



Department of Media Studies



MA Critical & Creative Media
PGDip Critical & Creative Media

Student Handbook

2023-2024

Table of Contents

Welcome	3
Contact details	4
Programme information and timetable	6
Timetable information	7
Information on grading and progression	8
Marks and standards for student work	9
Staff-Student Communications	10
Staff-Student Policies	13
Useful Resources	17
MU Library: Postgraduate Guide	18

Welcome to Media Studies at Maynooth University!

Welcome to Maynooth University and the Department of Media Studies. We are delighted you have chosen to expand your understandings of all things media with us by choosing the MA or PGDip in Critical and Creative Media.

This 2023-24 Handbook is your guide to the academic year and to the guidelines in place regarding your academic study and practice work. Please read it carefully and refer to it throughout the year. A copy can also be found on our department website, [Maynooth University Media Studies](#)

The Handbook provides details of the modules to be completed in the Media Studies subject and lists contact information for administrative and academic staff in Media Studies. Also included are Maynooth University Staff-Student Policies, including grades and progression information and a link to the University's policy on plagiarism.

Any specific questions you have on these policies and guidelines may be addressed to any staff member during the academic year.

If you have questions relating to individual modules or assignments, you should first discuss these with the lecturer teaching the module. Any issues related to your programme, should be discussed with the Year Coordinator.

I wish you all the best for the coming academic year and look forward to working with you.



Dr Sarah Arnold
Head of the Department of Media Studies

Contact Details

Website: www.maynoothuniversity.ie/media-studies

Facebook: Media Studies at Maynooth University

Twitter: @MU_MediaStudies

MA Coordinator

Dr. Kylie Jarrett

Associate Professor

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Get in touch if you have questions about your registration, timetables, or problems with the programme in general. Email or drop by my office.

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Department of Media Studies

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Postgraduate programme structures

MA 1 year full-time: MDCF6 (90 credits)

MA 2 years part-time: MDCP6 (30 credits) & MDCP62 (60 credits)

PG Dip 1 year full-time: MDCF5 (60 credits)

PG Dip 2 years part-time: MDCP5 (30 credits) & MDCP52 (30 credits)

Code	Module Descriptor	Compulsory	Semester	Lecturer
MD622	Critical and Creative Media Research	Yes	1	Dr Simon Hewitt
MD628	Dissertation/Project*	Yes	Year-long	Dr Stephanie Rains
MD635	Media Theory	Yes	2	TBC
Select 20 (min.) to 40 credits				
MD624	Irish Media History	No	1	Dr Stephanie Rains
MD636	Digital Critical Skills	No	1	Dr Jeneen Naji
MD631	Writing for Screen Media	No	1	Lindsay Sedgwick
MD630	Creative Interactive Computing	No	2	Dr Jeneen Naji
MD632	Media Publics: Digital Media, Public Discourse and Political Formations	No	2	TBC

* not compulsory or available in PGDip

Additional Modules available outside the Department of Media Studies.

Code	Module Descriptor	Credits	Semester	Department
Select up to 20 credits				
AN670	Key Concepts in Anthropology 1	5	1	Anthropology
AN673	Key Concepts in Anthropology 2	5	2	Anthropology
AN675A	Theory in Anthropology	10	1	Anthropology
AN676	Ethnographic Practice	5	1	Anthropology
AN692	Anthropology and Development	10	2	Anthropology
AN693	Anthropology of Digital Media	10	2	Anthropology
GY607	Field School	10	1	Geography
GY619	Public Engagement and Spatial Justice	10	2	Geography
GY621	Dublin Urban Laboratory	10	2	Geography
GY625A	Understanding Digital Society	10	1	Geography
GY629	Spatial Justice: Geographies of Social and Environmental Change	10	2	Geography
HY697	Gender and History in Britain and Ireland: A Survey	10	Year-long	History
LW685	Information Technology Law	10	2	School of Law and Criminology
MU624	Individual Project (Music)	10	Year-long	Music
MU681	Music and Screen Media	10	2	Music
NG630	An Ghaeilge Sna Méain Ó 2RN Go DTÍ An Ré Dhigiteach	10	1	Nua-Ghaeilge
SPA649	The Graphic Novel: Critical and Creative Approaches	10	2	Spanish

Full module descriptors can be found at [courses](#).

Timetables

The official university timetable information can be accessed at [MU Timetable](#)

It is important to check timetable before registering to ensure there are no clashes between modules. In the event of a clash between two elective modules, you will unfortunately need to choose one or the other. The timetable is complicated and has many moving parts so while we attempt to schedule classes to maximise options, this is not always possible.

Occasionally minor changes may have to be made to timetables after they have been published – when this occurs, the online version will be amended, and all affected students will also be notified of the change by email at the earliest opportunity.

Important information on grading and progression

Module completion and progression

- Students must pass all modules before proceeding to their next year of study.
- Students must submit all assessable components of each module. Students who do not may be required to repeat the module.
- If a range of particular conditions are met, students *may* pass by compensation at 35%. For more details, see the Marks and Standards document available at the Exams Office website: [Maynooth University Examinations Office](#)

Marks and standards for student work

Maynooth University has a detailed Marks and Standards policy document for all undergraduates degrees. **All students should refer to this document at the earliest opportunity.**

This may be downloaded at [Maynooth University Examinations Office](#).

Award Grades - where University awards are classified, the following standards are used.

First Class Honours	70-100%
Second Class Honours Grade I	60-69%
Second Class Honours Grade II	50-59%
Third Class Honours	45-49%
Pass	40-44%

For the sake of consistency, the Department of Media Studies marks in percentage grades.

The following guidelines on the awarding of specific marks to specific standards of work should be noted:

Letter Grade	Description	Representative %	Class
A++	Answer which could not be bettered	100	1:1
A+	Exceptional answer displaying unexpected insight	90	1:1
A	Undoubtedly first class, flawless answer, demonstrating originality	80	1:1
A-	Almost flawless answer demonstrating some originality	70	1:1
B+	Extremely high competence, perhaps displaying limited originality or technical flaws or minor errors	68	2:1
B	Fundamentally correct and demonstrating overall competence	65	2:1
B-	Competent performance, substantially correct answer but possibly containing minor flaws or omissions	60	2:1
C+	Awarded on the basis of the answer being somewhat better than a C but below a B-	58	2:2
C	Basically correct, answer with minor errors or one major error/omission.	55	2:2
C-	Awarded on the basis of the answer being somewhat below a C but better than a D+	50	2:2
D+	No more than adequate answer	48	3
D	Adequate answer with serious errors or omissions	45	Pass
D-	Lowest passing grade, barely deserving to pass	40	Pass
E+	The answer is inadequate and does not deserve to pass	38	Fail
E	The answer fails to address the question properly but displays some knowledge of the material.	35	Fail
E-	Fails to address the question	30	Fail
F+	Little relevant or correct material but some evidence of engagement with question	20	Fail
F	Very little relevant or correct material	10	Fail
F-	Totally irrelevant answer	0	Fail

Staff-Student Communications

Website

The Department of Media Studies website is at www.maynoothuniversity.ie/media-studies. This website includes all programme information, including links to detailed module descriptors showing module outlines and basic assessment information. The website also includes staff contact information and regular news/announcements. Please check the website on a regular basis.

You can also follow us on our Facebook page – Media Studies at Maynooth University – or on Twitter - @MU_Media Studies.

Email

All Maynooth University students are issued with an email account when they register, and retain the same account until they leave. These Maynooth University email accounts are the primary mode of communication used by the Department of Media Studies to contact students on both an individual and group basis. It is therefore your responsibility to check your email regularly, and we recommend that you do this **at least once a day**.

If you set up your Maynooth University email to forward messages to another email account, you must still regularly access your Maynooth University account to delete old messages. If you do not do this, your account will rapidly exceed its quota, and new messages will not be delivered until it has been cleared out.

Students wishing to make contact with a member of staff should use their Maynooth University email account only to send emails – messages from other email accounts may very well be delayed or removed by the spam-filter. All emails to any member of staff in the university should be treated as professional communications. This means **completing the subject heading of the message, addressing the recipient formally, and writing the message in clear English**. Emails sent to any recipient must also be respectful. Staff members will only reply to or send email between 9am and 5pm, Mon-Friday, except in serious, exceptional circumstances.

Moodle

The Department of Media Studies uses Moodle online learning spaces for each module; they contain detailed information on module content and assessment. Once registered all students are automatically registered for Moodle access to all the modules they are taking. Please check the Moodle pages for your modules on a regular basis. Any difficulties with Moodle access should be reported to moodlesupport@mu.ie, not to the Department of Media Studies. Before using Moodle, please also consult its Acceptable Use Policy, available after login.

Access to Staff

Students are encouraged to consult with lecturers on academic and other matters relating to a particular module. They should contact the relevant Year Coordinator for matters concerning their work in the university and their general progress as students.

References

Requests for references from staff should be made by formal email, giving full details of the nature of the course or appointment for which an application is being made (in the form of web-links where possible). Referees should have details of the applicant's address and telephone number to facilitate communication.

Every request for a reference should specify whether the reference required is a letter, a reference form (printed or online), and whether printed references should be forwarded directly to the applicant or to the institution or employer concerned. In either case, a full postal address must be supplied to the referee.

As much notice as possible should be given to referees, the final date for submission of the reference being clearly specified. **At least two week's notice** before this final date is required.

It is essential that the referee is also supplied with an updated copy of the applicant's CV. It should indicate subjects and modules studied, along with results received to date, and also relevant extracurricular activities, such as voluntary work, relevant work

experience, etc.

All of the above information should be supplied in one email to your proposed referee.

An 'open reference' may be of more limited value than the confidential reference relating to a specific application for a specific course or appointment.

Staff members appreciate a brief note informing them of the outcome of applications.

Social Media

For news and events related to the study of media, you can follow us on the following social media platforms.

Facebook @mediastudiesatmu

Twitter @MU_MediaStudies

Instagram @MUMediaStudies



Department of Media Studies Staff-Student Policies

The Department of Media Studies is committed to creating a safe and productive working environment for all students, faculty and staff of Maynooth University and Kairos Communications Ltd. This Charter is intended to contribute to this aim.

1. All faculty and staff of the Department of Media Studies and Kairos Communications Ltd. undertake to treat colleagues and students with respect. It is understood that all students undertake to treat their fellow students, faculty and staff of Maynooth University and Kairos Communications Ltd. with respect.
2. **Communication:** The Department of Media Studies often sends important information to students by Maynooth University email, and through Moodle. Please check your Maynooth University email account and Moodle regularly.
3. Students must submit **all the assignments** specified for a module. A module will be regarded as incomplete unless all assignments are submitted.
4. **Students are responsible for the submission of all assignments.** In particular, the following conditions will apply to all students:
 - Submission of written assignments are through Moodle and may also be requested in hard copy.
 - **By email:** Where written assignments are assigned, emailed submissions will **not be accepted** unless agreed with the module coordinator in advance. All emailed assignments should contain a digital cover sheet (available on the department Moodle page) with student name and the details of the module and assignment.

- **Email details:** Where module coordinators request a submission by email, the file should have the name of the student and the module code in the file name. The email subject field should name the module and the assessment.
 - **Submission date:** All assignments must be received on the date on which they are due. Late assignments will be penalised at a rate of 5% per working day unless exempted for documented medical or pressing personal reasons **agreed by the** module coordinator.
 - **Late submissions:** No assignment will be accepted after the end of teaching and exam periods in the semester in which such work falls due, unless exempted for documented medical or personal reasons agreed by the module coordinator.
 - **Retained Copies:** The Department of Media Studies requires each student to retain an exact copy of each piece of work (both written and practice-based) submitted for assessment. Submitted work is not returned to the student, but feedback is provided. In the event of submitted work being mislaid, the student will be expected to provide a replacement copy when asked. If you store your work electronically, you must be sure to maintain a back-up copy.
6. **Plagiarism:** The Department of Media Studies has a strictly enforced policy on plagiarism. Plagiarism is regarded as a serious offence in the Department and in the University. Please read the plagiarism and exam checking policies carefully; they are available at [Maynooth University Policies](#). Students who have a specific question regarding correct referencing should always seek the advice of the relevant lecturer in advance of submitting their work.
7. **Style and referencing of submissions:** All written assignments should be submitted in Times New Roman, 12pt, 1.5 spacing, have numbered pages, a detailed cover sheet and full references and a bibliography. Referencing should be done according to the Harvard system of referencing.
8. **Equipment procedures:** When signing out equipment from Kairos Communications Ltd., students undertake to be responsible for such equipment, and to use such equipment in a safe and responsible manner. In cases of wilful misuse or gross negligence resulting in loss or damage of equipment, such actions will be reflected in the student's continuous assessment mark. Moreover, the Department of Media Studies may refer the matter to the Disciplinary Committee of Maynooth University, which may impose a penalty up to and including withdrawal from the University.

- **Safety:** The Department of Media Studies will undertake to ensure that all students are fully instructed in the safe and correct use of all equipment. Any student can refuse without prejudice to undertake an assignment if that student does not feel capable of making safe and competent use of the necessary equipment.

9. Content of audio-visual material:

- All students will act responsibly when producing visual and audio materials for any programme. In particular, the following conditions will apply to all students: No student will deliberately produce any material that may be subject to legal proceedings (including material that is libellous, pornographic, incites hatred or is in breach of previously existing copyright).
- Kairos Communications Ltd. reserves the right to withhold copyright on all material produced by students as part of their programme.
- The Department of Media Studies will seek to ensure that students are aware of the legal and ethical issues relevant to media production prior to completion of the programme.

10. No provision contained herein contravenes a student's statutory rights, including such rights conferred by virtue of being enrolled as a student of Maynooth University.

11. The Department of Media Studies, acting in conjunction with Kairos Communications Ltd., undertakes to implement these policies in a reasonable manner, taking due account of any exceptional circumstances not expressly defined herein.

Addendum to contract for services between Maynooth University and Kairos Communications Ltd.

In addition to the obligations on all students of the University encoded in the *Code of Discipline for Students*, for those students undertaking courses related to the Media Studies Programmes the following may constitute a serious breach of the Code

"Malicious or reckless damage or theft of University property or any other property on the University grounds, or any property contracted for use of the University. Misuse of University

property, *or any property contracted for use of the University*, including library materials or private material on the campus”.

The words in italics indicate the amendment to the relevant clause (bullet point 7) in the *Code of Discipline*.

J. A. Walsh,
Vice-President: Innovation and Strategic Initiatives

21 September 2006

Useful Resources

Student Support Services

Managing your life at University can be a challenge.

Not only do you have to deal with the new ideas of your subject, you must also find ways to manage the workload among your other activities and keep your finances stable. Negotiating your way around the policies, procedures and processes of the institution can also be a frustrating experience as you may not know who to ask or what you need to know. It is also common for students to experience personal and emotional difficulties that affect their study.

You are not alone in dealing with these problems. Maynooth University has an array of student services, student support services and offices that can help you manage these or any other problems you may encounter during your studies. See the list at [Maynooth University Current Students](#) page of the University website to find out who can help you.

You can also get in touch with the student help desk which can be contacted in person or remotely: <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/studenthelp>

Programme Advisory Office

The Programme Advisory Office is available to advise you on any choices you might have to make related to your programme including subject choice.

The Programme Advisory Office can be contacted via

Email: programme.choices@mu.ie

Website: <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/programme-advisory-office>

International Students

The MU International Office has a suite of resources to support the transition of international students to life at MU that can be found here:

<https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/international/key-information>

MU LIBRARY 2023 – 2024: POSTGRADUATE GUIDE

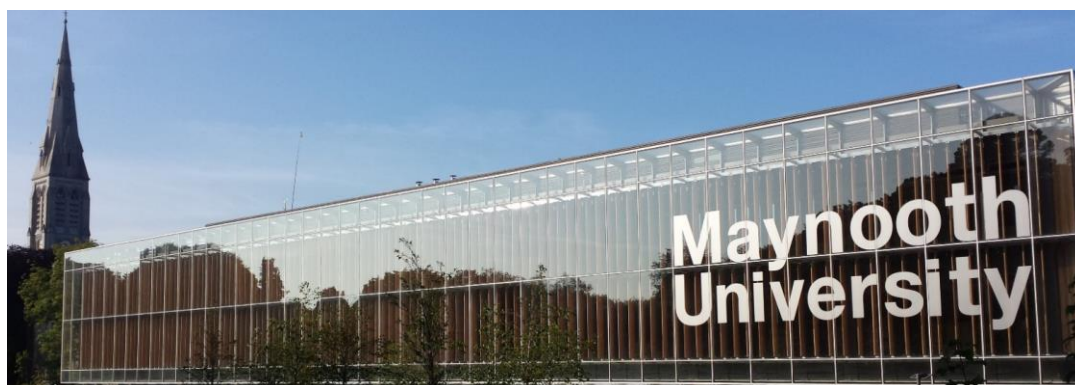


Fig 1. Exterior of MU Library

We look forward to meeting you during your postgraduate (PG) studies in Maynooth University. Whether you are doing a taught or research Master's, 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 our Special Collections & Archives,
- 24/7 access to our electronic collections online (eBooks / e-Journals / databases)
- exceptional digital collections, including extensive digital primary sources, available for your research
- 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 research and study
- inter-library loans / document-supply and access cards to other libraries
- digital-on-demand service, as well as click-and-collect for print material
- dedicated staff, including our Research Support Librarian, Ciarán Quinn, who supply information and research support at all PG levels

Our Library homepage is <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/library> where you can explore the range of our collections and services. Use your **MyCard** (student card) to access the library and to borrow books. Click the "*Using the Library*" tab on the library homepage, for more information.



Fig 2. The search-box, LibrarySearch; searching the entire collection of MU Library

Remember, our library homepage <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/library> will **always have:**

- up-to-date information about accessing the library,
- information on using all our services, including when off-campus, and accessing classes & training, and
- advice on connecting with us to get the support you need for your studies and assignments.

Borrow a laptop to use within the library, or logon to one of our many PCs and of course, you can bring your own laptop too, and use our charging stations. We have a 3D printer available (ask us!) as well as a fun “Short Story Dispenser” and our popular Energy Pods let you recharge on Level 1. You may wish to use the swipe-access, dedicated Postgraduate Room on Level 2, a quiet area in the library – Library Staff will add access to this room to your MyCard on request. Use [bookable group study-rooms \(see links at the end of this piece\) for your group project-work](#).

IT Services have a dedicated helpdesk found at the end of the Information Desk. They will be able to aid you with any **IT issues** you are experiencing, as well as **photocopying** support in the library.

We provide a **Subject Guide** for each area of study in the university. We recommend this as a starting point in your studies; it is a great source of relevant subject-specific material and resources: <https://nuim.libguides.com/?b=g&d=a>. You can upskill in your own time using our short **LIST Online tutorials**. <https://nuim.libguides.com/list-online>

Our **Research Support Librarian** offers a wide range of services to Research Master’s students, up to post-doctoral level. Look at his webpage here: <https://bit.ly/2NTvCqk> and you can make an appointment with him for 1-to-1 support in your studies.

Taught Master’s students have the support of our team of Teaching & Learning Librarians during the year (contact details at the end of this piece). We run popular Taught Master’s Workshops at critical points in your year around assignment preparation. We advertise these on our Library Homepage, the Graduate Studies Office and your Department. Sessions recently covered included:

- *Moving ahead with your thesis: from proposal to literature review and research*
- *Successful reference management practice and tools for thesis writing.*

We also provided small group consultations for students with librarians, following these workshops.

In terms of **material for your research topics**, our vast **electronic collections** (eBooks, eJournals and databases) are accessible 24/7, using your MU username and password. We have extensive digital Primary Sources too that may provide excellent research opportunities; use our A-Z of Databases link to explore these further (AM Explorer, ProQuest, Gale, etc.) Our **physical collections** are also extensive and in addition to the main library collection, we have a **Special Collections & Archives** (SC&A) department and the beautiful and historical **Russell Library**. See the SC&A section on our website here:

<https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/library/collections/special-collections-and-archives>. If you are searching for material that is not held by MU Library, we can help source this for you via:

- our free **Inter Library Loan (ILL)** service – allows you to borrow an item or receive a copy of a journal article or book chapter from another Library. You can make this request online via LibrarySearch. Click <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/library/using-library/inter-library-loans> for further details.
- by **visiting the library** that holds the item - this service is available to staff and postgraduates who hold an **ALCID** card. This card allows users to visit libraries in Ireland and consult their material. Get further information on this service from our website.
- by **applying for a SCONUL card**. The SCONUL Research Extra (SRX) scheme gives academic staff and research postgraduates borrowing facilities in most of the higher education libraries in Ireland and the UK.

Students can suggest up to **5 books for purchase by MU Library** in each academic year, see the link here: <http://bit.ly/3XTYphC>. **Contact us with any queries** you have about using the library or our resources or finding and using suitable sources for your research. The library is a place of research and study, and all undergraduates / postgraduates are expected to behave in accordance with library and university regulations. The library wishes you every success in your studies and we look forward to meeting you soon. Finally, make sure to follow us on **Instagram** @library_mu, **Facebook** @MaynoothUniLibrary or on **Twitter** @mu_library.

USEFUL LINKS:

Library homepage: <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/library>

[Student Book Purchase Order Form: http://bit.ly/3XTYphC](http://bit.ly/3XTYphC)

[Digital on Demand: https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/library/digital-demand-request](https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/library/digital-demand-request)

[Click and Collect: https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/library/using-library/book-request-form](https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/library/using-library/book-request-form)

Subject Guides: <https://nuim.libguides.com/?b=g&d=a>

LIST online: <http://nuim.libguides.com/list-online>

Group Study Rooms: https://nuim.libcal.com/booking/MU_GroupStudyRooms

Research Support Librarian: <https://bit.ly/2NTvCqk>

Special Collections & Archives: <https://bit.ly/2Zy11nN>

[Virtual Tours & Exhibitions: https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/library/virtual-tours-and-experience](https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/library/virtual-tours-and-experience)

[SensusAccess Document Conversion Service:](https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/library/using-library/sensusaccess-document-conversion-service)

<https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/library/using-library/sensusaccess-document-conversion-service>

CONTACTS:

- Taught Postgraduates contact:
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 - Áine ni Bharáin aine.nibharain@mu.ie
 - Saoirse de Paor saoirse.depaor@mu.ie

- Research students and staff (for research support) contact:
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