



Trinity College Dublin

Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath

The University of Dublin

School of Social Work and Social Policy

M.Sc. in Applied Social Research Course Handbook

2020-21

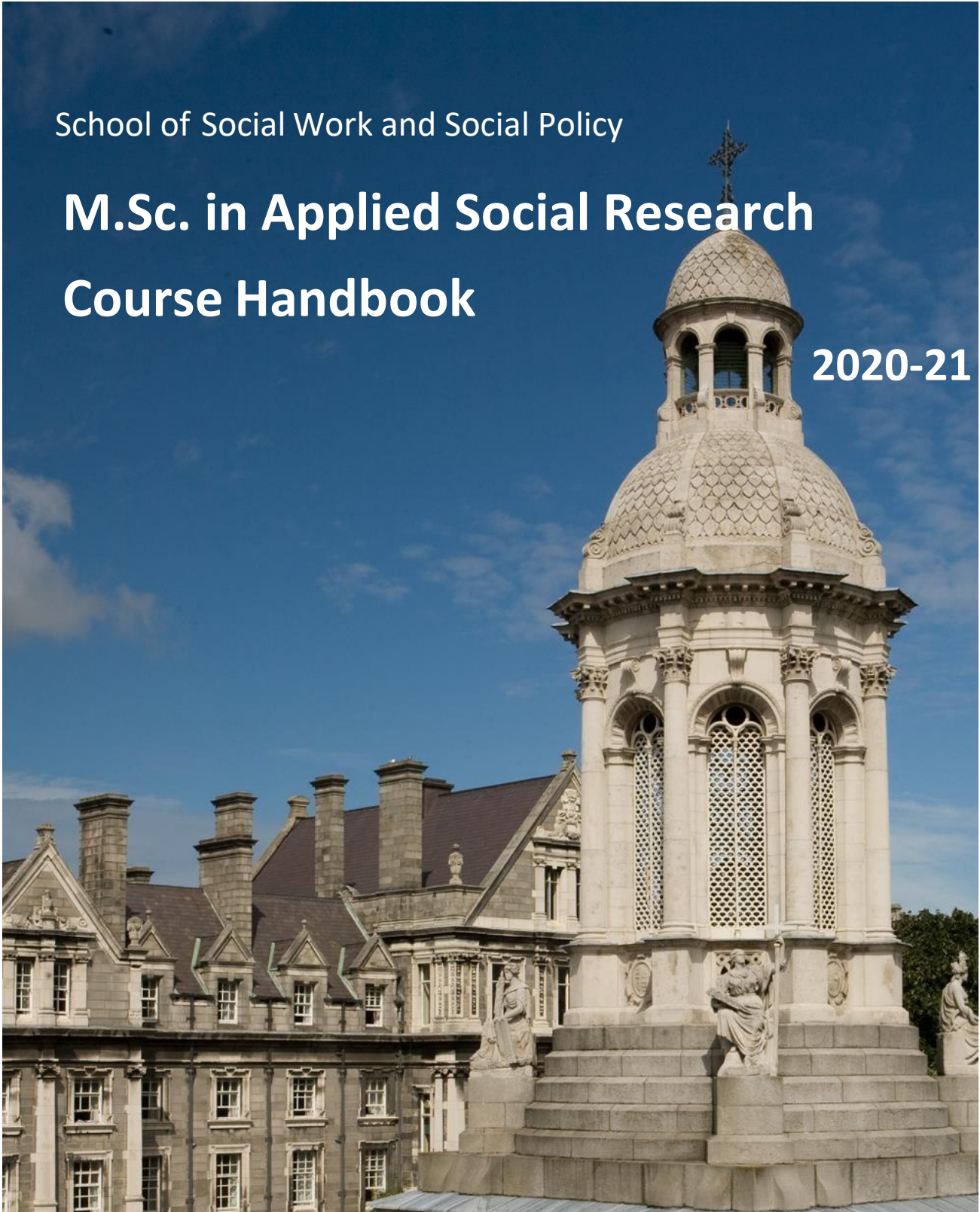


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Alternative formats of the handbook can be made available on request.

In the event of any conflict or inconsistency between the General Regulations published in the University Calendar and information contained in programme of local handbooks, the provisions of the General Regulations in the Calendar will prevail.

GENERAL DATA

STATEMENT ON GENERAL REGULATIONS

In the event of any conflict or inconsistency between the General Regulations published in the University Calendar and the information contained in programme or local handbooks, the provisions of the General Regulations in the Calendar will prevail.

HELPFUL RESOURCES FOR POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

Students can see a full range of the services available to them at www.tcd.ie/students/supports-services/. More detailed information about these services can be found at [http://www.tcd.ie/students/assets/pdf/Student%20Services%20Booklet%20\(web%20version\).pdf](http://www.tcd.ie/students/assets/pdf/Student%20Services%20Booklet%20(web%20version).pdf).

CAREER ADVISORY SERVICES

The Career Advisory Service is one of the most comprehensive and beneficial resources available to Trinity students. They offer weekly, year round workshops, events, seminars, talks, career fairs, and employer events and presentations. Events are updated regularly on their website and are free to all Trinity students. Examples of some popular on-going workshops include preparing a CV, practice interviews on video with feedback, finding postgraduate funding, and working in Ireland for non-EU students. In addition, they offer one-on-one career advice and counselling. Their website also features a comprehensive list of resources including job openings, funding opportunities, voluntary work, networking events, and podcasts. More information is available at <http://www.tcd.ie/Careers/>.

IT SERVICES

IT Services is the main provider of computing facilities and services to students at Trinity. They aim to enhance learning and research activities within the College. In addition to providing one-on-one technical support to students at the IT Services Helpdesk, they also run a series of software workshops and tutorials and basic computer courses. They also offer a range of software for sale at discounted rates. A full list of available software and workshops are available on their [website](#).

TCD LIBRARY

The Library's history dates back to the establishment of the College in 1592 and it is the largest library in Ireland. Today it has over 6 million printed volumes with extensive collections of journals, manuscripts, maps and music reflecting over 400 years of academic development. The most famous of its manuscripts, the [Book of Kells](#) and the Book of Durrow, were presented by Henry Jones, Bishop of Meath and former vice-chancellor of the University, in the 1660s. The Library was endowed with Legal Deposit privilege in 1801 and continues to receive copies of material published in the United Kingdom and Ireland.

The Library supports the learning and research needs across all disciplines of the College; it is a major research library of international repute; it provides services to a wide range of external users and institutions. More information about the Library can be found at <https://www.tcd.ie/library/>.

COLLEGE HEALTH CENTRE

The TCD Health Centre provides a wide range of health services for all students on campus. In addition to offering primary health care, the centre also runs a series of specialised clinics for students including travel vaccinations, sexual health, sports medicine, and antenatal care. Fees and opening hours are listed on their [website](#).

STUDENT COUNSELLING SERVICE

The Student Counselling Service provides free support who are experiencing personal and/or academic concerns. Available services include one-to-one counselling, peer mentors, on-line support programs, meditation groups, Niteline helpline, and group support. All services are free and confidential. Contact information can be found on their [website](#).

GRADUATE STUDENTS UNION

The Graduate Students' Union is an independent body which represent all postgraduate students in Trinity. Every postgraduate student is automatically a full member of the union upon entering their course. The union is available to assist you with academic and welfare issues and provides you with facilities including the 1937 Postgraduate Reading Room and the Postgraduate Common Room. They also schedule social events for postgraduate students. More information about the GSU can be found at <https://www.tcdgsu.ie/>. For more information about student representation please see <https://www.tcdgsu.ie/becomearep/>.

POSTGRADUATE ADVISORY SERVICE

The Postgraduate Advisory Service is a unique and confidential service available to all registered postgraduate students in Trinity College. It offers a comprehensive range of academic, pastoral and professional supports dedicated to enhancing your student experience. The Postgraduate Advisory Service is led by the Postgraduate Support Officer who provides frontline support for all Postgraduate students in Trinity. The Postgrad Support Officer will act as your

first point of contact and a source of support and guidance regardless of what stage of your Postgrad you're at. In addition each Faculty has three members of Academic staff appointed as Postgraduate Advisors who you can be referred to by the Postgrad Support Officer for extra assistance if needed.

The PAS exists to ensure that all Postgrad students have a contact point who they can turn to for support and information in college services and academic issues arising. Representation assistance to Postgrad students is offered in the area of discipline and/ or academic appeals arising out of examinations or thesis submissions, supervisory issues, general information on Postgrad student life and many others. All queries will be treated with confidentiality. For more information on PAS please see their [website](#).

CENTRAL SOCIETIES COMMITTEE

The Central Societies Committee (CSC) is the sole body on campus with the power to grant recognition to societies. As the governing body of societies the CSC represents their interests in dealings with College authorities. More information about College Societies and the CSC can be found at <http://trinitysocieties.ie/>.

DUBLIN UNIVERSITY CENTRAL ATHLETICS CLUB

Dublin University Central Athletic Club (DUCAC) is the governing body for Sport Clubs at Trinity. DUCAC is responsible for the overall administration of DU Sports Clubs in cooperation with Club Officers and for their interests and development in Trinity. More information about DUCAC can be found at http://www.tcd.ie/Sport/studentsport/ducac/?nodeId=94&title=Sports_Clubs.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURE

In the event of an emergency, **dial Security Services on extension 1999.**

Security Services provide a 24-hour service to the college community, 365 days a year. They are the liaison to the Fire, Garda and Ambulance services and all staff and students are advised to always telephone extension 1999 (+353 1 896 1999) in case of an emergency

Should you require any emergency or rescue services on campus, you must contact Security Services. This includes chemical spills, personal injury and fire assistance.

It is recommended that all students save at least one emergency contact in their phone under ICE (In Case of Emergency).

DATA PROTECTION FOR STUDENT DATA

Trinity College Dublin uses personal data relating to students for a variety of purposes. We are careful to comply with our obligations under data protection laws and have prepared a short guide at https://www.tcd.ie/info_compliance/data-protection/student-data/ to help you understand how we obtain, use and disclose student data in the course of performing University functions and services. This guidance note is intended to supplement the University's Data Protection Policy which can be found at https://www.tcd.ie/info_compliance/dataprotection/student-data/.

GENERAL PROGRAMME INFORMATION

INTRODUCTION

The M.Sc. in Applied Social Research is a taught Masters course that can be completed on a one-year, full-time or two-year, part-time basis. The course is designed for graduates of social sciences who wish to develop their research skills and gain employment in the rapidly expanding area of research. It is equally suited to those who want to build a suite of research skills for application in their current work environments. The course provides a solid foundation for further postgraduate study, particularly for those interested in pursuing a PhD.

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

- ✦ Design and conduct primary research using both quantitative and qualitative research methods;
- ✦ Analyse research data using a variety of computer packages; ✦ Write and present research findings to a range of audiences.

Graduates of the M.Sc. in Applied Social Research typically gain employment in a variety of organisations, including public or private research institutes or consultancies, government departments, the NGO sector, and in a range of policy environments.

CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Position	Telephone (+353 1 896)	E-mail
Dr Stephanie Holt	Head of School of Social Work and Social Policy	3908	sholt@tcd.ie
Dr Paula Mayock	Director of Teaching and Learning Postgraduate	2636	pmayock@tcd.ie
Dr Philip Curry	Course Director / Lecturer	3238	pcurry@tcd.ie
Mr Jason O'Callaghan	Course Administrator	3593	ocallajw@tcd.ie
Dr Paula Mayock	Course Lecturers	2636	pmayock@tcd.ie
Dr Lynne Cahill		<i>On sabbatical this year</i>	lychail@tcd.ie
Dr Louise Caffrey		3708	caffrelo@tcd.ie
Dr Catherine Conlon		1312	CONLONCE@tcd.ie
Dr Daniela Rohde			ROHDEDM@tcd.ie
Ms Siobhan Scarlett	Teaching Assistant (SPSS)		SCARLETS@tcd.ie
Ms Katharine Schulmann	Teaching Assistant (Qualitative Research)		schulmak@tcd.ie

Explanation of ECTS Weighting

European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) is an academic credit system based on the estimated student workload required to achieve the objectives of a module or programme of study. It is designed to enable academic recognition for periods of study, to facilitate student mobility and credit accumulation and transfer. The ECTS is the recommended credit system for higher education in Ireland and across the European Higher Education Area.

The ECTS weighting for a module is a measure of the student input or workload required for that module, based on factors such as the number of contact hours, the number and length of written or verbally presented assessment exercises, class preparation and private study time, laboratory classes, examinations, clinical attendance, professional training placements, and so on as appropriate. There is no intrinsic relationship between the credit volume of a module and its level of difficulty.

The European norm for full-time study over one academic year is 60 credits. 1 credit represents 20-25 hours estimated student input, so a 10-credit module will be designed to require 200-250 hours of student input including class contact time, assessments and examinations. ECTS credits are awarded to a student only upon successful completion of the programme year. Progression from one year to the next is determined by the programme regulations. Students who fail a year of their programme will not obtain credit for that year even if they have passed certain component. Exceptions to this rule are one-year and part-year visiting students, who are awarded credit for individual modules successfully completed.

ECTS BREAKDOWN FOR THE COURSE

The **M.Sc.** is worth 90 ECTS and the associated credits are as follows:

Qualitative Research Methods and Research Ethics	20 ECTS
Quantitative Research Methods	20 ECTS
Research Design, Evaluation Research and Literature Searches and Reviews	10 ECTS
Work Placement	10 ECTS
Research Dissertation	30 ECTS

The **Postgraduate Diploma** is worth 60 ECTS and the associated credits are as follows:

Qualitative Research Methods and Research Ethics	20 ECTS
Quantitative Research Methods	20 ECTS
Research Design, Evaluation Research and Literature Searches and Reviews	10 ECTS
Work Placement	10 ECTS

KEY DATES

FULL-TIME AND YEAR 2 PART-TIME STUDENTS

	Dates 2020/21	Outline Structure of Academic Year	Notes
1	31-Aug-20	PG Registration	
2	7-Sep-20		
3	14-Sep-20		
4	21-Sep-20	Week 1 – Orientation Week	←Michaelmas Lecture Term begins
5	28-Sep-20	Week 2 – Teaching begins	
6	05-Oct-20	Week 3	
7	12-Oct-20	Week 4	
8	19-Oct-20	Week 5	
9	26-Oct-20	Week 6	Monday Bank Holiday
10	02-Nov-20	Week 7	
11	09-Nov-20	Week 8 - Reading Week	
12	16-Nov-20	Week 9	
13	23-Nov-20	Week 10	
14	30-Nov-20	Week 11	
15	07-Dec-20	Week 12	
16	14-Dec-20	Week 13	
17	21-Dec-20	Christmas Period	
18	28-Dec-20		
19	04-Jan-21		
20	11-Jan-21	Week 1 – Teaching begins	←Hilary Term begins
21	18-Jan-21	Week 2	
22	25-Jan-21	Week 3	
23	01-Feb-21	Week 4	
24	08-Feb-21	Week 5	
25	15-Feb-21	Week 6	
26	22-Feb-21	Week 7 - Reading Week	
27	01-Mar-21	Week 8	
28	08-Mar-21	Week 9	
29	15-Mar-21	Week 10	Monday Bank Holiday
30	22-Mar-21	Week 11	
31	29-Mar-21	Week 12	
32-39	5-April-21 to 28-May-21	Work Placement – 8 Weeks	
40-52	31-May-21 to 25-Aug-21	Dissertation period – 12 weeks	

FULL-TIME AND YEAR 2 PART-TIME STUDENTS

	Dates 2020/21	Outline Structure of Academic Year	Notes
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5	28-Sep-20	Week 2 – Teaching begins	
6	05-Oct-20	Week 3	
7	12-Oct-20	Week 4	
8	19-Oct-20	Week 5	
9	26-Oct-20	Week 6	Monday Bank Holiday
10	02-Nov-20	Week 7	
11	09-Nov-20	Week 8 - Reading Week	
12	16-Nov-20	Week 9	
13	23-Nov-20	Week 10	
14	30-Nov-20	Week 11	
15	07-Dec-20	Week 12	
16	14-Dec-20	Week 13	
17	21-Dec-20	Christmas Period	
18	28-Dec-20		
19	04-Jan-21		
20	11-Jan-21	Week 1 – Teaching begins	←Hilary Term begins
21	18-Jan-21	Week 2	
22	25-Jan-21	Week 3	
23	01-Feb-21	Week 4	
24	08-Feb-21	Week 5	
25	15-Feb-21	Week 6	
26	22-Feb-21	Week 7 - Reading Week	
27	01-Mar-21	Week 8	
28	08-Mar-21	Week 9	
29	15-Mar-21	Week 10	Monday Bank Holiday
30	22-Mar-21	Week 11	
31	29-Mar-21	Week 12	

The timetables for all years are available at <http://www.tcd.ie/swsp/timetables/>.

KEY LOCATIONS

PROGRAMME OFFICE

The School Office is located in Room 3063, The Arts Building, Trinity College Dublin. The opening hours are Monday to Friday 09:00-13:00 and 14:00-16:00.

ONLINE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Blackboard Learn, which is located at mymodule.tcd.ie, is the College's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). You can use this to access lecture notes, online assignments and other activities through Blackboard. More information about Blackboard is available at <https://www.tcd.ie/CAPSL/resources/blackboard/>.

BERKLEY, LECKY, USSHER (BLU) LIBRARY

The BLU Library can be accessed through the second floor of the Arts Building or from the Ussher Podium. Information about the opening hours is available at <https://www.tcd.ie/library/openinghours/berkeley-lecky-ussher/>.

ACADEMIC REGISTRY

The mission of the Academic Registry is to provide key centralised administrative services to students and staff supporting the best possible Trinity experience. AR provides administrative support during a student's time in the University. Their vision is to be an integrated, flexible team with a professional service ethos supporting all stages of the student lifecycle. More information about the Academic Registry can be found on their [website](#)

TEACHING AND LEARNING

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this M.Sc. programme, students should be able to:

1. Understand the significance of quantitative and qualitative epistemological positions and how they relate to quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods research design;
2. Conceptualise a research problem and develop a number of appropriate and/or complementary research designs to bring evidence to bear on the problem;
3. Identify the scope and limitations of both quantitative and qualitative research;
4. Apply the requisite knowledge and skills involved in the collection, management, statistical analysis (using SPSS), interpretation and presentation of results of quantitative research that is appropriate to both data and research questions;
5. Apply the principles of qualitative research to the process of generating data, the selection of data collection methods appropriate to the achievement of specific research aims, and the management and analysis of qualitative data;
6. Identify and respond appropriately to the ethical issues that require consideration in the conduct of research involving human subjects;
7. Apply their knowledge and comprehension, their critical awareness and problem solving abilities, within the context of research or in the development of professional skills, in broader or multidisciplinary areas related to their fields of study;
8. Complete a thesis of 20,000 words that critically applies research methods and theoretical perspectives on a substantive topic related to the course.

COURSE MODULES 2018/19

QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS

Learning Outcomes: On successful completion of this module, students will be able to:

1. Comprehend, appraise and evaluate reports of survey research;
2. Design a cross-sectional survey project of moderate complexity;
3. Understand how cross-sectional surveys relate to other common quantitative research designs;
4. Select appropriate statistics to analyse cross-sectional survey data;
5. Comprehend the use of weights with cross-sectional survey data;
6. Apply appropriate statistics to describe sample characteristics and relationships between variables in a survey dataset;
7. Calculate estimates of population parameters on the basis of cross-sectional survey sample data;
8. Develop statistical models of social phenomenon using simple applications of the General Linear Model.

Module Code	SS8000 (Full-time)/SS7500 (Part-time)
Module Title	Quantitative Research Methods
Lecturers	Dr. Philip Curry / Dr. Daniela Rhode / Dr. Siobhan Scarlett
Module Overview	This module incorporates lecture courses in Quantitative Data Analysis with a corresponding practical course in SPSS and Survey Design.
ECTS	20
Syllabus	<p><u>Quantitative Data Analysis</u> This consists of two lectures courses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ <i>Samples and Populations</i> covers a range of statistical procedures for describing samples and making inferences to larger populations. ✦ The <i>General Linear Model</i> introduces the most widely used family of statistical techniques for modelling complex social phenomenon. <p>Qualitative Data Analysis also includes a practical course which demonstrates all of the statistical procedures covered through the use of the statistical package SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences).</p> <p><u>Survey Design</u> This section 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.</p>

<p>Assessment</p>	<p><u>Quantitative Data Analysis</u> Direct assessment for this course is based on two individual secondary analysis assignments and three multiple choice exams. These assignments and exams contribute 15% of the overall grade awarded for the M.Sc.</p> <p><u>Survey Design</u> Each student will be required to complete a survey design project, which involves developing a proposal for a survey and then designing a suitable self-completion survey instrument, administration procedure and sampling strategy to complete it. This project will contribute 10% of the overall grade awarded for the M.Sc.</p>
<p>Bibliography</p>	<p>Lecture notes and other materials for this course are provided but further reading is essential. Core text books that you should consider purchasing are indicated with a double asterisk (**).</p> <p>** Field, A. (2017). <i>Discovering Statistics using SPSS (5th Ed.)</i>. Sage: London</p> <p>Tabachnick, B.G. & Fidell, L.S. (2012/2018) <i>Using Multivariate Statistics (6th / 7th edition)</i>. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.</p> <p>**DeVaus, D. (2013) <i>Surveys in Social Research (6th)</i>. Routledge.</p> <p>Atkenson, L. R. and Alvarez, R. (Eds) (2018) <i>The Oxford Handbook of Polling and Survey Methods</i>. Oxford University Press.</p> <p>Czaja, R.F. and Blair, J.E. (2014) <i>Designing Surveys: A Guide to Decisions and Procedures (2nd)</i>. Pine Forge Press.</p> <p>Fowler, F. J. (2013) <i>Survey Research Methods (5th)</i>. Sage.</p>

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS AND RESEARCH ETHICS

Learning Outcomes: On successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Explain the epistemological foundations of qualitative research;
2. Identify principal differences between traditional scientific (quantitative) approaches and qualitative approaches (e.g. assumptions of the world, how the process is conducted, what can be studied);
3. Recognise and identify the types of information or data accessible through different qualitative methods of data collection (e.g. individual interviews, focus groups, participant observation etc.);
4. Select appropriate qualitative techniques for particular research questions.
5. Identify and deploy the sampling techniques appropriate to qualitative research (e.g., purposive sampling, snowball sampling);
6. Design and conduct a small-scale qualitative (interview-based) research project;
7. Analyse qualitative data and present qualitative research findings in a research report;
8. Identify ethical research issues that arise in the conduct of research generally and when researching specific groups and topics;
9. Complete a research ethics application form, including a research proposal, for submission to the School's Research Ethics Committee.

Module Code	SS8001 (Full-time)/SS7501 (Part-time)
Module Title	Qualitative Research Methods and Research Ethics
Lecturer	Dr. Paula Mayock / Dr. Catherine Conlon Ms. Katherine Schulmann, Teaching Assistant

Module Overview	<p>This module will introduce students to the epistemological underpinnings of qualitative research, develop their knowledge of a variety of methods of qualitative data collection and analysis, give practical experience of research, and enable students to design and undertake your own independent projects in future. This module will also examine contemporary ethical issues in research and develop students' skills in applying ethical theories and principles to practical settings. This component of the module is designed to support students to understand research activity as more than the generation of research questions, collection and analysis of data, and dissemination of results. It also involves researchers in a complex set of relationships that require decisions that involve ethical questions and considerations of values.</p> <p>Module delivery will follow a blended model that combines online and in-person elements to be attended on campus. Students will be asked to complete one or a number of tasks (e.g. reading an article/book chapter or watching a Youtube video) in advance of a lecture or workshop and will be strongly encouraged to contribute to class discussions on various methodological issues, procedures and challenges.</p> <p>While the lectures aim to cover a wide range of theoretical and methodological issues, the module is designed to equip students with the skills to carry out a qualitative research project and will cover the planning, data collection, and analysis phases of the research process. Students will receive practical guidance on how to set up and manage a qualitative research project, collect data via individual in-depth interviews and other qualitative data collection methods, turn their data into meaningful findings, and write them up in a research report. Issues such as project planning and administration, sampling, access negotiation, analysis of interview data, and the writing up and presentation of qualitative data will be covered.</p>
ECTS	20

<p>Module Content</p>	<p><u>Qualitative Research Methods</u></p> <p>Early lectures introduce the key concepts of qualitative research, beginning with the theoretical underpinnings of qualitative research, i.e. its roots in the interactionist and phenomenological paradigms of social sciences. A central aim is to introduce the major research paradigms and techniques that are at the core of contemporary approaches used to study social phenomena. Philosophical assumptions about the nature of reality (ontology) and about knowledge and how it can be attained (epistemology) will be explored. At the practical level of planning a research project, lectures will cover: access to research settings, sampling techniques, researcher roles, researching sensitive topics, and dealing with unanticipated challenges.</p> <p>A series of lectures throughout the first and second semesters will critically examine several data collection methods including the qualitative interview, focus groups, fieldwork and observation, ethnography, and mixed methods research techniques. These lectures will also cover the design of qualitative research instruments (i.e. interview schedules, focus group discussion guides). The course places a strong emphasis on the individual interview, which is the most commonly used data collection method within qualitative research. A number of workshop sessions will be dedicated to the planning and design of the interview-based qualitative group project which comprises 15% of the overall grade awarded for the M.Sc. (see below). During these workshops students will also have opportunities to practice their interviewing skills.</p> <p>During the second semester considerable time is devoted to the analysis of qualitative data, with a major focus on the Grounded Theory approach. Alternative approaches to qualitative data analysis are discussed, as are techniques and procedures for data entry, storage and management, coding and the development of category systems, analytic memo writing, and the identification of relationships between categories. Lectures during this semester also examine the criteria used in establishing and assessing the quality of research for the qualitative researcher, with specific attention to the issues of validity, reliability and reflexivity.</p> <p><u>Research Ethics</u></p> <p>Ethical considerations are an integral part of all research projects. Recent years have seen a growth in awareness of the need for ethical protocols and procedures which not only protect the interests and well-being of research participants, but also of the researcher, their host institution and funding body. In this part of the module we explore the need for rigorous ethical protocols throughout all stages of the research process. This includes the research design phase, the recruitment of participants, the implementation of the research instrument, and the research interactions, the analysis of</p>
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	<p>data, reporting and dissemination. Teaching on research ethics is both analytical and applied, and culminates with a mock ethical review workshop where students have the opportunity to test-drive their ethical protocols in preparation for the submission of their thesis proposal to the School of Social Work and Social Policy Ethics Committee.</p>
<p>Assessment</p>	<p><u>Qualitative Research Methods</u> Assessment is in two parts which, together, comprise 25% of the overall grade awarded for the degree:</p> <p><i>Qualitative Group Project</i> Students form groups (usually three or four per group) and work together to produce an interview-based qualitative group project. Each group identifies a topic that they wish to research, devises research questions, and designs an interview schedule. All group participants then conduct three individual telephone interviews and these (a total of 9-12 interviews per group project) will form the basis of the qualitative group project, which will be submitted as a qualitative research report. All students are required to submit the transcript of their <u>first</u> interview to the course lecturer for comment. At this stage, advice is provided by the course lecturer on how to improve their interviewing skills etc. The group project is submitted in late March and constitutes 20% of the overall grade awarded for the degree. It is the completed group research project rather than each individual's contribution that is assessed. The maximum word count for this assignment is 10,000 words.</p> <p><i>Submission of Individual Interview</i> Each student selects and submits the transcript of what they judge to be their best individual interview for assessment. The individual interview carries 5% of the overall grade awarded for the degree.</p> <p><u>Research Ethics and the Dissertation</u> Students are required to make a formal application to the School's Research Ethics Committee (REC) prior to undertaking data collection related to their dissertation work.</p>
<p>Recommended Reading</p>	<p><u>Qualitative Research Methods</u> Charmaz, K. (2013) <i>Constructing Grounded Theory</i>. 2nd Ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. Creswell, J.W. (2013) <i>Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches</i>. 3rd Ed. London: Sage. Denscombe, M. (2014) <i>The Good Research Guide: For Small-scale Social Research Projects</i>. Maidenhead: Open University Press. Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S. (eds.) (2000) <i>Handbook of Qualitative Research</i>. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. Kvale, S. (2009) <i>InterViews: Learning the Craft of Qualitative Research</i>. London: Sage. Mason, J. (2002) <i>Qualitative Researching</i>. London: Sage. Miles, M.B., Huberman, A.M. and Saldaña, J. (2013) <i>Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook</i>. 3rd Ed. London: Sage. Ritchie, J. and Lewis J. (2003) <i>Qualitative Research Practice</i>. London: Sage. Robson, C. (2002) <i>Real World Research: A Resource for Social Scientists and</i></p>

	<p><i>Practitioner-Researchers</i>. Oxford: Blackwell.</p> <p>Rubin, H. and Rubin, I.S. (2012) <i>Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data</i>. 3rd Ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.</p> <p>Taylor, S., Bogdan, R. & DeVault, I. (2016) <i>Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods: A Guidebook and Resource</i>. New York, Chichester: John Wiley & Sons.</p> <p><u>Research Ethics</u></p> <p>European Commission (2010) <i>European Textbook on Ethics in Research</i>. https://ec.europa.eu/research/scienc society/document_library/pdf_06/textbook-on-ethics-report_en.pdf Israel, M. and Hay, I. (2006) <i>Research Ethics for Social Scientists</i>. London: Sage.</p> <p>Mertens, D.M. & Ginsberg, P.E. (2009) <i>The Handbook of Social Research Ethics</i>. London: Sage.</p> <p>Oliver, P. (2003) <i>The Student's Guide to Research Ethics</i>. Maidenhead: Open University Press.</p> <p>Renzetti, C.M. & Raymond, L.M. (1993) <i>Researching Sensitive Topics</i>. London: Sage.</p> <p>** Please note that you will receive additional recommended reading for specific qualitative research methods (interviewing, focus groups and son on) throughout the year. Relevant readings will also be uploaded to Blackboard at regular intervals. Students will be required to read assigned articles or book chapters ahead of some lectures. These will be made available in the 'Preparation' Folder.</p>
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RESEARCH DESIGN, EVALUATION RESEARCH AND LITERATURE SEARCHES AND REVIEWS

Learning Outcomes: On successful completion of this course students will be able to:

1. Conduct a computerised search for relevant research and literature on a topic under investigation;
2. Write a review of that literature/research that is focused on the research question posed;
3. Devise a research design to investigate the research problem or research questions posed;
4. Assess the feasibility of the project in terms of access negotiation to research participants required for the specified research design;
5. Recall definitions of evaluation research designs and explain the designs' rationale and basic functioning in respect of Experimental Designs, Process evaluation and Theory Based Evaluation..
6. Evaluate the strengths, weaknesses and appropriate use of each of these evaluation designs and come to conclusions about the quality of individual evaluation studies.
7. Formulate and construct balanced and persuasive arguments to justify evaluation research designs.
8. Design a Theory of Change for an intervention and an evaluation to test it based on commissioners' needs.
9. Recall practical strategies for managing the evaluation role and apply these to augment evaluation research designs.

Module Code	SS8002 (Full-time)/SS7502 (Part-time)
Module Title	Research Design, Evaluation Research, and Literature Searches and Reviews
Lecturers	Dr. Catherine Conlon, Dr. Eburne Garcia Iriarte & Dr. Philip Curry, Ms. Lynne Cahill

<p>Module Overview</p>	<p><u>Research Design</u></p> <p>This component of the module, delivered in the second semester, focuses on the process of designing research at both a conceptual and practical level. It takes a workshop approach to equip students on how to identify from among the broad range of research strategies encountered across the course what is the 'best fit' for a research question. Students are encouraged to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) critically evaluate the implications of selecting different methods and; b) reflect upon the merits of alternative approaches. <p>Students are brought through the process of developing a research proposal, planning for the implementation of their research design and strategies for disseminating research out-puts. As well as working on how to write a research proposal, there is also a focus on how to present research proposals to an audience in a professional research context. The course uses real world applied research examples to demonstrate research design, planning and implementation processes.</p> <p>Learning Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding the ontological, epistemological and methodological components of designing a research project • Practical techniques to employ in the process of moving from research topic to research design <p>Appreciation of the elements involved in writing a comprehensive research design</p> <p><u>Evaluation Research</u></p> <p>The evaluation component of the module aims to equip students with the methodological knowledge to design and critically appraise evaluation research designs. The course covers the rationale and basic functioning of key evaluation designs, including experimental designs, process evaluation and theory-based evaluation. Students will be supported to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses and appropriate use of each of these designs and to come to conclusions about the quality of individual evaluation studies. As well as covering the major design issues, the module will provide students with practical knowledge for managing the evaluation-researcher role. Learning will be supported through interactive lectures.</p>
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	<p><u>Literature Searches and Reviews</u></p> <p>This course helps students appreciate the importance of well conducted and transparent literature searches and reviews. They will learn about the variety of data sources available, search strategies, the use of search terms and best practice in documenting search protocols and results. In addition, advanced forms of searching such as grey literature and internet searching will be introduced. Students will learn about implementing these skills in a range of contexts, from the explicitly more limited searches and reviews which might be suitable for a course work project to professional highquality reviews which might involve teams of researchers working over a period of years. This course also covers the process of writing literature review in research contexts, issues in evaluating and organising evidence, and academic writing style.</p>
ECTS	10
Assessment	<p>The Research Design, Evaluation Research and Literature Searches and Reviews module is worth 10% of the final grade for the degree.</p> <p><u>Research Design</u></p> <p>This course is assessed by means of one individual project assignment, a research proposal which students develop and present. Submission involves both presentation and a written-up format. This assignment is worth 5% of the overall grade awarded for the degree.</p> <p><u>Evaluation Research</u></p> <p>This module is assessed via a written assignment in which students apply their learning on evaluation methods. The Evaluation Research assignment is worth 5% of the overall grade awarded for the degree..</p> <p><u>Literature Searches and Reviews</u></p> <p>Students are expected to demonstrate the skills learnt on this course in the assignments submitted to other modules and in their dissertation. In addition, the literature searching and review writing skills taught on this course are explicitly assessed as part of the Survey Design assignment.</p>
Recommended Reading	<p><u>Research Design</u></p> <p>Core Texts</p> <p>Flick, U. (2015) <i>Introducing Research Methodology</i>. London: Sage</p> <p>Gilbert, N. and Stoneman, P. (2016) (Eds) <i>Researching Social Life</i>. 4th Edition. London: Sage</p> <p>Recommended Texts</p> <p>Bryman, A. (2008) <i>Social research methods (3rd)</i>. Oxford: Oxford University Press.</p>

****de Vaus, D. (2001).** *Research Design in Social Research*. London: Sage.

Creswell, J. (2014) *Research design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. London: Sage.

Denscombe, M. (2002) *Ground Rules for Good Research*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Ritchie J and Lewis J.(2005) *Qualitative Research Practice* (chapter 3) London: Sage

Robson, C. (2011) *Real world research: a resource for users of social research methods in applied settings*. Wiley-Blackwell.

Tartling, R. (2006) *Managing Social Research : A Practical Guide*. London: Routledge.

Yin R. (2014) *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, London: Sage .

Bell, J. (2005). *Doing Your Research Project: A Guide for First-time Researchers in Education, Health and Social Science*. Maidenhead: Open University.

Blaxter, L. Hughes, C. and Tight, M. (1996) *How to Research*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Hart, C. (1998). *Doing a Literature Review: Releasing the Social Science Research Imagination*. London: Sage Publications.

Thomas, Gary. (2013) *How to do your research project: a guide for students in education and applied social sciences*. Sage.

White, P. (2009). *Developing research questions: a guide for social scientists*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Evaluation Research

Cartwright, N., & Hardie, J. (2012). *Evidence-based policy: a practical guide to doing it better*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Fox, C., Grimm, R., & Caldeira, R. (2017). *An Introduction to Evaluation*. London: SAGE

Kellogg Foundation, 2017, *The Step-By-Step Guide to Evaluation*. Available here: <http://ww2.wkkf.org/digital/evaluationguide/view.html#p=6>

Moore, G. F., Audrey, S., Barker, M., Bond, L., Bonell, C., Hardeman, W., . . . Wight, D. (2015). *Process evaluation of complex interventions: Medical Research Council guidance*. *BMJ*, 350, h1258.

Rossi, P. H., Lipsey, M. W., & Freeman, H. E. (2004). *Evaluation: A systematic approach*. London: Sage publications.

Weiss, C. H. (1998). *Evaluation*. New Jersey: Upper Saddle River.

Literature Searches and Reviews

Bettany-Saltikov, J and McSherry, R. (2016) *How to do a Systematic Literature Review in Nursing: A step by step guide*. (2nd.ed.). Open University Press.

Fink, Arlene. (2010). *Conducting Research Literature Reviews: From the internet to paper*. (3rd ed.) Thousand Oaks, California, Sage.

Jesson, Jill, K., Matheson, Lydia, and Lacey, Fiona M. (2011). *Doing Your Literature Review: traditional and systematic techniques*. London: Sage.

Kugley S, Wade A, Thomas J, Mahood Q, Jørgensen AMK, Hammerstrøm K, Sathe N. (2017) *Searching for studies: a guide to information retrieval for Campbell systematic reviews*. Oslo: The Campbell Collaboration.

Ridley, Diana. (2012) *The Literature Review. A step by step guide for students*. (2nd ed.) London: Sage Publications Ltd.

WORK PLACEMENT

Learning Outcomes: On successful completion of the work placement, students will be able to:

1. Apply their knowledge of social research theory and practice to a 'real world' research environment;
2. Apply their research skills (e.g. qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods research skills) within a work environment where social research activity is a major focus of that employment setting;
3. Demonstrate that they have gained experience in one or a number of the following research tasks: reviewing literature, data collection, data analysis, writing research findings, assisting with the dissemination of research findings, project administration;
4. Demonstrate experience and learning that enhances their career opportunities.

The Work placement module carries 10 ECTS. Full-time students spend eight weeks on a work placement during the third semester (Trinity Term). Part-time students complete the work placement during the third semester of Year 2. 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.

During the work placement students get the opportunity to work on research projects alongside experienced researchers/research teams within their host organisations. Each year students are offered placement opportunities with a range of the most reputable Irish research institutes and consultancies, Government Departments and semi-state agencies, as well as various professional organisations. Normally students are on work placement from mid-April to mid-June.

As far as possible, work placements for students are organised during Semester 2, using the following procedure:

- ✦ A list of available workplaces is distributed to students early in the second Semester.
- ✦ Students then submit, via email, a list of their three preferred placement choices to the Course Director, Dr. Philip Curry (pcurry@tcd.ie) and Course Administrator, Jason O'Callaghan (ocallajw@tcd.ie) along with a copy of their Curriculum Vitae (CV).
- ✦ CVs are then circulated by the Course Administrator to each of the work placements selected by students.
- ✦ Following this, students are usually invited to attend for interview at all or a number of their selected work placements.

While the M.Sc. Course Director and teaching team make every effort to assist students in finding a work placement, it is ultimately each student's responsibility to secure a work placement. If a student is experiencing difficulty in this regard s/he is advised to contact the Course Director. **Please note the following:**

1. Prior to taking up this work placement students must have satisfactorily completed and submitted all course assignments with the exception of the research proposal for their dissertation.
2. During the work placement period, students are required to attend College on a designated number of afternoons to present their proposed dissertation topic and research design (part-time student make these presentations in Year 2). Please see section on Research Dissertation, for further detail.

The Work Placement & Attendance at College

During the work placement period, students will be required to attend College for a 2-hour period on 2-4 occasions, usually between 4 and 6pm, on designated dates. This will happen during the latter half of the work placement period (dates will be provided before students commence the work placement). During these 2-hour periods of attendance in College, students will present their proposed dissertation ideas (see page 28 for further detail).

It is the responsibility of all students to inform their employers of this requirement. Normally, students arrange with their employers to 'pay back' any work hours lost as a consequence of attending College on the designated days. Please note that attendance at these presentations is compulsory.

Work Placements and Payment

Students do not normally receive payment for the research tasks they undertake while on placement. In other words, there is no financial remuneration offered by most host organisations to students. There are exceptions. In general, however, **students should not expect to receive payment during the placement period**. Some work placements offer a small stipend to cover travel costs etc. **Please note that the Course Director does not discuss payment with host organisations and has no role in the decisions made by host organisations in this regard.**

Assessment of Work Placement

Since the primary aim of the Work Placement module is to enable students to gain 'real world' research experience, this module's ECTS are accrued by students via **self-assessment**. On completion of the work placement, students are required to complete and submit a self-assessment form to the Course Administrator and Course Director. This form requires students to provide an account of the following: a) the kinds of research tasks (including administrative tasks) they undertook during the work placement and; b) the work placement experience in general and their learning. Students are also encouraged to provide other comments and reflections on the work placement experience.

The self-assessment form will be posted on Blackboard in due course.

RESEARCH DISSERTATION

Learning Outcomes: On successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify and formulate a set of appropriate researchable questions and present them in a research proposal;
2. Construct a plan for the conduct of a research project;
3. Devise a methodological approach appropriate to the research design and the research questions;
4. Recognise the continuity between the research proposal, the research process and the research report;
5. Select and review literature relevant to the research problem;
6. Show evidence of using ethical principles in conducting research;
7. Apply the requisite knowledge and skills involved in analysis and interpretation that is appropriate to both the data and research questions;
8. Write a dissertation containing the following: a complete review of relevant literature; a description of the research design and research methods used; presentation of research findings; and a discussion of the research findings with conclusions drawn.

The research dissertation is a major component of the degree of M.Sc. in Applied Social Research, comprising 40% of the overall grade with 30 ECTS. The dissertation should demonstrate that students have the ability to complete an applied research assignment from the initial stages of collecting primary data/accessing secondary data to the presentation of a final report. It should include: a complete review of relevant research literature; a description of the research design and research methods used; presentation of research findings; and a discussion of the research findings with conclusions drawn. Quantitative data collected for the research should be analysed using appropriate statistical techniques. In the case of qualitative research, data should be analysed using the recommended coding and data management procedures.

The writing up stage of the dissertation is crucially important in the case of all research projects and is time consuming. The data analysis must be clearly written using appropriate heading, the findings clearly presented, and appropriate conclusions drawn. The report must be word processed and professionally presented. It will be a maximum length of 20,000 words and follow the academic citation conventions of the Harvard system. Further information on dissertation requirements is provided in the Dissertation Handbook which will be made available to students during the second semester.

The 40% of marks awarded for the Research Dissertation are broken down into the following subsections:

	Out of 100
Title, abstract & references	10
Coverage of background to research	20
Research design	20
Evidence of applied research skills	20
Evaluation of findings	20
Structure and presentation	10

Please note that these headings represent dimensions for evaluation and need not correspond to actual section headings in your dissertation.

Suggested Readings

Bell, J. (2005). *Doing Your Research Project: A Guide for First-time Researchers in Education, Health and Social Science*. Maidenhead: Open University.

Blaxter, L. Hughes, C. and Tight, M. (1996) *How to Research*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Hart, C. (1998). *Doing a Literature Review: Releasing the Social Science Research Imagination*. London: Sage Publications.

Taylor, G. (1989) *The Student's Writing Guide for the Arts and Social Sciences*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Research Proposal

Students themselves select the topic for the dissertation, usually during their work placement.

All students must submit an application to the Research Ethics Committee (REC), School of Social Work and Social Policy (see below for further detail and instructions) prior to embarking on their dissertation research. This application must outline the research aims, proposed research methods, approach to sampling and recruitment, and so on; importantly, students must also respond to any ethical issues that may arise during the course of the conduct of their proposed research. Students must adhere to the template (and word count limit) provided by REC.

Dissertation Presentations

All students must present their proposed dissertation research topic (including research aims, methodological approach, sampling and recruitment procedures, ethical considerations) to the class and course lecturers in a series of dissertation presentations convened during the work placement period (dates will be provided before the commencement of the work placement). This provides opportunities for students to get feedback from both their course lecturers and peers. Issues including access negotiation, sampling, and ethical issues arising from the proposed research must be considered at this stage and resolved satisfactorily before the research proposal is finalised. Each student's dissertation proposal must be approved by their dissertation supervisor (see below for information on the allocation of supervisors), as well as the School's Research Ethics Committee, before the research can proceed.

Attendance at Dissertation Presentations is compulsory and, as with other classes and guest lectures, attendance is taken.

Dissertation Library

Students may view past dissertations online via the Local Access tab on the School of Social Work and Social Policy webpage: <https://www.tcd.ie/swsp/local/>. You will be prompted to enter your college user ID and password.

ETHICAL APPROVAL

Ethical approval must be sought and attained by students from the Research Ethics Committee (REC), School of Social Work and Social Policy, for their proposed dissertation research projects. Students are not permitted to commence data collection until ethical approval has been granted.

The application form can be downloaded at <http://socialwork-socialpolicy.tcd.ie/research/ethics.php>. Please read all information provided via this link carefully.

Hard copy applications to REC must be reviewed and signed by an academic supervisor in advance of submission for ethical approval. **Please note that your research proposal must be submitted for comment to your academic supervisor at least three days in advance of the deadlines.**

To apply for ethical approval from the REC, completed application forms, together with supporting documentation, should be submitted in **hardcopy** for the attention of Noreen O'Sullivan, to the School's submission drop box facility which is located between Arts Room 3077 and Arts 3080. The box is labelled Ethics and will be emptied at 4.30pm on the day of the deadline. An **electronic copy** must also be e-mailed to Noreen at swsprec@tcd.ie

DISSERTATION SUPERVISION

Each student is assigned an academic supervisor. Students are often supervised by one of the M.Sc. course lecturers and, in other cases, by a member of the academic staff of the School of Social Work and Social Policy. In fewer cases, students are supervised by a member of academic staff from another School within TCD. Supervisors are allocated by the Course Director with due consideration of both the substantive topic of the proposed research and the proposed methodology. Efforts are made to match students' research interests with those of their supervisors.

Students and their supervisors generally agree to meet at suitable times (between June and August) to discuss all aspects of their research and to review progress. The supervisor will read one complete draft of the dissertation provided it is submitted by the student well ahead of the final submission deadline. The role of the supervisor is to advise and offer suggestions; however, the student is ultimately responsible for the conduct of his/her own research, as well as for writing it up properly and ensuring that it is submitted in a timely fashion. It is also the responsibility of the student to make contact with and arrange meetings with their supervisor.

A Dissertation Handbook will be posted on Blackboard during the second semester. It is strongly recommended that you read this document carefully.

Submitting the Dissertation

You will need to submit the following:

- ✦ One electronic copy submitted to BLACKBOARD
- ✦ In the case of projects based on qualitative interviews, students must submit the interviews to Louise O'Brien (louise.obrien@tcd.ie) by email (as one bound document, NOT as separate interviews).

Please ensure that electronic copies are SINGLE DOCUMENTS submitted in PDF FORMAT.

GUEST LECTURE SEMINAR SERIES

A list of guest lectures will be provided at the beginning of each semester and communicated to students via email and Blackboard. These guest lectures are included on the timetable to ensure that students:

- † are aware of a range of research projects currently ongoing in Ireland;
- † learn about the diverse range of research designs, approaches and methodologies currently in use;
- † gain exposure to the working intricacies (including methodological challenges) associated with the conduct of social science research;
- † become acquainted with the wider research community.

Guest lectures are delivered by subject specialists from the public and private sectors who have effectively conducted applied research in one or a number of areas. These lectures vary from year to year and may include the following types of topics: crisis pregnancy, health related topics, ageing, ethnic minorities, poverty/socio-economic disadvantage, equality policies and legislation, population health, sexuality/sexual health, mental health, educational disadvantage, and research involving children and young people.

Although a guest lecture will not be given on all weeks of each semester, students can expect to attend at least seven such lectures during each semester.

Attendance at these lectures is compulsory.

Part-time students will attend Guest Lectures in Year 2 but may also attend Guest Lectures during their first year if they wish.

Marking

The pass mark for all written assignments and the dissertation is 50%.

MARKING CRITERIA FOR ASSIGNMENTS

All course assignments are marked by Course Lecturers (sometimes with the help of a Teaching Assistant). Each individual assignment is marked according to relevant criteria that reflect the nature and purpose of the assignment. These criteria are set out below for each individual assignment.

Qualitative Research Methods and Research Ethics Assignments

Qualitative Interviews are marked out of 100 according to the following criteria:

Structure of the Interview	20
Listening Skills	20
Use of Probing/Follow-up Questions	20
Overall Content of the Interview	20
Overall 'Flow'/Rapport of the Interview	20
TOTAL	100

Qualitative Group Projects are marked out of 100 according to the following criteria:

Title, Abstract and Referencing	10
Background & Literature Review	20
Research Methodology	20
Quality and Extent of the Data Analysis & Findings	20
Discussion	20
Structure, Writing and Presentation	10
TOTAL	100

Quantitative Research Methods

The *Survey Design* assignment is marked out of 100 according to the following criteria:

Title, Abstract and Referencing	10
Background & Literature Review	20
Use of existing published measures (scales)	10
Creation of original scales	10
Sampling strategy	20
Administration procedure	20
Structure, Writing and Presentation	10
TOTAL	100

The *SPSS assignments* are each marked out of 100 according to the following criteria:

Accuracy of statistical analysis	35
Commentary and interpretation	35
Formatting and presentation of statistical results	10
Use of tables and graphs	10
Writing and presentation	10
TOTAL	100

Research Design

Research Design Assignment is marked out of 100 according to the following criteria:

Marks awarded for (<i>emphasis on...</i>)	
Title <i>Ability to encapsulate inquiry in 15 word title</i>	10
Abstract and proposal <i>Succinct and clear distillation of idea and method within 150 word count set out in assignment</i>	20
Rationale and background of proposed study <i>Compelling and succinct argument persuading reader of why this inquiry and method will add to existing knowledge within 120 word count as set out in assignment. Literature review section will also be referred to here.</i>	20
Research question, aims and objectives <i>Ability to distill down focus of inquiry into coherent and researchable questions, further articulated out as aims and objectives within 200 word count as set out in assignment</i>	20
Outline of the research design <i>Formulation of a robust and realisable research method that flows from research questions, aims and objectives; shows ontological and epistemological coherence and is realistic having regard to the time-frame and resources available to the student within 1000 word count as set out in assignment</i>	30
TOTAL	100

Evaluation Research

Evaluation Research Assignment is marked out of 100 according to the following criteria:

Research questions, aims and objectives <i>Ability to distil down focus of inquiry into coherent and researchable questions, further articulated out as aims and objectives</i>	20
Evaluation Methodology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Compelling and succinct argument persuading reader of why this evaluation design is justified and how it will address the research questions.</i> • <i>Design addresses commissioner’s requirements, the research questions and the Theory of Change.</i> • <i>Methods for data collection & analysis are specified & justified.</i> • <i>Logical structuring of the argument.</i> • <i>Critical use of appropriate literature.</i> • <i>Consideration of practical issues and constraints.</i> • <i>Realistic given constraints and resources.</i> • <i>Consideration of strengths and weaknesses of the evaluation design.</i> • <i>If appropriate, sets out what would be required to achieve a higher standard of evidence and any constraints on achieving this.</i> • <i>Sets out an evaluation schedule.</i> 	50 is (each point worth 5%
Theory of Change <i>Inclusion of key inputs, outputs, outcomes, external factors/assumptions, logical ordering, visual clarity.</i>	30
TOTAL	100

MARKING CRITERIA FOR DISSERTATION

1st Grade 80+	
Introduction and Rationale	Optimally formulated research question(s)/ problem with a clear subject-based focus and excellent, convincing rationale.
Literature Review	Evidence of extensive reading that has been thoroughly and critically evaluated; optimal understanding of the literature with excellent identification of gaps/ issues that are explicitly related to the research question; very good evidence of independent research for relevant sources. Excellent organisation of the literature reviewed.
Data Analysis	Results/ findings are optimally structured and articulated and consistently related to the research question(s)/ problem; data are very clearly and critically analysed and evaluated; data are clearly and unambiguously presented and wellorganised; strengths and limitations are discussed in a convincing manner.
Conclusions	Conclusion is excellent, providing a clear synthesis of the work and convincing discussion of the contribution of the findings; a clear understanding of the strengths and limitations of research is conveyed; strong and appropriate connections made between findings and the literature reviewed; future work and recommendations are convincing, reasonable and well-structured and defined.

Structure/ Organisation/ Presentation	Text and argument systematically and explicitly organised; without any significant lacunae or repetition; identifies and discussed pertinent issues indepth; within maximum word count limit; excellent presentation and use of referencing conventions; accurate grammar, spelling and used of language.
Overall	Work of excellent or outstanding quality, showing independent thought and critical insight.

1st Grade 70-79%	
Introduction and Rationale	Clearly formulated research question(s)/problem with a clear subject-based focus and a strong and convincing rationale.
Literature Review	Evidence of extensive reading that has been thoroughly and critically evaluated; showing a clear understanding of the literature alongside the identification of gaps/issues that are clearly related to the research question(s); evidence of independent research for relevant sources.
Data Analysis	Results/findings are well structured and articulated and consistently related to the research question(s)/problem; data are clearly and unambiguously presented and well-organised; strengths and limitations are discussed in a convincing manner.
Conclusions	Conclusion is comprehensive; providing a convincing discussion of the contribution of the findings; conveying a clear understanding of the strengths and limitations of the research; appropriate connections made between the findings and the literature review; future work and recommendations are clearly outlined and well structured.
Structure/ Organisation/ Presentation	Text and argument systematically organised; without any significant lacunae or repetition; identifies and discusses pertinent issues; within maximum word count limit; strong presentation and consistent use of referencing conventions; accurate grammar, spelling and use of language.
Overall	Work of a very high standard, showing independent thought and critical insight.

2.1 Grade 60-69%	
Introduction and Rationale	Competently formulated research question(s)/problem with evidence of subjectbased focus and well-constructed thorough rationale.
Literature Review	Appropriate reading with some limited evaluation; review not always consistently or clearly connected to the research question/problem; only partial evidence of independent research for relevant sources; good organisation of the literature reviewed.
Data Analysis	Results/findings are clearly presented and well-structured; data are critically analysed/evaluated to a reasonable extent; data are well presented and reasonably well organised; some acknowledgment of the strengths and limitations of the data.
Conclusions	Conclusion is very good, with a good synthesis of the work and strong discussion of the contribution of the findings; understanding of the strengths and limitations of the research is articulated; good connections made between the findings and

	the literature reviewed; future work and recommendations are identified and are reasonable.
Structure/ Organisation/ Presentation	Text and argument structured in a sustained way; all major structural and organisational elements present; identifies and discusses pertinent issues in reasonable depth; observes word count requirements; appropriate presentation and use of referencing conventions; spelling and grammar accurate in the main; satisfactory use of language.
Overall	Good or very good quality, showing knowledge and understanding.

2.2 Grade 50-59%	
Introduction and Rationale	Sufficiently formulated research question(s)/problem with some evidence of subject focus; adequate but under-developed rationale provided.
Literature Review	Evidence of some appropriate reading but over-reliance on limited resources; a descriptive review of the literature with little critical evaluation; review not strongly connected to the research question/problem; limited evidence of independent research for relevant sources; poor organisation of the literature reviewed.
Data Analysis	Results/findings are provided but poorly structured and articulated; data are not critically analysed/evaluated; poor presentation and organisation of data; little or no articulation on the strengths and limitations of the findings.
Conclusions	Conclusion provides a sufficient summary of the dissertation; very limited connection made between the findings and the literature review; limited awareness of the strengths and limitations of the findings; good connections made between the findings and the literature reviewed; future work poorly defined with little or no recommendations.
Structure/ Organisation/ Presentation	Text and argument reasonably well structured and in a reasonably sustained way; some structural and organisational elements absent; some gaps and evidence of misunderstanding of the key concepts; reasonable command of presentation conventions and referencing; adequately organised and expressed but with grammatical errors in the text and/or significant typos.
Overall	Reasonable quality, showing deficits in knowledge and understanding.

Fail Grade 49-35%	
Introduction and Rationale	Poorly formulated research question(s)/problem. Lacks subject focus. Inadequate or poorly articulated rationale with no clear focus.
Literature Review	Over-reliance on highly restricted sources of literature; significant gaps in literature review; literature review merely descriptive with no critical evaluation of relevant research literature; review not clearly connected to the research question/problem; poor organisation of the literature.

Data Analysis	Results/findings are very limited with no discussion or evidence of critical analysis/evaluation; presentation and organisation of data is confusing, repetitive or conflicting; no understanding or articulation on the strengths and limitations of the findings.
Conclusions	Conclusion is merely a summary of the dissertation; little or no connection made between the findings and the literature reviewed; the impact and/or the limitations of the findings are not addressed; future work and recommendations are absent.
Structure/ Organisation/ Presentation	Poor or weak organisation/structure; significant gaps and/or misunderstanding of the key concepts; repetition in the argument/text; basic command of presentation conventions and referencing; presentation marred by language/spelling errors such that comprehensibility is affected and/or compromised.
Overall	The work does not achieve the standards required at Masters level.

Fail Below 35%	
Introduction and Rationale	Very poorly formulated research question(s)/problem. Absence of clear focus and rationale.
Literature Review	Use of extremely restricted range of sources; consistent use of non-research sources such as newspapers; very large gaps in the literature review; no critical evaluation of research reviewed; review not connected to a research question; highly disorganised write-up.
Data Analysis	Extremely limited findings with no critical evaluation; highly disorganised presentation of findings; no articulation of the strengths and limitations of the findings.
Conclusions	Very poorly organised; at best limited to description; no connection made between the findings and the literature reviewed; no discussion of limitations of the research, future research or recommendations.
Structure/ Organisation/ Presentation	Very poor structure; key concepts misunderstood or missed entirely; very large gaps in the literature; weak and unconsidered argument; high levels of repetition; failure to adhere to basic presentation and referencing conventions; language and spelling errors; incomprehensible sentences or passages.
Overall	The work falls far below the standards required at Masters level.

STUDENT QUERIES AND OFFICE HOURS

Course lecturers encourage student participation during lectures and workshops and students are expected to avail of class time to ask questions and/or seek clarification on any aspect of course work/content, course assignment and so on.

General requests, questions and queries – articulated in the part of a majority if the entire class- should be directed to the Class Representative, who (as outlined on page 38) can present these to the teaching team during Team Meetings or, alternatively, communicate such requests or questions via email to the Course Director and/or individual lecturers at any time during the academic year.

Course lecturers are available to meet individually with students during term time on the days listed below should an issue arise that requires specific discussion. **Please note that students must make an appointment via email with individual lecturers at least one day prior to day listed.**

Lecturer	Office Hours
Dr. Paula Mayock 30 Anglesea Street	Mondays, 17:30-18:30
Dr. Philip Curry Room 3028 Arts	Mondays, 13:00-14:00
Dr Catherine Conlon Room 3060 Arts	Mondays, 13:00-14:00

COURSE REGULATIONS

Attendance

The M.Sc. in Applied Social Research is an intensive degree course which can be completed either on a full- or part-time basis. Full-time students should note that the time commitment to be allocated to reading, computing and coursework will average 40 hours per week. **Students are expected to attend all lectures, guest lectures and workshops and to complete all course work assignments on time.** Attendances will be taken at all classes and those who attend less than 80% of classes, will not be permitted to proceed to work placement. Attendance at one module will not cross compensate for non-attendance at another module. Students should email the relevant course lecturer(s) if, for any reason, they are unable to attend class(es).

Penalty for Late Submission of Work

In order to ensure fairness and comparability between students, to spread the workload and ensure consistent feedback, considerable importance is attached to the timely submission of course work. An extension to the stated deadlines will normally be considered only in the case of illness, or severe domestic upheaval. Students must request an extension in writing from the Course Director well in advance of the deadline (at least 2 Weeks). An extension will only be given in consultation with the lecturer concerned. Otherwise, in the interest of fairness, **work handed in late will be penalised by an automatic deduction of 10% for each week exceeding the stated deadline.**

The course work of all students must be returned to the course lecturer and kept on file, to be read by the External Examiner. The external examiner for 2018/19 will be Dr Andrew Yip, Professor of Sociology from the University of Nottingham.

M.Sc. Course Committee

The academic quality and content of the course for the M.Sc. in Applied Social Research is the responsibility of the Course Director. The M.Sc. Course Committee, which is composed of the Course Director, lecturers, and teaching assistants, governs the M.Sc. course. The class representative (see below) is invited to attend Course Committee to give feedback and/or communicate any issues or problems, *based on the views of a majority of fellow students*. Ten minutes is allocated to this at the beginning of Course Committee meetings, after which the class representative leaves the meeting.

Class Representative

Each year the class elects a class representative during the first term. The main responsibility of the class representative is to bring any relevant issues to the attention of the Course Director. Such communication typically takes place when the Class Representative joins Course Committee Meetings or via email correspondence with the Course Director. Year 2, Part-time students normally nominate one individual to communicate with the Course Director on behalf of the class.

Complaints and Grievances

If you have an academic-related problem or complaint you should discuss it first with the lecturer concerned. If you have a complaint that cannot be resolved through discussion with a course lecturer, you should approach the Course Director. If the problem remains, you should consult the Head of School or the Dean of Graduate Studies.

General issues to do with the structure or content of the course should be channelled through your student representatives to the Course Director and the M.Sc. Course Committee.

Court of Examiners

The Court of Examiners is composed of Course Director, the Head of the School of Social Work and Social Policy and the teaching staff on the M.Sc. in Applied Social Research and the external examiner. It meets in December every year. Dissertations will **only be examined at this time of the academic year** and those who fail to meet this deadline will have to seek permission from Graduate Studies to submit the following year. If permission is granted they will have to pay a continuation fee in order to submit their thesis the following year.

It is important to note that marks given throughout the course are only intended as an approximate guide to progress. At the end of each academic year, the files of students' work are shown to the external examiner and s/he has an opportunity to read their dissertations. Under the regulations of the University the external examiner can raise or lower the marks of students, although it is unusual for an external examiner to alter marks by more than a few points.

Students must pass the course work on *all three modules* (qualitative research methods and research ethics, quantitative research methods, and research design, evaluation research, and Literature Searches and Reviews) in order to proceed to the dissertation. There is no compensation between these modules. Students who do not pass will be permitted one opportunity to re-submit written work and such re-submitted work will be marked out of a range of 0-50%.

To be eligible for the award of the Masters degree in Applied Social Research, each course module and the dissertation must be passed satisfactorily.

AWARDS

Upon successful completion of the course students are awarded the degree of Masters in Applied Social Research.

Students with a mark of 40-49% in all course work, who accordingly are not eligible to proceed to the dissertation, are eligible for a Postgraduate Diploma in Applied Social Research. Students who fail the dissertation will not be awarded the M.Sc. but will be eligible for the award of Postgraduate Diploma in Applied Social Research.

Distinction in Masters in Applied Social Research

While the degree is ungraded, a distinction will be awarded to students who achieve a mark of 70% or higher in the dissertation and who have achieved an overall mark of 70% in their course work.

Referral of dissertation

If a dissertation is referred at the Board of Examiners, the student may seek approval to re-submit the work the following year. If permission is granted they will have to pay a continuation fee. The resubmitted work will be considered at the examination board in the following year.

Course Transcripts

Students who have passed the course after the Examination Board can request a transcript from Louise via email louise.obrien@tcd.ie . These are normally sent electronically to a TCD email address unless a hard copy is specifically requested.

The transcript includes the marks awarded for each module of the course. The student must retain a copy of this transcript for future reference as it is important for subsequent job or research applications. There is an administrative charge for any additional or later copies of the transcript.

Assessment Regulations

Course work assignments constitute 60% of the final grade for the M.Sc. 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).

Breakdown of Final Grade

Module	Component	%
SS8000: Quantitative Methods	SPSS Data Analysis	15
	Survey Design	10
SS8001: Qualitative Methods	Qualitative Group Project	20
	Qualitative Interview	5
SS8002: Research Design, Evaluation Research & Literature Searchers and Reviews	Research Proposal	5
	Evaluation Research	5
SS8004: Research Dissertation		40

Students **must pass all course modules and the dissertation** to be awarded the degree of Masters in Applied Social Research. In other words, no cross-module compensation is possible. Additionally, in order to pass Module 1, Quantitative Methods, students **must pass both SPSS Data Analysis and Survey Design**. The degree of M.Sc. is undifferentiated, so that marks awarded are given as evidence of personal skill and of individual achievement and progress, rather than leading to a differentiated degree award. Because the course is seen as a professional qualification, all students who hope to graduate must satisfy the examiners that they are competent in both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Both course work and the final dissertation form the basis of this adjudication

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism of any kind is unacceptable in academic work and is penalised. To ensure that you have a clear understanding of what plagiarism is, how Trinity deals with cases of plagiarism, and how to avoid it, you will find a repository of information in [this library guide](#).

We ask you to take the following steps:

- i. Visit the online resources to inform yourself about how Trinity deals with plagiarism and how you can avoid it in [the library guide](#). You should also familiarize yourself with the Calendar entry on plagiarism and the sanctions which are applied which is located at: <http://www.tcd.ie/calendar/graduate-studies-higher-degrees/> (also set out below).
- ii. **Complete the [‘Ready, Steady, Write’](#) online tutorial on plagiarism. Completing the tutorial is compulsory for all students.**
- iii. Familiarise yourself with the School’s PG Plagiarism Declaration Form that you submitted at the start of the year (see Appendix)
- iv. Contact your College Tutor, your Course Director, or your Lecturer if you are unsure about any aspect of plagiarism.

Calendar Statement on Plagiarism for Postgraduates - Part III, 1.32

General

It is clearly understood that all members of the academic community use and build on the work and ideas of others. It is commonly accepted also, however, that we build on the work and ideas of others in an open and explicit manner, and with due acknowledgement.

Plagiarism is the act of presenting the work or ideas of others as one’s own, without due acknowledgement.

Plagiarism can arise from deliberate actions and also through careless thinking and/or methodology. The offence lies not in the attitude or intention of the perpetrator, but in the action and in its consequences.

It is the responsibility of the author of any work to ensure that he/she does not commit plagiarism.

Plagiarism is considered to be academically fraudulent, and an offence against academic integrity that is subject to the disciplinary procedures of the University.

Examples of Plagiarism

Plagiarism can arise from actions such as:

- (a) copying another student’s work;
- (b) enlisting another person or persons to complete an assignment on the student’s behalf;

- (c) procuring, whether with payment or otherwise, the work or ideas of another;
- (d) quoting directly, without acknowledgement, from books, articles or other sources, either in printed, recorded or electronic format, including websites and social media; (e) paraphrasing, without acknowledgement, the writings of other authors.

Examples (d) and (e) in particular can arise through careless thinking and/or methodology where students:

- (i) fail to distinguish between their own ideas and those of others;
- (ii) fail to take proper notes during preliminary research and therefore lose track of the sources from which the notes were drawn;
- (iii) fail to distinguish between information which needs no acknowledgement because it is firmly in the public domain, and information which might be widely known, but which nevertheless requires some sort of acknowledgement;
- (iv) come across a distinctive methodology or idea and fail to record its source.

All the above serve only as examples and are not exhaustive.

Plagiarism in the context of group work

Students should normally submit work done in co-operation with other students only when it is done with the full knowledge and permission of the lecturer concerned. Without this, submitting work which is the product of collusion with other students may be considered to be plagiarism.

When work is submitted as the result of a Group Project, it is the responsibility of all students in the Group to ensure, so far as is possible, that no work submitted by the group is plagiarised.

Self-Plagiarism

No work can normally be submitted for more than one assessment for credit. Resubmitting the same work for more than one assessment for credit is normally considered self-plagiarism.

Avoiding Plagiarism

Students should ensure the integrity of their work by seeking advice from their lecturers, tutor or supervisor on avoiding plagiarism. All schools and departments must include, in their handbooks or other literature given to students, guidelines on the appropriate methodology for the kind of work that students will be expected to undertake. In addition, a general set of guidelines for students on avoiding plagiarism is available at <http://tcd-ie.libguides.com/plagiarism>.

If plagiarism as referred to in paragraph (1) above is suspected, the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) or his/her designate will arrange an informal meeting with the student, the student's Supervisor and/or the academic staff member concerned, to put their suspicions to the student and give the student the opportunity to respond. Students may nominate a Graduate Students' Union representative or PG advisor to accompany them to the meeting. The student will be requested to respond in writing stating his/her agreement to attend such a meeting and confirming on which of the suggested dates and times it will be possible for them to attend. If the student does not in this manner agree to attend such a meeting, the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate), or designate, may refer the case directly to the Junior Dean, who will interview the student and may implement the procedures as referred to in Section 5 (Other General Regulations).

If the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) forms the view that plagiarism has taken place, he/she must decide if the offence can be dealt with under the summary procedure set out below. In order for this summary procedure to be followed, all parties noted above must be in agreement and must state their agreement in writing to the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) or designate. If one of the parties to the informal meeting withholds his/her written agreement to the application of the summary procedure, or if the facts of the case are in dispute, or if the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) feels that the penalties provided for under the summary procedure below are inappropriate given the circumstances of the case, he/she will refer the case directly to the Junior Dean, who will interview the student and may implement the procedures set out in Section 5 (Other General Regulations).

If the offence can be dealt with under the summary procedure, the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) will recommend one of the following penalties:

- (a) Level 1: Student receives an informal verbal warning. The piece of work in question is inadmissible. The student is required to rephrase and correctly reference all plagiarised elements. Other content should not be altered. The resubmitted work will be assessed and marked without penalty;
- (b) Level 2: Student receives a formal written warning. The piece of work in question is inadmissible. The student is required to rephrase and correctly reference all plagiarised elements. Other content should not be altered. The resubmitted work will receive a reduced or capped mark depending on the seriousness/extent of plagiarism;
- (c) Level 3: Student receives a formal written warning. The piece of work in question is inadmissible. There is no opportunity for resubmission.

Provided that the appropriate procedure has been followed and all parties in (6) above are in agreement with the proposed penalty, the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) should in the case of a Level 1 offence, inform the Course Director and, where appropriate, the Course Office. In the case of a Level 2 or Level 3 offence, the Dean of Graduate Studies must be notified and requested to approve the recommended penalty. The Dean of Graduate Studies will inform the Junior Dean accordingly. The Dean on Graduate Studies may approve or reject the recommended penalty, or seek further information before making a decision. If he/she considers that the penalties provided for the summary procedure are inappropriate given the circumstances of the case, he/she may also refer the matter directly to the Junior Dean who will interview the student and may implement the procedures as referred to under conduct and college. Notwithstanding his/her decision, the Dean of Graduate Studies will inform the Junior Dean of all notified cases of Level 2 and Level 3 offences accordingly. The Junior Dean may nevertheless implement the procedures as set out in Section 5 (Other General Regulations).

If the case cannot normally be dealt with under summary procedures, it is deemed to be a Level 4 offence and will be referred directly to the Junior Dean. Nothing provided for under the summary procedure diminishes or prejudices the disciplinary powers of the Junior Dean under the 2010 Consolidated Statutes.

See [here](#) for more information on avoiding plagiarism.

UNIVERSITY REGULATIONS

Academic Policies

Information about the Universities Academic Policies can be found at:

<http://www.tcd.ie/teachinglearning/academic-policies/>

Student Complaints Procedure

Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin, is committed to excellence in teaching, research and service provision. The University aims for the highest standards of quality in all its activities. It takes legitimate student complaints seriously and aims to resolve them in a clear, fair and timely manner.

Information about the Student Complaints Procedure can be found at

https://www.tcd.ie/about/policies/160722_Student%20Complaints%20Procedure_PUB.pdf.

Dignity and Respect Policy

Trinity is committed to supporting a collegiate environment in which staff, students and other community members are treated with dignity and respect. Bullying and harassment (including sexual and racial harassment) are not tolerated in Trinity. Information about the Dignity and Respect Policy can be found at <https://www.tcd.ie/equality/policy/dignity-respect-policy/>.

APPENDIX

PGT & PGR DECLARATION

I hereby declare that all submissions made for the duration of the programme I am undertaking is entirely my own work, free from plagiarism and has not been submitted as an exercise towards a degree at this or any other university

I have read and I understand the plagiarism provisions in the General Regulations of the University Calendar for the current year, found at:
<http://www.tcd.ie/calendar/graduatestudies-higher-degrees/>

I have also completed the Online Tutorial on avoiding plagiarism 'Ready Steady Write', located at <http://tcd-ie.libguides.com/plagiarism/ready-steady-write>

Student Name

Student Number

Course

Date

Note to Students

To ensure that you have a clear understanding of what plagiarism is, how Trinity deals with cases of plagiarism, and how to avoid it, you will find a repository of information at <http://tcd-ie.libguides.com/plagiarism> We ask you to take the following steps:

- (i) Visit the online resources to inform yourself about how Trinity deals with plagiarism and how you can avoid it at <http://tcd-ie.libguides.com/plagiarism> . You should also familiarize yourself with the 2018-19 Calendar entry on plagiarism located on this website and the sanctions which are applied;
- (ii) Complete the 'Ready, Steady, Write' online tutorial on plagiarism at <http://tcdie.libguides.com/plagiarism/ready-steady-write>. Completing the tutorial is compulsory for all students.

- (iii) Familiarise yourself with the declaration that you will be asked to sign when submitting course work at <http://tcd-ie.libguides.com/plagiarism/declaration>;
- (iv) Contact your College Tutor, your Course Director, or your Lecturer if you are unsure about any aspect of plagiarism.