

Career opportunities

This MA facilitates the participants in developing a range of transferable skills, including research skills, strategic skills, principles of decision-making and the capacity to present accurate reports, both verbal and written. This MA will provide participants with:

- knowledge of Military History and Strategic Studies from 1789 to the present day;
- a set of transferable skills that are applicable to any workplace;
- an opportunity to develop a piece of original research;
- enhanced critical skills, developed through scenario-based exercises and wargames;
- the opportunity to publish articles or book reviews in the in-house journal – *The Journal of Military History and Defence Studies*;
- access to military practitioners to discuss their operational experience in the research context;
- the opportunity to develop a personal network with colleagues researching in this field;
- a foundational experience and skill-set for those interested in pursuing a career in academia;
- an introduction to key concepts in defence and security for those interested in a career in defence, either as military practitioners or civilian administrators;
- an advanced university qualification that will enhance participants' CVs and facilitate career advancement.



Entry requirements

Students who have an honours degree with a 1:1, a 2:1 or high 2:2 grade in History will be offered a place. Other applications will be considered depending on life experience and available spaces. Applicants must have a recognised degree equivalent to Irish university primary degree level. We welcome international students and military officers from the Irish Defence Forces, the USA, Australia and EU countries have completed this MA for career advancement purposes.

Key details

- Apply online: www.maynoothuniversity.ie/study-maynooth/how-apply/postgraduate-applicants
- Codes: MHP58/MHP59 (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 (2-3 years part-time)

For more information

- Programme Director: Dr David Murphy
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MA in Military History and Strategic Studies





What is Military History and Strategic Studies?

Military History is the study of military operations, campaigns and the conduct of war. In the context of this MA, course content will address the major conflicts from the Napoleonic period up to the present day. There is discussion of warfare on land, at sea and in the air with reference to major developments in both technology and



tactics. The course includes content on contemporary conflicts such as the ‘War on Terror’ of the early 21st century and the current war in Ukraine. This MA also examines contemporary security subjects such as Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism, Energy Security and Hybrid Warfare. Ethical and legal issues are also discussed.

This is an interdisciplinary MA and includes content on Strategic Studies. Participants will be introduced to major strategic theorists such as Sun Tzu and Carl von Clausewitz. They will be briefed on key strategic concepts and how strategy informs military and political

leadership. Participants will be encouraged to develop a strategic mindset for their own career progression.

Why Maynooth?

Established in 2008, this MA course was the first of its kind in Ireland and is associated with the Department of History’s Centre for Military History and Strategic Studies. The lecturing staff have established a national and international reputation in these fields of study and have published widely. Through engaging in professional military education with the Irish Defence Forces and with academies in the EU and USA, the centre has an unrivalled network of international contacts. The centre now has its own online journal, allowing for the timely dissemination of original research. This combination makes Maynooth University the premier location for the study of Military History and Strategic Studies in Ireland.

Taught MA in Military History and Strategic Studies

This taught MA in Military History and Strategic Studies can be completed in one year (full-time) or two/three years (part-time). During the MA, participants complete a combination of required and optional modules as well as a minor thesis on a topic of their choice. To date, MA theses have covered a wide range of topics including both military history and strategic studies topics.



The course is assessed using a blend of written assignments, in-class presentations, learning portfolios and in-class scenarios/wargames. Core modules introduce participants to key elements of historical research, while optional modules cover aspects of military history from 1789 up to the present day. These modules include discussion of the key phases of various conflicts such as the Napoleonic Wars, the American Civil War, the two World Wars and contemporary conflicts. Due to the inter-disciplinary nature of the MA, key strategic concepts are developed throughout the course.

This MA addresses associated war and society topics, such as the treatment of PoWs and civilians in war and gender issues in conflict zones. Developing from the inter-disciplinary nature of the MA, participants will be introduced to the current major debates, including cyber warfare, concepts of societal resilience and resource security. Ultimately, this MA aims to equip participants with an understanding of the character and nature of war – a hugely important subject in the modern era.

To date over 300 students have graduated from the MA in Military History and Strategic Studies. They have gone on to develop careers in academia, in the Irish Defence Forces, in an Garda Síochána, and in the heritage and museum sector, among many other career paths.