

SCHOOL HANDBOOK 2023-24

SCOIL NA NUA-THEANGACHA, NA LITRÍOCHTAÍ AGUS NA GCULTÚR
SCHOOL OF MODERN LANGUAGES, LITERATURES AND CULTURES



**Maynooth
University**

National University
of Ireland Maynooth

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Welcome from the Head of School

Dear students,

On behalf of all of the staff at the School of Modern Languages, Literatures and Cultures, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome those of you who are joining us this year for the first time and to welcome back those of you who are continuing with your studies. We are delighted to have you with us!



Learning a language at university is an exciting experience, and it can sometimes be a little daunting. Rest assured that your lecturers, tutors, and teachers are here to help. We are all passionate about language learning, and we want to see you develop your competence and your confidence in your language skills in the coming months and years. Our programmes offer a wide variety of modules in literary and cultural studies, as well as applied linguistics and intercultural studies, and we encourage you to sample a little of everything we have to offer. Above all, we hope that you will enjoy your time with us.

The Maynooth University campus is a great place to study. I would encourage those of you who are starting your studies with us, as well as those of you who have not had a chance to get to know the campus yet, to familiarise yourselves with all of the facilities and services available to support you: check out the MU Library, which has a wealth of books, journals, and other resources; participate in a Moodle workshop to find out how to access additional resources for your modules and understand where to submit assignments; get to know the MU Student Services and the Academic Writing Support centre; join a club or society to meet other students with similar interests. Taking full advantage of these opportunities will enhance your experience at Maynooth University.

All the staff in the School of Modern Languages, Literatures and Cultures wish you every success with your studies. We hope that you enjoy your time at Maynooth University, make lots of friends, participate in extra-curricular activities on and off campus, and that you broaden your horizons. We are confident that our courses can offer you an exciting, challenging, and high-quality educational experience, and we look forward to supporting you as you take this next step in your journey.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Valerie Heffernan'. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Prof. Valerie Heffernan
Head of School



1. Take personal responsibility for your learning – engage and participate!
2. All details relating to your modules will be on the Moodle page. Get into the habit of checking Moodle daily.
3. We will correspond with you on Moodle or by email using your university email address.
4. Never be afraid to ask questions – we are all here to help you.
5. Become involved in university life; it will help you have a great experience!

SMLLC Contact Details



School of Modern Languages, Literatures and Cultures
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Maynooth, Co Kildare, Ireland, W23 FA3P.



01 708 4646



smlc@mu.ie



maynoothuniversity.ie/school-modern-languages

Language Unit Contact Details

Chinese Studies

chinese@mu.ie

French Studies

french@mu.ie

German Studies

german@mu.ie

Spanish and Latin American Studies

spanish@mu.ie

English for Academic Purpose (EAP)

eap@mu.ie

We are active on social media on the links below,

[MU Languages \(@MU_SMLLC\) / Twitter](#)

[Maynooth University School of Modern Languages, Literatures and Cultures | Facebook](#)

[MU School of Modern Languages \(@mu_smlc\) • Instagram photos and videos](#)

SMLLC Staff

Chinese Studies		
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German Studies		
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Dr Richard Huddleson	richard.huddleson@mu.ie	Coordinator Final Year
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Technical Support		
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SMLLC Operational Guidelines

Email Policy

We are happy to assist all our students with any query that may arise. Students should always use their Maynooth University email address and become familiar with the following:

What details to include:

- Full name as per registration (If you go by a different name, please let us know);
- Student Number;
- The nature of the query;
- If the query pertains to a particular module, please provide the module code.

When to expect a reply:

- Please be informed that our School email inboxes are actively monitored from 09:00 to 17:00, Monday to Friday, excluding Bank Holidays/Public Holidays. Emails sent outside of these working hours will be attended to promptly on the following working day.
- We will respond to most emails within 2-3 working days. Nevertheless, please bear in mind that during busy periods in the academic calendar, such as examination preparation and timetable finalisation, response times may be slightly extended.
- Students should note that we will not correspond with any email other than your Maynooth University email address (@mumail.ie or @spcm.ie).
- In case of an urgent query, we highly recommend contacting the administration team by phone or visiting the School Admin Office in person for immediate assistance.

Where might you find the answer to your query?

- We receive a substantial number of emails requesting information that is readily available in the School Handbook or via [Moodle](#). To save time, we encourage you to check both resources before contacting us.
- Additionally, we recommend exploring the School website, full of valuable information. You may find the answers to your questions by checking the [website](#).
- For general queries about university life or if you require support, the Student Helpdesk website offers a wealth of useful information [here](#) that you may find beneficial.

Attendance and Participation

At the university level, taking responsibility for your own learning is crucial. Learning a language demands consistent practice and continuous interaction with proficient speakers. Consequently, language courses may require a significant time commitment, usually involving several contact hours per week. Active participation in all scheduled hours, including core language classes, conversation groups, and language labs, is strongly encouraged as it directly benefits each student's language acquisition journey.

Understanding the School attendance procedures is of utmost importance. If for any reason you are unable to attend a class, it is in your interest to let us know. Please bear in mind the following principles:

- ALL modules have attendance monitoring in place. If attendance falls below **70%** of session hours, the mark will be **capped at 35%** for this module. (This condition will not be applied to repeat examinations.)
- Students are required to attend all lectures, seminars, tutorials, conversation classes and laboratory classes that are applicable to the module they are studying.
- Absence owing to medical or other compelling reasons is not penalised. To validate the reason for absence, please complete the [SMLLC Student Absence and Personal Circumstances Form](#) which is accessible on the School [website](#) and via Moodle. It is essential to submit the form promptly, preferably before but otherwise as soon as possible – ideally no later than two days – after the missed class/es, and include any relevant evidence, such as a Medical Certificate, if applicable.
- It is each student's own responsibility to obtain notes, assignments, etc. and catch up on any work they have missed due to absence.
- Attendance records are usually updated on Moodle by the teaching staff during class. On occasion, the teaching staff may request your signature on an attendance sheet, which will be subsequently updated in the system.

We understand that there are also times during a student's life at university where their personal circumstances or an unexpected event might impact upon their performance. If students wish to notify the School of any particular circumstances or occurrence, they should access the school website and complete the [SMLLC Student Absence and Personal Circumstances Form](#). Rest assured that all student submissions are handled discreetly and with the utmost confidentiality.

Classroom Etiquette

- Students should arrive at the lecture theatre or classroom on time, i.e., no more than five minutes past the hour.
- Mobile phones must be always switched off during lectures, tutorials, and classes, unless you are invited by your lecturer or tutor to use your phone for a particular classroom activity.
- Please refrain from bringing food and drinks into lectures, tutorials, or classes.
- Talking during lectures, tutorials or classes can be disruptive to both fellow students and the lecture itself. Unless specifically invited by the lecturer, talking during these sessions is not acceptable and should be avoided.

University Supports & Key Contacts

Personal and Academic Supports

The student experience is about embracing your academic journey, taking on new challenges, meeting new people, and exploring various opportunities.

From time to time, students may need some supports to help them during their studies at Maynooth.

There are many [personal and academic supports](#) available to all students and we encourage students to avail of these supports during times of need.

Students can visit the [school website](#) to explore what supports are available and learn how to access them. Some helpful tips for students navigating university life can be found in Appendix D of this handbook.

Maynooth University Library

The MU [Library](#) plays a pivotal role, providing students with numerous supports and services throughout their university journey.

The MU Library team is dedicated to enhancing your study experience in Maynooth by providing extensive support. With access to a vast collection of over 450,000 books/eBooks and more than 42,000 electronic journals, you can make the most of your academic journey.

Explore a diverse range of [information, skills, and training courses](#) designed to empower students in identifying, obtaining, evaluating, and utilising information efficiently, effectively, and ethically. For further details about our comprehensive services and facilities, please refer to the available information is available [here](#). Additionally, you can access subject-specific [information skills and training courses](#). Library guides for specialized assistance in your academic pursuits are available [here](#).

Graduate Studies

The [Graduate Studies Office](#) is your go-to resource for comprehensive guidance and assistance throughout your postgraduate journey. Our dedicated Graduate Studies team is committed to supporting you at every stage, from the initial application to your well-deserved graduation. Students are welcome to book an appointment with any member of the team by emailing graduatestudies@mu.ie.



Registry

The University Registry is a key part of the administration of the university, and is responsible for a range of functions including:

- ❓ [Student Records and Registration](#)
- ❓ [Examinations](#)
- ❓ [Academic Timetable](#)
- ❓ [Conferring](#)
- ❓ [Student Vetting](#)
- ❓ [Registry Policy Office](#)

Students will find useful information relating to University Policies on the [Registry website](#). Registry is located on the South Campus in Humanity House.

IT Services

IT Services provides a wide range of general and specialist IT services to students and staff of the university in support of the university's objectives in areas including teaching, learning and research. IT Services also support and maintain the computing infrastructure which underpins those services.

Details of the services provided are available on the university website. Support and assistance in using those services can be obtained by visiting the [website](#) where you will find detailed [Frequently Asked Questions](#) and a wealth of helpful advice and guidance.

IT Services Help Desk is located on the [North Campus](#) on the ground floor of the Eolas Building.

Key Dates for Academic Year 2023-24

You can access Key Dates for the academic year on the Registrar's Office website. Click [here to view these important details](#).

For the complete and up-to-date academic calendar, we encourage you to visit the Registrar's Office [webpage](#).

Assessment and Examination Information

Module assessments encompass a variety of methods, ranging from university-scheduled exams to oral exams, aural exams, continuous assessment, quizzes, presentations, and other scheduled activities. To access specific assessment details for each module, you can refer to the module descriptor on [Course Finder](#) and Moodle. For comprehensive information, make sure to consult the Module Handbook.

Submitting Assignments

- Ensure to check Moodle for precise information regarding essay and assignment titles, as well as their respective submission dates.
- The format and length of essays may vary between modules. For explicit guidelines, refer to the Module Handbook or check Moodle for detailed instructions.
- For all essays and assignments, it is mandatory to type and submit them through Turnitin, ensuring that the appropriate cover sheet is included.
- Once submitted via Turnitin, the assignment/essay will be date-stamped on submission.
- If students require the use of a computer in the Public Access Computer Rooms (PACR), they are strongly advised to book the computer in advance and avoid disappointment.

Extension of Submission Date

Deadlines for the submission of essays and course-work assignments must be strictly observed.

In case of illness covered by a Medical Certificate that hinders a student from meeting an essay or assessment deadline, they may request an extension. **Prior to the submission date**, students should fill out the [SMLLC Student Absence and Personal Circumstances Form \(with uploaded Medical Certificate\)](#) available on the school website. The Subject Leader, Module Coordinator, or individual lecturer can then consider granting an appropriate extension.

Penalties for late submission of Assignments and Essays

Late submission of assessed course work or examination materials without valid reason will incur a reduction of the original grade by 5% (5 marks) per day. However, late submission due owing to medical or other compelling reasons is exempt from penalties. To be eligible for such consideration, students must notify the reason by completing the [SMLLC Student Absence and Personal Circumstances Form](#) **prior** to, or immediately (within two working days) after the relevant submission deadline accompanied by the appropriate evidence. (Typically, this evidence would be a Medical Certificate uploaded during the form completion process of the form).

Presentation of Assignments

- Assignments should be submitted by students in the subjects and modules they are currently enrolled in.
- Each assignment instructions will specify the required word count for written assignments, and it is important to adhere to this limit. (In general, in excess of 10% under or over word count can incur a penalty; however, this may vary, and you should carefully check the assignment brief for guidance). Supplementary materials or appendices typically do not contribute to the assigned word count.
- All assignments must be accompanied by a cover page, which can be accessed on Moodle or the [school website](#). Students **must** complete this cover page and attach it to their work before submission.
- Assignments must be typed and adhere to proper academic form, including an appropriate system of referencing and bibliography. Harvard Style referencing should be used throughout assignments and a helpful guide to [Harvard Reference](#) can be found on the Library website [here](#).

Marking Criteria for Written Assignments

Assignments are graded using the University Marks and Standards. The grade descriptors specific to the School can be found in Appendix A of this handbook.

Plagiarism & Academic Integrity Policy

Maynooth University considers plagiarism to be a significant form academic misconduct and deems it deserving of severe academic consequences. This includes use of uncredited sources in essays, assignments, take-home exams, remote examinations, or any other assessment formats. Additionally, this includes acts of impersonation, or procurement or purchase of essays or other material written by third parties. Cases of plagiarism, including suspicions thereof, within research degrees are addressed in accordance with the Research Integrity Policy.

Plagiarism involves an attempt to incorporate a portion of another person's work into your own without providing proper acknowledgement, with the intention of obtaining academic credit. It may include the unacknowledged verbatim reproduction of material or unsanctioned collusion but is not limited to these matters; it may also include the unacknowledged adoption of an argumentative structure, or the unacknowledged use of a source or of research materials, including computer code or elements of mathematical formulae in an inappropriate manner. Plagiarism includes using material from books or periodicals, from the internet, from grind tutors, or from other students, without full acknowledgement of the sources.

If you wish to review your work to clarify references or citations, [Turnitin](#), the online plagiarism prevention software will be of assistance to you. Turnitin can be accessed via your Moodle home page. Additionally, you can find valuable guidance on comprehending and preventing plagiarism on the Library [webpages](#) (which offer other LIST tutorials).

It is important to thoroughly read and understand the Maynooth University plagiarism policy which may be accessed [online](#).

In certain cases, the School may request an additional verification assessment to confirm that the work submitted is the student's own, original work. If you are called for a verification assessment, you will receive notification about the specific module being examined and given information about the assessment's format.

Examination Requirements

- Students are advised to carefully read the module descriptors in the [MU Course Finder](#) for comprehensive assessment information in all instances and consult with the respective lecturer for guidance or clarification. Should additional inquiries arise, they can be directed to the module coordinator.
- **Students must pass required language modules** to advance to the subsequent year of study.
- To understand the implications of different results, students can refer to the [exam results information guide](#) on the Exams Office website.
- Guidelines for engaging in discussions, verifying, and lodging appeals can be found on the [Exams Office website](#).
- All students are personally responsible for finding out what assignments they are required to complete and the corresponding submission deadlines. Access to this information is available through the [Moodle](#) page for each respective module.

Every student is accountable for adhering to all regulations and prerequisites necessary for entry to examinations. Further details are available from the Examinations Office [website](#).

Marks and Standards

Assessment of language modules encompasses in-class assessments, aural/oral exams, and university-scheduled written exams. The aural/oral exams and the written exams are required elements; the module cannot be passed without their completion.

Some modules may also have specific conditions: For instance, you could be required to pass specific assessment components or attain a designated attendance threshold. Failure to meet these conditions will result in a maximum (capped) module mark of 35%. This capping may prevent you from progressing in the subject if the module is a required module.

If you pass a module, you earn the credits associated with it. A module can be assessed in several ways. Many modules include more than one assessment; there is often a combination of university-scheduled examinations and continuous assessment.

You must meet a minimum standard in each year to be allowed to progress to the next year of the programme. Your annual mark is calculated by taking the credit-weighted average of your module marks.

The University [Marks and Standards Procedures](#) document is a valuable resource for students, offering essential information. It can be accessed by visiting the [Registry website](#).

The Mark Bands are as follows (Please refer to appendix A further details):

1 st Class Honours	70%
2 nd Class Honours Grade I	60%
2 nd Class Honours Grade II	50%
3 rd Class Honours	45%
Pass	40%

Consultation Day

There is a designated consultation day following each examination period which provides students with an opportunity to review their results with select academic staff. Students who wish to do so are requested to proactively reach out to the respective language unit in advance. Instructions regarding consultation day procedures will be shared on Moodle in the week leading up to the publication of results.

Repeating and Resitting Examinations

Students who did not pass a module may apply to repeat the module.

When you re-sit a module, you must register for the full module and complete all the assessment components.

- If a module was not passed in one year, you must register to repeat the module to secure an opportunity to pass it. Compensation is not applied to a previous year's course work.
- If a module has not been compensated (i.e., the result is NP, even if it falls within the 35-39 compensation range) then no credits have been earned. In this case you **must** register to repeat the module or take an acceptable alternative in its place.
- Should you not meet the compensation criteria, you are **required** to repeat/re-sit any modules with marks falling below the compensation range (normally 35%).

- If you do not meet the compensation criteria, you are **expected** to repeat all modules where your marks have not reached the established pass threshold (normally set at 40%).

For details on registration for repeat modules you should visit the [Records and Registration webpage](#). Students should also note that they **must register** to retake exams; this is not an automatic process.

Further details on resitting or repeating exams can be accessed by visiting the [Resitting and Repeat Information | Maynooth University](#) information on the examination's office website.

Language Areas, Programmes and Structures

Along with the ever-popular Bachelor of Arts MH101 course, there are various undergraduate programmes of study which incorporate languages. Students can explore these programme options by visiting the [Undergraduate Studies](#) area of the website.

Each programme of study is made up of modules. Each module is assigned a specific credit value, and you must meet the credit requirement in order to pass the year.

Compulsory Module: A compulsory module in a programme is one which is obligatory for all students taking that programme.

Optional Module: An optional module in a programme is one which may be chosen from a variety of available modules, but which is not compulsory.

Required Module: A required module is a compulsory module in a programme which must be passed without compensation (i.e., achieving a minimum mark of 40) in order to progress within the programme.

Classroom Contact Hours

There are a number of different classroom contact hours that students may be required to attend. The module coordinator will advise you on the classroom contact hours applicable to that module. Some examples of classroom contact hours are:

- Lectures
- Tutorials
- Grammar Classes
- Conversation Classes
- Language Labs

Chinese Studies

Chinese Studies is an Arts subject offered by the School of Modern Languages, Literatures and Cultures at Maynooth University. Maynooth's Chinese Studies programme provides students with a welcoming and supportive academic environment, characterised by dedicated expert faculty, intimate class settings, and a friendly collegial atmosphere.

Students usually pursue Chinese Studies as part of the four-year BA International, where the third year is spent at one of Maynooth University's partner universities in Beijing, Shanghai, Chengdu, or Xiamen. Upon successful completion of their studies, students will graduate with a BA

(International) degree awarded by the National University of Ireland (or a BA degree if there are extenuating circumstances that prevent them from spending a year in China).

The programme is primarily designed for beginners, and no prior knowledge of Chinese language is required. Students with some prior knowledge of Chinese can also be accommodated. In first year, students take Chinese studies with other subjects. In the subsequent second and third years, students have the option to continue Chinese Studies either as a joint honours pursuit or as a minor subject in specific degree programmes.

In all years of the programme, Chinese language (Mandarin) is compulsory. The primary focus during first year is to cultivate and enhance students' language proficiency. During second and third years, students delve further into the exploration of various facets of China – including its history, politics, culture, philosophy, and economy.

Chinese Studies Programme Structures

To explore the undergraduate modules and programme structure for Chinese Studies, simply visit the [Course Finder](#).

Within each module descriptor, students will find details such as credit allocation, teaching semester, module overview, learning outcomes/objectives and assessment guidelines.

German Studies

German is an exciting subject to pursue at third level, but even more so at Maynooth University! With its dedicated expert staff, small class sizes, and friendly collegial atmosphere, German Studies at Maynooth offers students a great home.

Our diverse range of expertise which enables us to offer courses in language, literature, linguistics (the theoretical study of language, as opposed to learning a respective foreign language), German-language film, Business German, Dutch, and medieval German language and literature. (While it's not guaranteed that all these options will be available every year, we make every effort to provide them as often as possible).

We offer German courses tailored for Beginners and for students who have completed their Leaving Certificate German (or equivalent qualification).

German Studies Programme Structures

The list of undergraduate modules and programme structure for German Studies can be viewed by visiting the [Course Finder](#).

Within each module descriptor, students will see the credit value, semester of teaching, module overview, learning outcomes and assessment guidelines.

French Studies

French has been part of Maynooth's curriculum since the establishment of the university in 1795.

With over 200 undergraduates and a number of postgraduate students studying here at any time, French has a prominent position in higher education and attracts students from across the nation.

We have a strong heritage of teaching French language, literature, and culture, with a substantial portion of the curriculum being taught through the medium of French. Our lecturers are actively engaged in ongoing research, which directly influences and enhances the quality of our teaching.

French Studies Programme Structures

The list of undergraduate modules and programme structure for French Studies can be viewed by visiting the [Course Finder](#). Within each module descriptor, students will find details such as credit allocation, teaching semester, module overview, learning outcomes/objectives and assessment guidelines.

Spanish and Latin American Studies

Founded in 1999, the Department of Spanish and Latin American Studies provides comprehensive instruction by specialists in language, literature, cultures, and linguistics, catering to both undergraduate and graduate education levels.

The language is offered at both ab initio and non-Beginner (post-Leaving Certificate, or equivalent) levels during the First Year. From Second Year onwards, all students follow a common programme of study.

Spanish and Latin American Studies Programme Structures

The list of undergraduate modules and programme structure for Spanish and Latin American Studies can be viewed by visiting the [Course Finder](#). Within each module descriptor, students will see the credit value, semester of teaching, module overview, learning outcomes and assessment guidelines.

English for Academic Purposes (EAP)

EAP (English for Academic Purposes) is an expanding field within English-language education, primarily aimed at the growing population of international students who aspire to pursue higher education at English-speaking institutions.

At Maynooth, our EAP programmes aim to:

- raise the linguistic and communicative competence of the international students to the level required for their undergraduate or postgraduate studies;
- equip students with the essential study skills and knowledge needed to become critically aware of their own learning through the medium of English, allowing them to fully engage in higher-education studies and assessment procedures in their chosen subject areas.

Our commitment lies in consistently delivering the most relevant, effective, and engaging EAP teaching and learning experience for our students, regardless of whether their university pursuits are at undergraduate or postgraduate level. This is accomplished by research-informed practice and underpinning adult education theory, complemented by the extensive classroom expertise of our dedicated, subject-specialist teaching staff.

Further information about the options available for EAP is available [here](#).

Postgraduate Programmes

As the School of Modern Languages, Literatures and Cultures we offer many exciting Postgraduate Programmes spanning the four language domains, alongside interdisciplinary offerings. A full listing of programmes is available on our [website](#).

For the academic year 2023-24 the school is offering some exciting programmes in [French Studies](#), [German Studies](#), and [Spanish & Latin American Studies](#) for prospective teachers who would like to complete the subject-specific credits required to submit themselves for accreditation with the [Teaching Council of Ireland](#).

Students have the flexibility to choose from a variety of options such as Translation, Literature, Film, and Language Teaching and put together a tailored programme that will enable them to apply for Teaching Council accreditation. It is even possible arrange all classes on one day per week so as to meet other professional and personal commitments simultaneously!

Prospective candidates may qualify for partial funding of their programmes through the [Post-Primary Languages Initiative \(PPLI\)](#).

The Year Abroad

General Information

Within the Maynooth University School of Modern Languages, Literatures and Cultures, all students will have an opportunity to embark on a year abroad as an integral part of their study programme.

Students who have successfully completed the year abroad, and were registered at Maynooth University for four years, are eligible for the award of the degree of BA (International).

Students studying two modern foreign languages programme have the option to spend a year in either of the countries where the target language is spoken, immersing themselves in the vernacular. Alternatively, they can choose to apply for a semester-long stay in each country.

Spending a year abroad is regarded as the “**default position**”, i.e., students are expected to go on a year abroad (normally equivalent to one academic year, i.e., at least nine months).

Opting Out in Exceptional Circumstances

Students may, in **exceptional circumstances** and with strong, verified reasons, be granted permission to graduate without residency abroad.

If a student feels that they are unable to participate in a year abroad, they must seek permission to “**opt out**” of the year abroad by contacting the International Coordinator for the relevant language area at the start of the second year (and no later than the end of the first semester of Second Year).

If the application is granted, an Acknowledgement Form (see Appendix B) must be signed by the applicant. Students “opting out” of the year abroad are required to devise an action plan to bring their language competence up to a standard appropriate for Final Year, and they must present this plan to the [International Coordinator](#), who will give feedback and advice on its appropriateness.

After finishing the second year, students who have opted out of the year abroad will join the Fourth Year Group, who have spent a year abroad, and take the same Final Year exams with them. Students who opt out of the year abroad should therefore be aware that when they commence their Final Year, they will be in a class where the majority of students will have spent a year abroad.

Residence Abroad for Teaching Assistants

Upon their return from the year abroad, students who undertook an English-Language Assistantship must submit their Residence Abroad Log – see Appendix C– by 1st of November during their Final Year at Maynooth University. The Residence Abroad Log should be accompanied by the following documents:

- As proof of the Teaching Assistantship/Internship, students are required to provide an attestation completed and signed by the Principal/Deputy Principal of their host school, or a comparable attestation from their internship.
- Additionally, they must submit a 1000-word report in the respective target language (i.e., Chinese, French, German, Spanish) detailing their teaching experience.

Opportunities for Studying Abroad

The benefits of a year spent in abroad are enormous, contributing not only to academic achievement but also to enhanced post-graduation employability.

Full details relating to the year abroad for each language unit can be found on the school website [‘Study Abroad/Visiting Students’](#) area.

Teaching Council Requirements

*Achieving a place on a HDip in Education or Professional Master of Education (PME) programme may be based on a student’s second-year result if the final year result is unavailable by the application deadline. This applies when a student seeks a place for the academic year immediately following completion of the undergraduate programme.

To allow students to teach languages at Post-Primary level in Ireland, the Teaching Council requires verifiable evidence of “an immersive educational experience in the curricular language of a minimum of four weeks duration”. Spending a semester or more studying at a university or completing an English-language Assistantship in a country in which the relevant curricular language is spoken may be considered by the Teaching Council to constitute an appropriate “immersive educational experience”.

Please see www.teachingcouncil.ie for full details of requirements.

Further information relating to the Teaching Council requirements is available on the school website [‘Useful Contacts / Links’](#) area.

Prizes and Awards

The Prizes and Scholarships awards ceremony takes place each year in March. Every year, prizes for academic achievement are awarded. Some of these prizes are sponsored by embassies or other bodies.

Chinese Studies

- Year 1:** Chinese Embassy prize for First Year.
Year 2: Chinese Embassy prize for Second Year.
Final Year: Chinese Embassy prize for Final Year.

French Studies

- Year 1:** French Government Prize for Best Student at First Arts Examination.
Year 2: French Government Prize for Best Student at Second Arts Examination.
Final Year: French Government Medal for Best Student at Honours Degree level.
NUI Prize for Best Student at Degree level.
Prix Lombard for Best B.A. Dissertation in Final Year.

German Studies

- Year 1:** Swiss Embassy Prize for the best first year beginners examination in German.
Swiss Embassy Prize for the best first year Post Leaving Certificate examination in German
Year 2: German Embassy Prize for the best second year examination in German.
Final Year: Austrian Embassy Prize for the best third year examination in German.

Spanish and Latin American Studies

- Year 1:** Prize for the best result achieved by an *ab initio* student of Spanish.
Prize for the best result achieved by a non-beginner.
Year 2: Prize for the best overall result in the second year.
Final Year: Prize for the best overall result in the final year.
Portuguese Prize: Prize for the best overall result in Portuguese.
Catalan Prize: Prize for the best overall result in Catalan.
Embassy of Mexico Prize: Prize for Best Final Year Assignment on Mexican Culture.

The [Dr Henry Hutchinson Stewart Scholarship and Prizes in Modern Languages](#) are awarded based on students' examination results in the First Arts examinations. This prize is awarded by the National University of Ireland, and some of our students have been the recipients of this prestigious award.

There is no need to apply for these scholarships and prizes; the top student in First Year Arts - Chinese, French, German, and Spanish are automatically put forward as candidates for this award.

The winners are chosen from nominees of the constituent colleges of the [National University of Ireland](#).

Other Important Contacts

NiteLine

In addition to the support services available within the university, [NiteLine](#) is an out-of-hours well-being support service run by students for students across all Irish universities and colleges.

MILO

MILO (Maynooth University Inclusive Learning Online) is an innovative platform designed to support students to develop academic and wellbeing skills. It offers a wide range of online resources and tools, including videos, quizzes, and interactive exercises. To access MILO, simply visit mu.ie/milo. From there, your MU login will allow you to explore the platform.

Students' Union

The [Students' Union](#) is the representational body for students in Maynooth University. The primary goal of the Students' Union is to advocate for, safeguard and enhance the welfare of its members. Every student registered at MU automatically becomes a member of the Students' Union.

Student Societies

[MSU Life](#) manage Clubs and Societies that students can join by paying a subscription during Freshers' Week. Student-led Clubs and Societies form an integral and vibrant aspect of the student journey at Maynooth University.

Chinese Studies: The dynamic Chinese Society orchestrates various events throughout the year. Past events have included Movie nights, Chinese New Year Gala (February), Pairing party to find language partners and many more. Chinese Studies also organises cultural events featuring Chinese Folk Music night, excursions to the Terracotta Warriors/Chester Beatty Library in Dublin, lunchtime music sessions and Tai-Chi classes.

French Studies: It is a good idea to actively engage in this society – it is a chance to expand your connection to the language and culture beyond the confines of your academic studies. Having final year students who have also experienced studying abroad themselves can be immensely beneficial, as they can provide valuable guidance and support to the society's committee.

German Studies: MU Deutsch aim to create a safe space with a feeling of encouragement to spread all things great about the German culture and language. They have lots of exciting plans for the year ahead and they extend a warm welcome to students who are either fluent or simply interested in learning a few phrases within an enjoyable setting.

Spanish and Latin American Studies: Mundo Latino is the society run by students share a passion for all things Hispanic. It arranges social events infused with a Spanish or Latino vibes.

The Languages Society: The society advocates for languages and language learning with the aim of making language learning fun and enjoyable for all. They host regular meet ups where students can forge new friendships, have some fun and of course, learn or refine language skills in a friendly and laid-back atmosphere. This year, they have plans to arrange themed language-learning events, game nights, quizzes, and much more! We invite you to join us for the chance to cultivate new friendships, experiences, and explore different languages.

University Policies

- [Marks and Standards](#)
- [MU Policy on Plagiarism](#)
- [Examinations Regulations](#)
- [Rules and Regulations for Students](#)
- [Code of Conduct for users of Computing Facilities and IT Policies](#)
- [Equality and Diversity Policy](#)
- [Academic Policies and Procedures](#)
- [Student Charter](#)
- [Procedure for Discussion, Checking and Appeal of Exam Results](#)

Appendices

Appendix A:

MAYNOOTH UNIVERSITY
MAYNOOTH, CO. KILDARE, IRELAND

SCHOOL OF MODERN LANGUAGES, LITERATURES AND CULTURES
SCOIL NA NUA-THEANGACHA, NA LITRÍOCHTA AGUS NA gCULTÚR



GRADE DESCRIPTORS, AS PROPOSED BY THE NUI SENATE

Explanatory Note:

The Grade Descriptors below are offered as indicative descriptors. It is accepted that these indicative descriptors are particularly appropriate for examinations based on essay-type questions but may be found less suitable for examinations in subjects where there are detailed marking schemes. The Senate recommends that these Grade Descriptors be circulated to all Faculties.

GRADE	Marks Range %	GRADE DESCRIPTORS
1 st CLASS HONS	90-100	<p><u>Supreme</u> performance, engaging profoundly, systematically and comprehensively with question set, brilliantly demonstrating</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a superlative mastery of the subject matter, richly supported by evidence and citation, reflecting deep and broad knowledge and understanding as well as extensive reading an outstanding ability to organise, analyse and express ideas and arguments in an original, sophisticated and discriminating manner an optimal capacity for critical analysis the display of rare penetrative insight, originality and creativity
	80-89	<p><u>Exceptional</u> performance, engaging deeply and systematically with the question set, with consistently impressive demonstration of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a comprehensive mastery of the subject matter; amply supported by evidence and citation, reflecting deep and broad knowledge and critical insight as well as extensive reading an exceptional ability to organise, analyse and present arguments fluently and lucidly with a high level of critical analysis a highly-developed capacity for original, creative and logical thinking;
	70 -79	<p><u>Excellent</u> performance, engaging closely and systematically with the question set, with consistently strong evidence of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a comprehensive mastery of the subject matter, ably supported by evidence and relevant citation excellent ability to organise, analyse and express arguments fluently and lucidly with a high level of critical analysis a highly-developed capacity for original, creative and logical thinking
2 nd CLASS HONS (Grade 1)	60-69	<p><u>Very Good</u> performance, engaging substantially with the question set, demonstrating strong grasp of the subject matter, well supported by evidence and relevant citation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> well-developed capacity to analyse issues, organise material, present arguments clearly and cogently some original insights and capacity for creative and logical thinking

GRADE	Marks Range %	GRADE DESCRIPTORS
2 nd CLASS HONS (Grade 2)	50-59	<p><u>Good</u> performance - intellectually competent answer (i.e. factually sound) with evidence of a reasonable familiarity with the relevant literature and techniques</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • acceptable grasp of the subject material • ideas stated rather than developed and insufficiently supported by evidence and relevant citation • writing of sufficient quality to convey meaning but some lack of fluency and command of suitable vocabulary • omission of parts of the subject in question or the appearance of several minor errors • average critical awareness and analytical qualities • limited evidence of capacity for original and logical thinking
3 rd CLASS HONS (where awarded)	45-49	<p><u>Satisfactory</u> performance – intellectually adequate answer with evidence of some familiarity with the relevant literature and techniques</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • basic grasp of subject matter, but somewhat lacking in focus and structure • main points covered in answer, but lacking detail • some effort to engage, but only a basic understanding of the topic portrayed • some development of argument • only some critical awareness displayed • no evidence or relevant citation included in answer • appearance of several minor errors or one major error • lacking evidence of capacity for original and logical thinking
PASS	45-49 (where 3 rd Class Honours NOT awarded)	<p><u>Satisfactory</u> performance – intellectually adequate answer with evidence of some familiarity with the relevant literature and techniques</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • basic grasp of subject matter, but somewhat lacking in focus and structure • main points covered in answer, but lacking detail • some effort to engage, but only a basic understanding of the topic portrayed • some development of argument • only some critical awareness displayed • no evidence or relevant citation supplied • appearance of several minor errors or one major error • lacking evidence of capacity for original and logical thinking
	40–44	<p><u>Acceptable</u> performance – intellectually adequate answer with limited familiarity with the relevant literature and techniques</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • basic grasp of subject matter but limited focus on question asked <p>unclear presentation of argument, random layout, with some omissions or inaccuracies in answer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • argument insufficiently developed • no evidence or relevant citation supplied • appearance of one major error and minor errors • inclusion of unsubstantiated statements and/or irrelevant material • descriptive rather than argumentative or analytical answer presented • an attempt to solve moderately difficult problems related to the subject material and an attempt to examine the material in a critical and analytical manner only partially successful • an incomplete or rushed answer e.g. the use of bullet points through part / all of answer
FAIL (*)	35-39	<p><u>Unacceptable</u> performance, with either</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - insufficient understanding of the question displayed - failure to address the question resulting in a largely irrelevant answer - a display of some knowledge of material relative to the question posed, but with very serious omissions / errors and/or major inaccuracies included in answer - or answer left somewhat incomplete for lack of time <p><u>Also:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • limited understanding of question displayed • a random layout / underdeveloped structure - not planned sufficiently • poor analytical skills, with an absence of argument • random and undisciplined development - limited structure • lack of clarity, poor spelling • material of marginal relevance predominating <p><i>See note on 'Pass by Compensation' below</i></p>

GRADE	<i>Marks Range %</i>	GRADE DESCRIPTORS
FAIL	<35	<p><u>Wholly unacceptable performance, with</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - deficient understanding of the question displayed - complete failure to address the question resulting in an irrelevant answer - inadequate knowledge displayed relative to the question posed - or answer left incomplete for lack of time <p>Also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • very poor analytical skills, with an absence of argument • random and undisciplined development –poorly structured answer • confused expression, poor spelling • irrelevant material predominating
<p><u>Note on Fail * - 'Pass by Compensation'</u></p> <p>Traditionally, under Marks and Standards, provision has been made for a student failing in one or more subjects in an examination, to pass the examination by compensation, where he/she has double the deficiency of marks available in another subject or in other subjects. It is recommended that provision for 'pass by compensation' be continued, in accordance with such conditions as may be set out in Marks and Standards by Faculties. The application of the provision should be facilitated by the above descriptions with particular reference to the Descriptor for the *Fail (35-39) Marks Band.</p>		

Appendix B:

MAYNOOTH UNIVERSITY
MAYNOOTH, CO. KILDARE, IRELAND

SCHOOL OF MODERN LANGUAGES, LITERATURES AND CULTURES
SCOIL NA NUA-THEANGACHA, NA LITRÍOCHTA AGUS NA GCULTÚR



Application to Opt Out of the Year Abroad

Student Name: _____

Student Number: _____

Programme (e.g. MH101 ARTS, MH409 Business & Languages, etc): _____

Subject(s): _____

If you are applying to opt out of the year abroad (i.e. Erasmus or Teaching Assistantship/placement), please explain the reasons.

I am aware that I am responsible for bringing up my language skills to a level suitable for final year courses, and I propose to take the following actions to achieve this (please describe in detail):

Appendix C:

MAYNOOTH UNIVERSITY
MAYNOOTH, CO. KILDARE, IRELAND

SCHOOL OF MODERN LANGUAGES, LITERATURES AND CULTURES
SCOIL NA NUA-THEANGACHA, NA LITRÍOCHTA AGUS NA GCULTÚR



Residence Abroad Log

Student Name: _____

Student Number: _____

Programme (e.g. MH101 ARTS, MH409 Business & Languages, etc): _____

Subject(s): _____

Details of Residence Abroad:

(a) English-Language Assistantship

Academic Year: _____

Name and Address of School(s)

Please attach the completed and signed *English Language Assistantship Attestation Form* or a signed informal attestation of employer / person in charge of placement, and your report.

(b) Placement

Academic Year: _____

Name and Address of Company/Organisation:

Please attach evidence for residence abroad (tickets, informal attestation of employer, etc.), and your report.

I confirm that _____ (Name of student) has fulfilled the requirement for the three-month residence abroad.

International Coordinator's signature

Date

Appendix D:

MAYNOOTH UNIVERSITY
MAYNOOTH, CO. KILDARE, IRELAND

SCHOOL OF MODERN LANGUAGES, LITERATURES AND CULTURES
SCOIL NA NUA-THEANGACHA, NA LITRÍOCHTA AGUS NA GCULTÚR



Coping with University life

Navigating University Life

Student Services:	mu.ie/student-services
Student Helpdesk:	mu.ie/studenthelp
Academic Advisory:	mu.ie/centre-teaching-and-learning
Writing Centre:	mu.ie/centre-teaching-and-learning
Student Learning:	mu.ie/centre-teaching-and-learning

Students will learn and be taught differently than they were at school, characterised by increased autonomy and self-directed learning. One of the most valuable things students can learn from their studies in higher education is to cultivate independent thought and develop their own point of view – nurturing critical thinking skills.

Here are five helpful guidelines for approaching academic tasks:

1. Assume ownership of your own learning journey and engage actively in it.
2. Find out what is expected of you in terms of attendance, assessments, and deadlines.
3. Establish realistic study objectives and benchmarks, regularly evaluating your progress.
4. Don't hesitate to seek clarification by asking questions when needed.
5. Form a study group with other students to give each other mutual assistance and constructive feedback.

Consider these eight strategies to optimise your university study:

1. Prepare for lectures, listen actively, make notes, and review them afterwards.
2. Participate actively in class to get the maximum value from your language degree.
3. Learn how to read critically, intensively and in depth, alongside techniques like text scanning and skimming.
4. Develop your writing skills through consistent practice and by seeking constructive feedback.
5. Hand in assignments on time to avoid penalties.
6. Read your written homework again before submitting it (to identify and correct possible mistakes).
7. Master the use web-based learning platforms such as Moodle and MS-Teams.
8. Familiarise yourself with the library's resources and its computer catalogues to enhance your research capabilities.