



**TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN**  
COLÁISTE NA TRÍONÓIDE, BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH

THE  
UNIVERSITY  
OF DUBLIN

# Masters in Applied Social Research



School  
of Social Work  
and Social Policy



## Masters in Applied Social Research

### Course Overview

The Masters in Applied Social Research is a taught Masters course which can be completed on a one year full-time or two year part-time basis. It is designed for graduates in the social sciences who want to develop their research skills and gain employment in the area of research. It is equally suited to those who wish to build research skills for application in their current work environments. The course also provides a strong foundation for further post-graduate study, particularly for PhD research.

Using a combination of lectures, workshops and practical assignments, this M.Sc. programme trains graduates to do the following:

- Design and conduct primary social research using both quantitative and qualitative research methods.
- Analyse the research data collected using appropriate analytic tools.
- Write and present research findings for a range of audiences.

Graduates of the Masters in Applied Social Research typically gain employment in a variety of organisations including public and private research institutes, consultancies, university departments, government departments, semi-state agencies, the NGO sector, and in a range of policy environments.





## **Course Structure**

The Masters programme consists of a number of integrated modules which run over 2-4 semesters (depending on full- or part-time registration). Students also complete a work placement over a period of eight weeks. Students are required to complete a research dissertation which they submit following the completion of all course assignments. The programme consists of the following modules:

### **1. Qualitative Research Methods**

This course trains students to design and manage a qualitative research project, collect data via individual in-depth interviews and other qualitative methods, conduct qualitative data analysis, and present a written research report based on qualitative data. Issues such as project planning and administration, sampling, access negotiation, and ethical issues that arise in the conduct of qualitative research are also addressed.

### **2. Quantitative Research Methods**

This module consists of courses in Survey Design and Quantitative Data Analysis. Survey Design focuses on the use of surveys for the collection of quantitative data and includes an introduction to such issues as the formulation of testable hypotheses, questionnaire design, sampling, administrative procedures and the reporting of results. Quantitative Data Analysis covers the use of data from samples to statistically describe large populations and introduces the most widely used family of linear techniques used to model complex social phenomena. This module includes a full course in the use of the software SPSS. No prior knowledge of statistics or statistical software is required.

### **3. Research Design, Accessing Resources and Research Ethics**

Research Design introduces students to conceptual issues in the design of research and also covers practical aspects of the research process such as negotiating access, and the development of research tenders and proposals. Accessing Resources equips students with the skills



to access relevant resources, including computerised resources, bibliographic databases, electronic journals and the Internet (websites, search engines and portals). The Ethics section of the module considers the core ethical principles in the conduct of research involving human subjects. Students are required to submit an ethical application form for approval by the Ethics Committee at the School of Social Work and Social Policy ahead of commencing data collection for their dissertation.

#### **4. Work Placement**

Students spend eight weeks on a work placement where they have the opportunity to apply their skills in a research environment. Students are offered placement opportunities within a range of the most reputable Irish research institutes and consultancies, government departments, semi-state agencies, as well as various trade and professional organisations. Students already in relevant employment can complete their work placement in that setting. Exemptions from the work placement may be granted at the discretion of the Course Director in exceptional cases.

#### **5. Research Dissertation**

The dissertation is an essential component of the degree and is completed over the summer months (of Year 1 for full-time and Year 2 for part-time students). It must demonstrate students' ability to complete an applied research project from the initial stages of accessing data to the presentation of a final written report. It includes a thorough review of the literature on the substantive topic chosen for study and a comprehensive account of the research methods employed. The data collected for the research is analysed using, as required, appropriate computer packages. The dissertation is a maximum length of 20,000 words and is supervised by a member of the academic staff.

## **Course Calendar**

Course work is completed over two or four semesters, depending on full-time or part-time registration. Full-time students attend classes on Monday, Tuesday and Friday over two semesters (one year). Part-time students attend classes on one day – Monday in Year 1 and Tuesday in Year 2 – over four semesters (two years). Work placements are completed in year one for full-time students and year two for part-time students over an eight-week period, which usually starts in mid-April. Students complete their dissertations during the summer months (of year one for full-time students and year two for part-time students).

## **Assessment**

Course work assignments constitute 60% of the final grade for the Masters in Applied Social Research. The remaining 40% is awarded for the research dissertation. The course carries a total of 90 ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System).

## **Qualification Awarded**

Master in Science (M.Sc.)

## **Admission Requirements**

Applicants are required to have an upper second class honours degree in a social science discipline. Applications from graduates in other disciplines who have relevant experience will be considered, including: nursing, business studies, economics, history etc.

## **How to Apply for the Masters in Applied Social Research**

Applications must be submitted online. Please see

**<http://www.tcd.ie/courses/postgraduate/az/course.php?id=DPTSW-ASRE-1F09>** for details.

**Course Code:** DPTSW-ASRE-1F09 (Full-time Students)  
DPTSW-ASRE-1P09 (Part-time Students)



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## For Further Information

School of Social Work and Social Policy  
Room 3063, Arts Building  
Trinity College Dublin  
Dublin 2

Telephone: +353-1-896 3593

Email: [MScASR@tcd.ie](mailto:MScASR@tcd.ie)

Web: [www.socialwork-socailpolicy.tcd.ie/postgraduate](http://www.socialwork-socailpolicy.tcd.ie/postgraduate)

### **Contact:**

Course Administrator  
[MScASR@tcd.ie](mailto:MScASR@tcd.ie)

### **Dr. Paula Mayock,**

Course Director  
[pmayock@tcd.ie](mailto:pmayock@tcd.ie)