciplinary degree. The academic departments involved in this degree are Adult and Community Education, Applied Social Studies, Anthropology, Sociology, Geography and History. Research areas range from Urban and Rural Development, Social Inclusion, Youth and Community Work, Culture and Society, Identity, Power, Gender and Social Analysis among others. Michael Kenny delivers the introduction to Community Studies and Community Development modules. Michael is an agriculturalist & adult educator. He has many years experience in adult education & youth work in the non-formal sector. He has also been involved in overseas development work in Africa. Michael is also an innovator in e-learning and rural development and lectures at certificate, diploma, degree and master's level.

## What can I do with my degree?

Students who have completed the BA Community Studies acquire knowledge and develop skills that are much sought after in the statutory, community and voluntary sectors. Our students have progressed to work in the areas of adult and further education and training; community development; teaching; the HSE, civil service and NGOs.

Some graduates opt to progress into postgraduate study in fields of interest such as education, citizenship, social inclusion and social cohesion, regeneration, narrative enquiry, gender studies, politics and sociology. MU Postgraduate programmes such as the HDip in Further Education and Training <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/adult-and-community-education/postgraduate-programmes>

## What are my options for studying Community Studies at Maynooth?

Options	What you study	Apply	Points 2023
Community Studies as a part-time (evening) interdisciplinary degree	Adult and Community Education; Anthropology; Applied Social Studies; Sociology; History; Geography	Through the CAO course code: MH803	Mature applicants only. Eligibility is 21 years or over on January 1st of the year of entry

# What will I study?

## Sample course plan

### First year – Semester 1

These are the only compulsory modules on the Degree.

Common Introductory  
Modules:

- Introduction To Programmes:
- Study Skills and Student Support
- Introduction to Local Studies/ Community Studies
- ICT for Research and Learning Part A

Study Skills modules  
will include:

- Study Planning,
- Learning Styles,
- Library Skills,
- How to Read Academic Texts,
- Note Taking,
- Essay Writing,
- Referencing/Bibliography
- Introduction to Research Methods,
- Time Management,
- Stress Management

### First year – Semester 2,

In semester 2, Students choose which stream Local Studies (LS) or Community Studies (CS) they will opt for. Modules are revised and new modules introduced on a regular basis.

Local Studies  
(LS Modules)

- Introduction to Maps and Landscapes
- Introduction to Local History A and B
- Sources for Irish Local History
- Introduction to Irish Archaeology
- Research Methods for Historians
- Irish for Local History

Community Studies  
(CS Modules)

- Social Analysis I and II
- Models of Community Development
- Introduction to Adult Development and Learning
- Introduction to Adult Development and Learning
- Public Administration
- Community Engagement and Learning
- Critical Thinking
- Introduction to Anthropology
- Philosophy of Adult and Community Education
- Mindfulness and Adult Development and Learning

Common Modules  
(CM Modules)

ALL STUDENTS can take Common Modules which are offered throughout the degree programme..

## Local Studies

- Ireland 431-1014
- Introduction to Irish Archaeology 2
- Irish for Local History 2
- The Local Physical Environment

- Ireland 1014-1400
- Landscape Archaeology
- Latin for Local History 1
- The Irish Language Literature and Folk Tradition
- Europe in the Nineteenth Century

- Ireland 1400-1603
- Introduction to Irish Art History
- Latin for Local History 2
- Irish Place Names
- Europe in the Twentieth Century

- Ireland 1603-1800
- Introduction to Irish Architectural History
- Kings, goddesses and Sovereignty
- Gender in Local Context

- Ireland 1800-Present
- Case studies in Urban History
- The Evolution of the Irish Landscape

- Estates, Farms and Settlements
- Minor Thesis

- Summer Schools Local Studies

## Community Studies

- Psychology of Adult Development
- Counselling Theories
- Urban Society I: Critical Studies of Global Processes in Local Communities
- Introduction to Social Policy
- Theory and Practice of Working with Groups

- Urban Society II: Critical Studies of Global Processes in Local Communities
- Substance Misuse and Dependence
- Anthropology, Identity and Representation
- Community Work Principles and Approaches
- Groupwork and Facilitation Skills
- Echoes-Greek History and Culture in the 21st century
- The Eternal City, Ancient Rome's continuing legacy in the modern world.

- Adult and Community Education: Policy and Practice
- Medical Anthropology
- Community Work: Policies and Issues
- Gender, Power and Identity
- Drama Facilitation

- Theory and Practice of Mediation and Consensus Building
- Guidance and Counselling in Adult Learning
- Youth and Community Studies
- Theatre of the Oppressed: Theory and Methods
- ICT for Research and Learning Part B

- Project Planning and Management
- Anthropology of Development
- Theory and Practice of Working with Groups
- Youth Work in Ireland
- Philosophy of Adult Education

- Drama in Education
- The Anthropology of Ethnicity
- Minor Thesis

- Summer Schools Community Studies

## General Information

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### Semesters

Each academic year has two semesters. Semesters consist of twelve weeks class contact and two weeks to complete assignments.

Each academic year on-campus is typically structured as follows:

#### **Semester 1** September–December

12 weeks class contact

2 study weeks

#### **Semester 2** January–May

12 weeks class contact

2 study weeks

#### **Summer Modules** (Optional) Monday–

Friday

Full-time 1 week

Lectures are offered over two nights per week, usually Tuesday and Wednesday from 6.00–10.00pm

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### Modules

Each programme is offered through modules. A module is a 'block' of learning in which a particular topic is taught and assessed. Most modules are 'stand alone' and can be studied as separate blocks. All modules carry credits towards the degree. The modules of study are delivered through a combination of regular lectures, tutorials, presentations, field trips and short summer schools.

Modules carry different credit weightings as follows:

Module Credits	5
Class Contact Hours	24
Module Credits	10
Class Contact Hours	48

### Credits

The degrees are based on the accumulation of credits. Students must accumulate 180 credits to successfully obtain their degree. Credits are awarded on successful completion of end of semester assessment. The flexibility of the degrees means individuals can accumulate a maximum of 20 credits or a minimum of 5 credits per semester.

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### Assessment and Awards

Each module on the degree programmes is assessed. In general assessment methods include written assignments, project work, presentations. All students must complete a capstone thesis towards the end of their degree and no earlier than having achieved 120 ECTS.

On achieving 180 credits the student is awarded a BA

Local Studies (Honours-Level 8) OR a BA Community Studies (Honours – Level 8).

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### Student Support

Students on the part-time degrees are fully registered students of Maynooth University and have full access to all of the services and supports available available in the University, with the additional services of a dedicated Student Support Officer for our night time students. A Study Skills and Student Support module is offered in the first semester of the programme.

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### Admission Requirements

Applicants to the degree programmes should be mature students, i.e. aged 21 years or over by 1st January in the year of admission. Maynooth University encourages applications from adults who may not have completed second level education.

### Non-European Applicants

The University welcomes applications from non-EU applicants. For information regarding fees for non-EU applicants visit the University's website at: [www.maynoothuniversity.ie/international](http://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/international)

### Language Proficiency

Both programmes are delivered through English. Students are advised that to benefit from their chosen programme they should be proficient in both written and spoken English.

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### Fees

Fees are calculated on the credit weighting of each module. For example, in 2023 a module of 5 ECTS costs €410, while a 10 credit module costs €820 and so on up to 20 credits which would cost 1640 euro. A Payment Plan is available through the [Fees Office](#) once registration is complete. Students are also eligible to participate in the [Student assistance Fund](#) and should contact the [Student Budgeting Advisor](#) post registration. There are also the 1916 Bursary and the Uversity Scholarship.

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**How and where to apply** Application for the BA Local Studies/ BA Community Studies is made through the CAO using course code: MH803 [www.cao.ie/index.php](http://www.cao.ie/index.php)

E-mail [kay.loughlin@mu.ie](mailto:kay.loughlin@mu.ie) for Easy Guide to CAO for MH803.

All eligible Candidates will be invited for interview.

For further information please contact the BA Office Department of Adult and Community Education, Maynooth University.

**Tel:** 01 708 6062/708 3948

**Fax:** 01 708 4687

**Email :** [Kay.loughlin@mu.ie](mailto:Kay.loughlin@mu.ie)

**Web:** [www.maynoothuniversity.ie/adult-and-community-education](http://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/adult-and-community-education)

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## What the students say...

### BA Local Studies

When I was a teenager I left college early and started work, but always with the intention of returning some day. Fifteen years later that dream came through when I decided to embark on this BA. I am now in my final year of the BA Local Studies and I am currently researching my final thesis. As I write this and reflect on my experiences, I realise that I have gained much more than I ever envisaged. I have learned so much, gained invaluable skills and made great friends along the way. As I busy mum of two, the Part-time nature of this degree and the flexibility it offers, proved to be very important. I could take more or less classes depending on my circumstances each semester. The broad subject choice allowed me to shape the degree to suit my interests. There were times along the way, (including a family crisis or two!) when I needed extra support and the BA team were always there to help. And, there was always a friendly face or two waiting at the coffee dock for a chat over a cuppa. Embarking on this BA is one of the best decisions I have made. All the hard work and commitment seems worth it for the sense of achievement and pride I feel.

**Caroline Kane**

One of the most significant decisions that I have made in my life was to participate on the BA Local Studies/ Community Studies programme. It is difficult to imagine from the perspective of one such as myself, who left school without a qualification that not only is there a place for you in university but that you will fit in and are more than capable of completing a degree. This programme offers that and much more. It equipped me with all the necessary tools to participate fully in class and complete assignments. The degree thought me to see the world in a different way. I engage more deeply in conversations and in my interactions with others. I have met some amazing people on this learning journey from lecturers, to support staff, to my fellow students, all of whom were supportive and encouraging along the way. I feel that from my experiences on the course that I have grown in a way that I never thought possible and in the process become a new person.

**Gerard Nolan**



## What the students say...

### BA Community Studies

My experience of the BA Local Studies/Community Studies has opened up in me a compelling quest for knowledge. It changed my life. It is a new and exciting adventure. I realise that there is a world out there that was passing me by. I have discovered a new and caring community, new friends and colleagues who are always willing to assist and share ideas. The academic life is a new experience and one to be enjoyed. There is a great sense of belonging. The field trips were a memorable part of the course. The most enjoyable for me was the discovery of the community that once lived on the Blasket Islands, their way of life and their literary heritage.

The administrative, teaching and library staff are always there when needed and willing to help. You just have to ask. It is the student that matters and the accumulative energy of the place is towards his/her betterment and encourages academic excellence. The student is encouraged to contribute ideas through a consultative process. I am now writing my thesis having completed the required number of modules. Right now I am considering embarking on a MA course and perhaps a PhD after that. The experience has done much for my personal self confidence and prestige. It has given me such a positive feeling that I cannot envisage ever leaving the place. I love it.

**Jim Doyle**

Throughout the process of studying as a mature part-time student on the BA Community Studies programme, I acquired much more than cultural capital in the form of academic knowledge and credentials. I developed a deeper understanding about my life-world and, most importantly, the capacity to think critically and reflect about myself, my community and society as a whole.

**Mairéad McHale**

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## What the students say...

# BA Community Studies

I can't believe I am here... It has been one of the most exhilarating and terrifying experiences of my life. Taking the first step is like jumping off a cliff without knowing what is at the bottom... I made the application without telling anyone what I was doing. From making the initial contact with the college it was just made so easy and before I knew it I was in – but in to what? What would be expected of me and would I fall flat on my face? Would I be open to new concepts and new ways of learning – and what are the new ways of learning? Would I be able to cope with the whole experience?

I then had to tell my family as I would be 'missing' two nights a week. Arrangements had to be made for someone else to do the dropping off and picking up from extra curricular activities. This was sorted out and as long as it is just the two nights a week it's accepted without too much complaining. It is only if I have to go into the library for another night that the grumbling starts. My children are quite supportive but I know they still think I have lost the plot – why would you go to college unless you 'had' to?

I have told other people on 'a need to know' basis. I had to tell my boss at work as I was late registering and had to look for a couple of hours off work to do so. Otherwise it does not affect my working life as I work part time and do not work on the nights I have college.

On the home front I find I am having to be a lot more organized... There is very little time for watching TV or reading for leisure. That sounds quite negative but in fact is not at all. I wake up each morning with what I can only describe as 'a fizz in my blood.' I want to get up and get at the day – get the housework and my paid employment out of the way so I can do what I really want to do which is spend some time, be it only half an hour at 10 o'clock at night reading over notes from classes or preparing for the next one.

I know I am only on the first steps of a very long road and it will get much harder as we are really being cossetted for the first semester but I feel I have learnt more in the last 6 weeks than I have for the previous 30 years of my life. I may look back in a year's time and laugh at my naivety but for now I am just enjoying the feeling.

**Pauline Oxley**

The information contained in this publication is intended as a guide for those seeking admission to the University and does not constitute a contract or any terms thereof between the University and any intending applicant or any third party. Neither is it intended to give rise to legal obligations of any kind on the part of the university and its employees. The University reserves the right, at any time, or from time to time, to cancel, revise, amend or alter programmes of study and academic regulations. The University is not responsible for and shall not be bound by any errors in, or omissions from, this publication.

**Produced by**

Maynooth University, Department of  
Adult and Community Education

**Design**

[www.unthink.ie](http://www.unthink.ie)

**Print**

[www.clondalkingroup.com](http://www.clondalkingroup.com)

**Photography**

Johnny Savage

**Paper**

UPM Fine

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