Maynooth University
National University
of Ireland Maynooth

Department of Media Studies

MA Critical & Creative Media
PGDip Critical & Creative Media

Student Handbook

2024-2025

Table of Contents

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 2024-25 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

Dr Sarah Arnold
Head of Department, Associate Professor in Media Studies
Department of Media Studies
Iontas 0.20
Tel: 01-708 7702
Email: sarah.arnold@mu.ie

Anne Byrne
Administrative Officer
Department of Media Studies
Iontas 0.16
Tel: 01-708 3624
Email: anne.m.byrne@mu.ie

Caterina Mac Namara
Executive Assistant
Department of Media Studies & English
Iontas 0.17
Email: caterina.macnamara@mu.ie

Dr Denis Condon
Assistant Professor in Media Studies, Second Year Coordinator
Department of Media Studies
Iontas 0.25
Tel: 01-708 6212
Email: denis.j.condon@mu.ie

Dr Simon Hewitt
Assistant Professor in Media Studies
Department of Media Studies
Iontas 0.27
Tel:
Email: simon.hewitt@mu.ie

Dr Veronica Johnson
Assistant Professor in Media Studies, Access MAP Coordinator
Department of Media Studies
Iontas 0.24
Tel:
Email: veronica.johnson@mu.ie

Dr Jeneen Naji
Associate Professor in Media Studies
Department of Media Studies
Iontas 0.26
Tel: 01-708 3521
Email: jeneen.naji@mu.ie

Dr Anne O'Brien
Associate Professor in Media Studies, Associate Dean Research FACSP
Callan 2.109
Tel: 01-708 6470
Email: anne.obrien@mu.ie

Dr El Putnam
Assistant Professor in Media Studies, MA and Practice Coordinator
Department of Media Studies
Iontas 0.15
Tel:
Email: el.putnam@mu.ie

Dr Stephanie Rains
Associate Professor in Media Studies, Third Year, Examinations and International Coordinator
Department of Media Studies
Iontas 0.22
Tel: 01-708 6980
Email: stephanie.rains@mu.ie

Naomi Seale
Senior University Tutor and AV Coordinator
Department of Media Studies
Iontas 0.48
Tel:
Email: naomi.seale@mu.ie

Professor Gavan Titley
Professor in Media Studies, Research and PhD Coordinator
Department of Media Studies
Iontas 0.23
Tel: 01-708 6422
Email: gavan.titley@mu.ie

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	Prof Gavan Titley
Select 20 (min.) to 40 credits				
MD624	Irish Media History	No	1	Dr Stephanie Rains
MD630	Creative Interactive Computing	No	2	Dr Jeneen Naji
MD631	Writing for Screen Media	No	1	Lindsay Jane Sedgwick
MD636	Digital Critical Skills	No	1	Dr Jeneen Naji

* 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				
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
MU681	Music and Screen Media	10	2	Music
NG630	An Ghaeilge Sna Méain Ó 2RN Go DTÍ An Ré Dhigiteach	10	1	Nua-Ghaeilge
SO646	Digital Social Science Methods	10	2	Sociology
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 [Maynooth University Current Students](#) page of the University website to find out who can help you.

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

Academic Writing Support

Academic Writing Support offers free, friendly, non-judgemental writing help to any student, undergraduate or postgraduate.

Email: writingsupport@mu.ie

Website: https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/student-success/your-academic-journey/writing-support

MU LIBRARY: POSTGRADUATE GUIDE

Welcome to Maynooth University! We're excited to support you throughout your postgraduate studies, whether you're pursuing a taught or research Master's, or any further studies. MU (Maynooth University) Library offers a range of resources and services tailored to your needs:

- **Physical Books and Journals**: Access our extensive collections, including Special Collections & Archives.

- **24/7 Electronic Collections**: Enjoy around-the-clock access to eBooks, eJournals, and databases.

- **Digital Primary Sources**: Utilise exceptional digital collections for your research.

- **Postgraduate Study Room**: Swipe-access to a dedicated quiet zone in the library.

- **Bookable Group Study Rooms**: Ideal for collaborative project work.

- **PG Training Sessions**: Attend relevant PG training sessions, both online and in-person, to support your research and studies.

- **Inter-library Loans & Access Cards**: Borrow items from other libraries and get access to their collections.

- **Digital-On-Demand and Click-and-Collect**: Convenient services for accessing print materials.

- **Research Support**: Get help from our Research Support Librarian, Ciarán Quinn, and other dedicated staff.

Visit our library homepage at https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/library to explore our collections and services.

For more information, look at our guide "Using the Library" here: https://nuim.libguides.com/library-services/usingthelibrary or ask us for a demo.

Use your MyCard (student card) to access the library and borrow books.

Key Features of the MU Library

Our library homepage https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/library provides:

- Up-to-date information about accessing the library

- Details on using our services, both on and off-campus

- Information on classes and training sessions

- Support for your studies and assignments

Technology and Study Spaces

- **Laptops and PCs**: Borrow a laptop or use our PCs. Bring your own device and use our charging stations.

- **3D Printer**: Available for free student use—ask us for details.

- **Short Story Dispenser and Energy Pods**: Enjoy a quick read or a relaxing break on Level 1.

- **Postgraduate Room**: A quiet area on Level 2 with swipe-access. Staff can add access to your MyCard upon request.

- **Group Study Rooms**: 12 bookable spaces for group project work.

IT Support
Our dedicated IT helpdesk, found at the end of the Information Desk, can assist with any IT or photocopying issues during library service hours.

Subject Guides and Research Support

 We provide a *Subject Guide* https://nuim.libguides.com/?b=g&d=a for each area of study, offering subject-specific materials and resources. You can also attend our library & information skills tutorials (LIST) in the library in Semester 1 & 2 or use our LIST online tutorials https://nuim.libguides.com/list-online so upskill at your own pace.

Our Research Support Librarian, Ciarán Quinn, offers a wide range of services for Research Master's students up to post-doctoral level. Visit his webpage here: https://bit.ly/2NTvCqk and make an appointment for 1-to-1 support, or a small group consultation.

Taught Master's students can get support from our Teaching & Learning Librarians. We run workshops at critical points during the year, covering topics like thesis preparation and reference management. These sessions are advertised on our Library Homepage, the Graduate Studies Office, and your department.

Extensive Collections for Research

Our electronic collections, including eBooks, eJournals, and databases, are accessible 24/7 with your MU username and password. We also have extensive digital Primary Sources available. Use our *A-Z of Databases* to explore these resources further. In addition to the main library collection, we have a Special Collections & Archives (SC&A) department and the historical Russell Library. Learn more about SC&A here: https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/library/collections/special-collections-and-archives

Additional Services

- **Inter Library Loan (ILL)**: Borrow items or receive copies from other libraries. Request this service online via LibrarySearch, see https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/library/using-library/inter-library-loans

- **ALCID and SCONUL Cards**: Access other libraries in Ireland and the UK. More information is available here: https://nuim.libguides.com/library-services/otherlibraries

You can also suggest up to 5 books for purchase by the MU Library each academic year here: http://bit.ly/3XTYphC Contact us with any queries about using the library, our resources, or finding suitable sources for your research to library.learning@mu.ie

Stay Connected

Follow us on social media for updates and tips:

- **Instagram**: @library_mu

- **Facebook**: @MaynoothUniLibrary

- **Twitter**: @mu_library

We wish you every success in your studies and look forward to meeting you soon.

Useful Links

- **MU Library Homepage**: https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/library

- **Student Book Purchase Order Form**: http://bit.ly/3XTYphC

- **Digital on Demand**: https://www.maynoothdigitalcollections.ie/node/56

- **Click and Collect**: Click and Collect Request form: https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/library/using-library/click-and-collect-request-form

- Explore, using our **Makerspace:** https://bit.ly/MU_Mkr

- **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

- **SensusAccess Document Conversion Service**: https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/library/using-library/sensusaccess-document-conversion-service

Contacts

Taught Postgraduates Contact:
- Áine ni Bharáin: aine.nibharain@mu.ie

- Saoirse de Paor: saoirse.depaor@mu.ie

Research Students and Staff:

- Ciarán Quinn: ciaran.quinn@mu.ie