Handbook for Research Postgraduate Students

French — German — Hispanic and Latin-American Studies — Chinese Studies

Welcome to the School of Modern Languages, Literatures and Cultures (SMLLC) at National University of Ireland Maynooth. We hope that you enjoy your postgraduate studies with us and that you find your time here both productive and stimulating. This Handbook provides information about the School of Modern Languages, Literatures and Cultures and explains certain regulations and arrangements that affect you. The Handbook should be used in conjunction with the two publications issued by the Graduate Studies Office: the *PhD Research Student Supervisory Policy* and the *NUIM Postgraduate Student Handbook* (both available at http://graduatestudies.nuim.ie). The SMLLC *Handbook for Research Postgraduate Students* only contains additional information specific to the SMLLC.

Research Postgraduate Students are students registered for an MLitt or a PhD, both full-time or part-time. Since 2010-2011, French, German and Spanish have introduced Structured PhD programmes (Chinese Studies will follow in due course). All modules on the Structured PhD are open to students registered for the MLitt. MLitt students are strongly encouraged to fulfill the requirements set down for the Structured PhD in case they want to continue their research at PhD level later.

SMLLC can offer personal supervision and teaching by experts in a wide variety of fields, innovative areas of research and a lively intellectual environment. Research ranges from literature to didactics in foreign language teaching, from film to translation, from history to visual cultures. From the Middle Ages to the very present, all periods are covered by members of staff within SMLLC. Details of individual staff members' expertise, their publications and their current projects can be found on the departmental websites. Please note that staff are mostly willing to supervise projects that lie outside their own specific research specialisms. Ask the Head of School or the Head of Subject / Postgraduate Coordinator of subject to direct you to the most suitable staff member. In general, research is organized around the following thematic research clusters:

> Translation Studies and Intercultural Studies;
> Migration, Exile and Transcultural Identities;
> Contemporary European Women's Writing;
> Religion and Literature;
> Visual Cultures.

Projects outside these areas are also accepted for supervision.

Any research student's primary relationship is with his or her supervisor. Joint supervision across the disciplines within SMLLC and with colleagues in other schools, departments or institutes is possible. Research students are encouraged to participate in the activities of the School by attending guest lectures and readings, and above all by attending the SMLLC Research Seminar series (Wednesdays 1 pm, SMLLC Seminar Room). Even listening to presentations on topics not related to your own research can provide valuable experience. The Research Seminar is also the primary forum to present your own research to an interested and knowledgeable audience.

The postgraduate programmes offered by the School aim to help you to develop your understanding and knowledge of important concepts in the literatures and cultures of Europe and the wider world, to enhance your analytical, creative and reflective skills, and to cultivate your love of other cultures. The aim of embarking on a major research project at post-MA level is not only to demonstrate one's own understanding of the chosen field of investigation, but also to make a meaningful contribution to knowledge in this field. This includes demonstrating where the thesis breaks new ground by locating the investigation and argument in the overall context of existing (published) research and scholarship.

To enter a postgraduate programme is to commit oneself to certain standards of professional behaviour. These include regular and punctual attendance at all time tabled sessions and supervisory appointments, and punctual presentation of all assignments. They also include a methodical approach to the citation of sources in all written work and adherence to the style conventions of the relevant sub-discipline.

While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the material in this Handbook, neither the School nor the university can be bound by any error or omission, and we reserve the right to make any changes deemed necessary.

Contact Information

All staff and administrative offices of SMLLC are located in the Arts Building, North Campus, NUIM. The administrative offices are in rooms 35, 36 and 37. Noticeboards are located adjacent to the administrative offices. The departmental websites and notice boards should be consulted regularly.

Departmental Websites: http://french.nuim.ie/   http://german.nuim.ie/   http://spanish.nuim.ie/ http://chinese.nuim.ie/

Contact details for individual staff are on these webpages.

Research Environment

As a postgraduate student in the SMLLC, you will enhance your understanding and knowledge of the various languages and cultures taught in the School, enhance your research, linguistic, and other transferable skills, carry out research in your chosen area of specialization under the supervision of an expert in the field, meet established academics in the field of languages, literatures and cultures, become part of a specialist group of scholars and participate in research seminars, workshops and conferences.

Research students, particularly those in receipt of a John and Pat Hume Scholarships, funding from the IRCHSS, the NUI, or other academic bodies, should apply to An Foras Feasa (www.forasfeasa.ie) for work space in the Iontas Building (foras.feasa@nuim.ie). SMLLC will attempt to provide shared office facilities and access to computers to all research postgraduate students who also have teaching duties in any of SMLLC's departments.

Supervision of Thesis

A supervisor is appointed by the University for every MLitt and PhD student on the nomination of the Head of School. The student and supervisor will agree on a schedule of research and writing. The number, duration and frequency of meetings between student and supervisor will be determined by the supervisor.

The exchange between supervisor and research student is one of the defining characteristics of university life. Every supervisor learns from his/her research students; and the supervisor is always keen to encourage original discoveries and insights on the student's part. The supervisor, on the basis of knowledge and experience, will provide perspective, direction and information, but the initiative in researching and writing a thesis must come from the student. It is the duty of the supervisor to warn the student if he/she is making mistakes or failing to produce work to the required scholarly standard. However, the production of a thesis of the necessary quality is ultimately the responsibility of the student. Any change in the scope or emphasis of a thesis should be negotiated with the supervisor.

Supervisors will read and advise on individual chapters and/or oral presentations by the student. The frequency of this core supervisory activity is agreed between supervisor and student. However, it is imperative that a complete final draft of every thesis (including the preliminary pages and the bibliography) should be submitted to the supervisor before the official submission of the thesis. A PhD thesis will not be accepted for examination by the university until both the supervisor and the Head of School have first signed a formal statement to the effect that it is ready for examination. (This does not commit the supervisor, or the Head of School to an assertion that the thesis merits the award of the degree.)

Students should not depend on the availability of their supervisors for consultation in July or August, unless this has been specifically arranged. In case of any dispute arising between a student and his or her supervisor, either party may raise the matter – informally in the first instance – with the Head of School. If the Head of School is also the supervisor, the head of the relevant subject should be informed of the problems. Beyond that, the normal grievance procedures pertaining in NUIM will be activated.

Submission of Thesis

Details are available at: http://examinations.nuim.ie/thesis.shtml.   (Submission Forms, Thesis layout recommendations and other useful information).

Annual report and progression

Every MLitt and PhD student is required to complete the *Initial Meeting Record Form* at the beginning of their research and the *Annual Progress Review Form* to report on the year's work and to set out future plans. These forms are forwarded to the supervisor who adds his/her comments and then passes them on to the Head of School. Copies of the forms are available from the supervisor, the Graduate Studies website and from the SMLLC offices.

Please note that the return of the *Annual Progress Review Form* is an obligation, even if the student proposes to submit a thesis in the summer or autumn of that year. For others it is a university prerequisite for continuing registration in the following academic year. Please also note that funding agencies (IRCHSS, NUI, John Hume) operate their own reporting regimes which mostly require the supervisor's confirmation of adequate progress.

Where a prospective PhD candidate has registered initially as an MLitt student, satisfactory progress may lead to a change of registration from MLitt to PhD. Progress considered to be unsatisfactory may lead to a recommendation to change registration from PhD to MLitt or to discontinue studies at the University.

Please consult the NUI Maynooth PhD *Research Student Supervisory Policy*:
http://graduatestudies.nuim.ie/policies/university-policies/phd-research-student-supervisory-policy/academic-route-phd/progress-eva

Programme Structure (Structured PhD)

The normal prerequisite for admission to the Structured PhD programme is an MA or MLitt in the relevant subject area. Students with such a qualification are required to take structured PhD modules to the value of 30 ECTS credits. Students admitted without an MA, MLitt or equivalent are required to take structured PhD modules to the value of 60 ECTS credits. Students may, in consultation with their supervisor, take extra modules beyond this requirement.

The Structured PhD consists of two parts:

Major Thesis: The thesis is based on original research conducted by students under the direction of an academic supervisor. The option of jointly-supervised research with another school, department or research institute (e.g. An Foras Feasa) is also available. For further information, please consult: http://graduatestudies.nuim.ie/prospectivepostgrads/researchdegrees.

Any thesis must adhere to the conventions of the discipline in which it is written. This concerns structure and argument, the register (clarity and correctness) of the analytical language, but also the style of referencing and bibliography. The various disciplines and sub-disciplines represented in SMLLC all have certain conventions and requirements regarding thesis style. A comprehensive guide that contains information on all aspects of the formal presentation of theses, including referencing and bibliography, is issued by the Modern Humanities Research Association. This MHRA Style Guide is widely regarded as normative for academic form and style in English-speaking Europe; it is downloadable for free at http://www.mhra.org.uk.

The School does not prescribe the length of the thesis. However, an MLitt thesis that falls below 120 pages or 35,000 words, a PhD thesis that falls below 250 pages or 75,000 words (both including footnote references and bibliography, but excluding appendices, statistics, reproduction of sources, etc.) might be regarded as too light to deserve the award of the respective degree. The supervisor is the ultimate authority on length, style, structure, bibliography, referencing and related issues.

Generic Skills Modules, Transferable Skills Modules, Advanced Specialist Modules, Subject-Specific Modules: The research doctorate is supported by a number of taught modules to be taken over the course of the programme designed to enhance research excellence and professional training.

The student, in consultation with his/her supervisor, will devise a plan with a specified number of modules taken each year of the programme [30 ECTS credits minimum (15 must be in generic or transferable skills and 15 in subject-specific or specialist advanced modules). Maximum = 90 credits]. Students normally take any given module only once over the course of the PhD programme. The same piece of work can only be submitted and accredited once (see table below).

Students are normally required to take the faculty-wide Generic Skills Modules GSA1, GSA2 and GSS3 over the first three years of the programme. Allowances will be made for specific circumstances such as prolonged periods spent abroad or equivalent. Prolonged research periods abroad might offer the opportunity to take Advanced Specialist Modules at the host university. PhD students based at a foreign university will be advised by their supervisor to take relevant modules or attend relevant seminars, etc. Such modules will be awarded the ECTS value stipulated by the host university. Prolonged research periods abroad may also be considered as an Internship. The mark(s) achieved at the host university will be translated into the NUIM scheme of "Pass" and "Did Not Complete".

Students are normally required to take at least one of the ID84X modules (that's the SMLLC Research Seminar identified as ID841, ID842 or ID843 depending on the year of registration for the degree) during the first three years of their PhD programme. ID81X modules are offered in irregular intervals, but at least every third year so that every student has the chance to take an ID81X module over the course of their programme; specific topics will vary (determined by area of research of a given cohort).

Students are encouraged to take suitable modules, including Transferable Skills Modules, offered by cognate departments / schools / research institutes within NUIM. Students also have the opportunity to take suitable modules from relevant MA programmes if they have not already done so. All students normally have to pass at least one Advanced Specialist module (FR/GN/SPA85X, 86X, 87X, 88X, ID81X).

Module Code	Module Title
	A minimum of 15 credits from the following Generic Skills and Transferable Skills modules:
GSA1	Organising and Managing Research and Digital Humanities
GSA2	Communication Skills; Presenting Research and Professional Effectiveness
GSS3	Thesis Completion and Career Development
PCTL	Professional Certificate in Postgraduate Teaching & Learning: Tutors & Demonstrators
	A minimum of 15 credits from the following Advanced Specialist, Subject-Specific and Transferable Modules:
ID84X	SMLLC Research Colloquium*
FR/GN/SPA 85X	Summer or Winter School / External Short Course / Master Class**
FR/GN/SPA 86X	Conference: Attendance & Presentation**
FR/GN/SPA 87X	Inter-institutional / International Seminar**
FR/GN/SPA 88X	Internship**
FR/GN/SPA 89X	Language for Academic Purposes
ID 81X	Issues and Strategies in Contemporary Modern Languages, Literatures and Cultures**
	Transferable Modules (from other Depts and Centres)

* Attendance at Research Seminars is strongly recommended. Credit will be awarded on the basis of the presentation of a paper on the student's own research or a response paper / summary of another speaker's presentation.

** Assessment and award of mark will be determined on an individual basis, appropriate to the event. If external organisers award certificates or credit, the result will be translated into the NUIM categories of "pass" or "did not complete"; if external organisers do not issue certificates, other forms of assessment (e.g. project report) will be required.

Supervisors will make their students aware of any external opportunities (conferences, workshops, etc), but students should also inform themselves of conferences and courses, for example by subscribing to relevant mailing lists.

The Viva Voce Examination

Once the thesis is submitted, the university will appoint examiners for the PhD, one internal (normally from the department or subject in question) and one external expert in the field. An independent chair is also appointed who invites the student once a date for the viva has been set. The student will also be asked if he/she would like his/her supervisor to be present at the viva. Vivas would normally concentrate on the thesis, especially issues arising out of the research, but may also touch on topics from related fields. The examiners issue a recommendation; if the recommendation is that certain corrections and amendments have to be undertaken by the student, it is the role of the internal examiner to verify that these were indeed carried out before the final version can be submitted and the degree can be awarded. No new viva is necessary in these circumstances. Other recommendations include acceptance of thesis without any corrections and rejection of thesis. More information at
http://graduatestudies.nuim.ie/policies/university-policies/phd-research-student-supervisory-policy/academic-route-phd/viva-voce-ex

Services and Supports

The Library: As a research postgraduate student, you will be given some basic training in research skills as you embark on postgraduate study. This might include a workshop with your subject librarian, which will show you how to access the many useful resources available in the library. SMLLC offers support to research postgraduates to cover the cost of interlibrary loans (up to 10 per student per year).

As a postgraduate student, you will have access to the National Library of Ireland (http://www.nli.ie/en/readers-tickets.aspx) and other university libraries in the Dublin area. You can get the application forms for SCONUL and ALCID cards from the John Paul II Library in Maynooth (http://library.nuim.ie/services-facilities/access-other-libraries). These will allow you to access other libraries in Ireland and the UK. The Russell Library in St Patrick's College holds historical materials that may be of interest to research students. Access to the Russell Library is by appointment only (http://library.nuim.ie/russell-library).

An Foras Feasa: SMLLC has strong links with An Foras Feasa: The Institute for Research in Irish Historical & Cultural Traditions (www.forasfeasa.ie). Research postgraduate students of SMLLC can avail of the facilities of and are encouraged to participate in events organized by An Foras Feasa.

Conference Support: Supervisors will make their research students aware of any external funding possibilities both as regards scholarships for the MLitt/PhD as a whole and for special initiatives (travel grants, conference subsidies, bursaries for archive visits, etc.). The most important sources of postgraduate funding are IRCHSS scholarships, NUI studentships and the John and Pat Hume scholarships awarded by NUI Maynooth. Supervisors will assist students with their applications.

The individual subjects within SMLLC might offer limited financial support to Research Postgraduate Students to facilitate attendance of conferences, workshops and masterclasses. Such assistance must be authorized by the Head of School. Further information about possible funding opportunities is available from:
http://graduatestudies.nuim.ie/feesfundingfinance/funding/internalfunding/nuimpostgraduatetravelfund

Graduate Studies Office: The Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies is responsible for the overall affairs of the postgraduate community; v.a. generic skills modules, welfare, internal scholarships, etc. You are strongly advised to look at the Graduate Studies Office http://graduatestudies.nuim.ie/ website. It contains information on the governance of and regulations for postgraduate degree programmes as well as information about: The Graduate Feedback Council; The Postgraduate Researchers' Forum; The Postgraduate Society.

Legal Requirements

Health and Safety: The commitment and cooperation of all staff and students of the University is essential if safety, health and welfare are to be ensured. When entering a lecture theatre or classroom, students should note the nearest exit in case of emergency. In the interest of safety students are asked not to obstruct passageways with bags/books etc. in class rooms and lecture theatres. Please consult the Health and Safety web page for further information regarding fire assembly points, first aid etc.
http://www.nuim.ie/service/safety

Equality Statement: NUIM is committed to equality in higher education, both within the University and within the higher education system as a whole in Ireland. It recognises that the obstacles to equality are complex and can include deep-rooted structural biases as well as formal barriers. It seeks to develop and implement policies and procedures which promote equality and which avoid unfair discrimination on grounds of age, disability, membership of the Traveller community, marital status, family status, gender, religion, social class, sexual orientation, race, colour, nationality or ethnic or national origins.

The University regards equality as an essential component of quality assurance which is aimed at improving the quality of education and related services, while at the same time ensuring the maintenance of proper academic standards.
http://humanresources.nuim.ie/documents/Statementofpolicyonequality.pdf

Guidelines on Intellectual Property Rights: All students and staff at NUI Maynooth are subject to the Intellectual Property Policy, and therefore should familiarise themselves with it:
http://graduatestudies.nuim.ie/sites/graduatestudies.nuim.ie/files/documents/currentpostgrads/IP_Policy.pdf

Postgraduate Researchers are expected to work to the same ethical standards as other academics within their department and the University. All research projects must have ethical approval. In some cases the project may need to be considered by the University's Ethics Committee. For further information, please consult the Graduate Studies webpage:
http://graduatestudies.nuim.ie/policies/universitypolicies/ethicalreviewandresearchintegritypolicypdf

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is intolerable at all levels of academic life and scholarly activity. Please consult the following NUIM library document on plagiarism:
http://library.nuim.ie/about/documents/plagiarism.pdf

The European Doctorate

PhD students who have a strong European Language element to their research can apply for a European Doctorate. For further information, please consult the Graduate Studies webpage:
http://graduatestudies.nuim.ie/policies/university-policies/european-doctorate