



The Structured PhD in the School of Histories and Humanities

The School of Histories and Humanities embraces the Departments of History, Classics and History of Art & Architecture, and the Centre for Gender and Women's Studies. The School has a strong international research profile and students enjoy access to a broad range of expertise. Our 45 academic staff members are experts in areas as varied as classical, medieval, and modern history, history of art and architecture, archaeology, Latin and Greek language and literature, and gender and women's studies. The School is also home to some of Ireland's leading research centres in the Humanities, including the Irish Art Research Centre (TRIARC), the Centre for Gender and Women's Studies, the Centre for Medieval History, the Centre for Early Modern History, the Centre for Contemporary Irish History, the Centre for Irish, Scottish and Comparative Studies, the Centre for War Studies, the Centre for Mediterranean and Near Eastern Studies, and the Centre for the Study of the Platonic Tradition. Over 120 students are currently studying for research degrees (MLitt and PhD) across the disciplines in the School and another 80 are registered on one of our seven taught Masters (MPhil) courses.

The School of Histories and Humanities provides doctoral training through provision of a structured programme of research and study. The core component of a structured PhD programme is the advancement of knowledge through original research. Through conducting research, engaging in associated research-related activities and attending courses our PhD students are supported in their development of a range of skills that meet the needs of an employment market that is wider than academia. The high quality research experience, training and outputs are consistent with international norms and best practice

The structured PhD programme, in support of the original research activity, includes the following elements:

1. A formalised integrated programme of education, training and personal and professional development activities

PhD students undertake original research via a structured PhD which promotes the development of in-depth knowledge of their field of study, research skills, critical analysis and communication skills. Any identified skills gaps are addressed by formal training. Professional development is facilitated through the student's participation in seminars, workshops and conferences at university, national and international level. PhD students are expected to undertake taught modules during their PhD, a minimum of 10 ECTS and a maximum 30 ECTS within the first 18 months of enrolment.

In order to be confirmed on the PhD register after 18 months, students must have successfully completed School Research Training modules. In the first 6 months of enrolment they draw up a personal Research and Professional Development Plan (RPDP) with their supervisor(s), assessing specialist and generic skills required for their research and ambitions and a workplan for research, professional development and filling skills gaps. The agreed RPDP includes a record of modules, courses, workshops, seminars and conferences (to be) attended; other professional development activities (to be) undertaken, such as internships, teaching, research presentations and publications; a record of supervision arrangements and meetings; and a research and writing plan. The RPDP is evaluated annually by the student's review panel.



A number of the School's PhD students are enrolled in the interdisciplinary Digital Arts and Humanities PhD programme.

2. The development of discipline-specific knowledge, research skills and generic / transferable skills

Research students in the School complete Research Training modules, whose compulsory elements include participation in the research seminar relevant to their area of study. Dedicated research seminars exist in many areas of history (Medieval, Early Modern History, Modern, Contemporary Irish, War Studies) and in Classics, History of Art and Architecture, and Gender and Women's Studies.

In addition students have access to a plethora of training options. These include ca. 40 approved postgraduate modules in the School and ca. 40 additional modules in the affiliated Schools of English and Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies.

The School also convenes an series of Postgraduate Workshops tailored to the specific needs of our students, covering topics such as the student-supervisor relationship, academic presentation skills, preparing grant applications, thesis submission and examination, publishing, academic and non-academic careers.

Finally, students can access a broad range of College-wide modules, trainings and programmes to develop generic and transferable skills. These include training in foreign languages; courses in English for Academic Purposes; IT courses offered by Information Systems Services; the Centre for Academic Practice's teaching and supporting learning module (training for teaching assistants) and other workshops for postgraduate students, covering topics such as research skills, writing and presentation skills, self-management; the Careers Advisory Service, which advises on career planning, CV's, applications, interviews, internships; and the Innovation Academy, a PRTLI-funded initiative to cultivate creativity and entrepreneurial thinking at postgraduate level, which offers modules building up to a Graduate Certificate in Innovation and Entrepreneurship.

3. Declared outcomes and graduate attributes in line with national and international best practice

The School offers a doctoral training programme in accordance with the learning outcomes expected of a research doctorate (Level 10, National Framework of Qualifications), as specified in the Calendar Part 2 (Section 1.27.4) and the IUQB guide *Good Practice in the Organisation of PhD Programmes in Irish Higher Education* (2009) and the Irish Universities Association *PhD Graduate Skills* document, which has identified the following skills as relevant to PhD student education: research skills and awareness; ethics and social understanding; communication skills; personal effectiveness; teamworking and leadership; career management; entrepreneurship and innovation.

4. Supervision by a principal supervisor(s), normally with a supporting panel approved by the institution.

Trinity College has a policy for eligibility to supervise research students (Calendar Part 2, 2.9). All academic staff members in the School are research-active. In addition to appointing a principal supervisor the School encourages co-supervision where this is academically desirable and encourages informal engagement of other staff members with students' research to provide expert advice on specific areas of knowledge and skills.



5. Progress to completion is formally monitored against published criteria and supported by formal institutional arrangements in line with national and international best practice.

PhD students annually undergo a formal progress review, conducted by a panel including an expert reader not involved in the student's supervision and the School's Director of Postgraduate Teaching and Learning. In addition to the student's Research and Professional Development Plan (tracking learning and professional development) and a formal progress report, which are submitted annually, the panel assesses:

In Year 1, a 8,000-word research document introducing the student's thesis subject, central research questions, aims and objectives, conceptual and methodological frameworks, sources, and academic context and originality of the project; and a bibliography.

In Year 2, a thesis outline; a draft chapter of ca. 10,000 words, displaying the levels of research, critical analysis and originality commensurate with research at doctoral level; and the project bibliography. The Year 2 review decides whether students continue on the PhD register or submit their thesis for the MLitt degree.

In Year 3, an updated thesis outline; a plan for completion; an additional chapter.

45-minute panel interviews are conducted with all students annually and formal reports on the review produced by the expert reader and Director of Teaching and Learning, outlining the panel's recommendations and indicating a progression decision.

Submitted PhD theses are assessed by 2 examiners, at least one of which is external to Trinity College and an internationally recognised expert in the research area of the thesis. PhD examiners are approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies. Students are questioned about their thesis by the examiners in a viva voce examination, which usually lasts ca. 2 hours and is chaired by the Director of Postgraduate Teaching and Learning or another senior academic in the School.

6. Appropriate placements, rotations and assignments across wide sectors of the economy are encouraged for inclusion as part of the structured PhD programme.

The School promotes civic engagement and actively encourages students to make their expertise and skills productive beyond the academic environment, for example, in public history, cultural heritage and outreach projects such as the 1916 Letters and 1641 Depositions projects or the Classics Activity Workshop for secondary schools. A significant number of students complete internships of some sort during their PhD; recent examples include placements in the Dáil, the information technology sector, museums, archaeological digs or conservation projects. For students enrolled in the interdisciplinary Digital Arts and Humanities PhD, a 3-month internship is compulsory. All PhD students in College encouraged to participate in the Innovation Academy (2 above), which provides access to industry-mentored projects as part of the *Opportunity Recognition* module. Most of our students spend some time abroad during their PhD, to access sources and archives, attend workshops, trainings and conferences, and discuss their research with international experts.