



Career opportunities

The skills and experience acquired on the MA in Local History programme apply to a variety of fields, especially history, archaeology, genealogy and cultural heritage. The programme provides participants with:

- an opportunity to conduct original research and to contribute to the field through a thesis;
- the chance to mix with and learn from like-minded people from a variety of backgrounds;
- transferrable skills that can be used to carry out further research independently or as part of a local society or organisation;
- a stepping-stone to advanced postgraduate research (e.g., MLitt. or PhD) and/or further education in the arts and heritage sector, in galleries, libraries, museums, archives and cultural institutions;
- experience and a qualification that will strengthen funding applications for local projects;
- valuable skills for community-building and preservation efforts;
- resources and opportunities to facilitate networking and collaboration;
- the chance to publish a book in the renowned *Maynooth Studies in Local History* series;
- job opportunities in museums, heritage organisations and local government;
- a good basis for pursuing a career in academia, arts administration, the civil service, the diplomatic service, education, journalism, law, politics, public administration and public relations or research;
- a university qualification and skills that will enhance promotion and career development prospects.

Entry requirements

Students who have an honours degree with a 1:1, a 2:1 or high 2:2 grade in History before the programme begins, will be offered a place. Other applications will be considered depending on available spaces. Applicants must have a recognised primary degree which is considered equivalent to Irish university primary degree level.

Key details

- Apply online: www.maynoothuniversity.ie/study-maynooth/how-apply/postgraduate-applicants
- Codes: MHP54 (full-time) MHP55 (part-time)
- Closing date: 30 June 2025
- Qualification: Master of Arts Degree
- Award type and NFQ level: Taught Masters (9)
- Commences: September 2025
- Course duration: 1 year full-time/2 years part-time

For more information

- Programme Director: Dr Michael Potterton
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- Website: www.maynoothuniversity.ie/history



MA in Local History



The Department of History, Maynooth University
Celebrating 70 years of Excellence in Teaching,
Research and Publication **1953-2023**

MA in Local History

What is 'Local History'?

It is the study of a particular place or region in the past, including its people, culture and events. It is the foundation upon which a sense of community and belonging is built. It examines closely how historic incidents and individuals have affected the development of the region in question, providing a deeper understanding of the past and how it has shaped the present. Studying and researching Local History can help to preserve and promote cultural heritage by highlighting the unique traditions, customs and landmarks of an area. It fosters community engagement and encourages active participation in the preservation of local heritage, as well as playing a role in economic development by promoting tourism and preserving historic sites.

Why Maynooth?

On the doorstep of Dublin, and set in the idyllic north-Kildare countryside, Maynooth benefits from a perfect location for the local historian, within easy reach of all parts of the country. Maynooth University is consistently

ranked among the top research-led universities in Ireland, while the Department of History is the country's leading centre for the study of local history. It has an exceptionally strong tradition in Irish history, a great reputation for producing high-quality research, and a team of skilled, respected and approachable teachers and researchers. We are especially proud to be the recognised Home of Local History in Ireland.

Taught MA in Local History

The **Taught MA In Local History** is a 90-credit programme in which participants complete a combination of required and optional modules (60 credits) as well as a minor thesis (30 credits) on a topic agreed with the Programme Director and an assigned expert supervisor. Assessment for the modules is a blend of written assignments, in-class participation and presentations. The programme can be taken full-time (1yr) or part-time (2 yrs).

Core modules introduce participants to key elements of historical research, while optional modules cover aspects of Irish history from the Middle Ages to

the twentieth century, typically including the following topics: heritage, conservation and cultural tourism; the evolution of the urban landscape; landed estates and designed landscapes; domestic architecture; war and revolution; rural settlement; genealogy; the archaeology and history of medieval Ireland.

The **Taught MA in Local History** prepares students to research their chosen place, identifying and analysing sources, compiling evidence, structuring a dissertation and producing a final written thesis. An interdisciplinary approach grounded in history draws on complementary fields such as anthropology, archaeology, geography and sociology. This focus on specific places and communities has the potential to uncover previously unknown or overlooked aspects of history, while there is a parallel emphasis on understanding the past in relation to the present.

With some 175 published titles, Maynooth Studies in Local History is an internationally renowned series established thirty years ago. Edited by the Director of the MA in Local History, Michael Potterton, this peer-reviewed and highly acclaimed series provides participants in the programme with an unparalleled resource and an opportunity to publish their own work. The 19 volumes of **Maynooth Research Guides for Irish Local History** provide those interested in local history with practical advice, suggestions and recommendations.

