



Department of Germanic Studies

The University of Dublin, Trinity College

TR039 Computer Science and German [BA (Mod.)]

Why study Computer Science and German?

Trinity offers three courses that comprise Computer Science and Language (German or French or Irish). They unite within a single programme the relatively modern discipline of **computing** with the more traditional skills of **learning languages** and **linguistics**. Put very simply, linguistics means studying languages analytically and it acts as a bridge between computer science and your German studies. Students entering the Computer Science and German programme are required to have reached specified levels in German and Maths (at least a C1 and a C3 at Higher Level respectively in Leaving Cert.), but are not expected to have expert computer skills.

When you graduate:

- you will have a high level of achievement in computer science, German and linguistics – you will, for example, be equipped to operate as a computer science professional within a German-speaking environment;
- you will have all kinds of additional and useful ‘transferable skills’: the ability to communicate clearly, to manage your time, to work on your own or as a member of a team, and to persevere with a project until you have brought it to a conclusion;
- you will have successfully completed a year abroad, studying at a German university – an experience that is highly regarded by prospective employers.

What will I study on the course?

In each year of the course students must take 60 credits. This is made up of 30 credits in Computer Science, 15 credits in Linguistics and 15 credits in German. Central to the course is the relationship between natural language and artificial language: that is where linguistics comes in! It would be a mistake to think that the degree is just computer science with bits of linguistics and German bolted on. By the end of the second year, for example, you will have raised your competence in German to the level where you can go off to a German university and study further through the language. German and linguistics give added value to the degree, by enabling you to make interconnections between all three components – what you will be able to do is greater than the sum of the parts.

Course structure

The computer science and linguistics components are taken in common by all three language cohorts. Students progress from first-year foundation courses (e.g. 'Introduction to Programming' or 'Language, Mind and Society') through to advanced study of information systems and artificial intelligence in the final year. There is a conscious integration of different strands in courses like 'Computer Programming and Natural Language Processing' or 'Computational Linguistics'. You can find further details in the general leaflet for Computer Science and a Language.

The German component of the course is structured as follows:

First two years (Junior and Senior Freshman)

- developing your language skills, both written and spoken, including modules that prepare you for the year abroad;
- studying the social, political, economic and historical background of German-speaking countries.

Third year (Junior Sophister)

- a year studying abroad under the SOCRATES programme of the EU – we have exchange partnerships with the universities of Bielefeld, Bremen, Karlsruhe, Saarbrücken, Stuttgart, Trier and Tübingen;
- developing academic and personal skills in a new environment.

Final year (Senior Sophister)

- advanced oral-aural and written language work, including translation.

And what could I do with my degree?

Computer Science and Language (German) leads on to careers throughout the computer industry, in software design and development, information management, language processing and graphics, or to research in areas like artificial intelligence, cognitive science or computational linguistics.

One of our graduates, Liz, writes:

'I loved German and liked the idea of combining it with the technical subjects involved in the computer science element of the degree. [...] Understanding European markets, speaking German – the language of one of the most significant of those markets – and living in Europe have all been essential and invaluable skills in my career to date. [...] I cannot stress enough the importance of leaving university with a global and, more specifically, a European outlook. Studying German and participating in SOCRATES gave me just that.'

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