



Department of Geography



BA Undergraduate Handbook

2026-2027

Welcome to Geography at UCC



*Dr. Kieran Hickey
Head of Dept.*

Without geography we are lost – lost to where we are and what the world is, lost on how the world works – human, environmental and physical and lost in how to understand and engage with the world’s challenges including conflict, environmental degradation, climate change, migration, urbanization, global inequality, loss of biodiversity and many others.

Without geography we are lost to understanding the spatial and temporal linkages that permeate the world from the micro to the global scale and beyond, we are also lost to understanding the Earth below us, the sky above us and the seas and oceans around us and that we live on a very thin and dynamic skin at the interface between all three.

Geography is fundamentally about where we are and where everything is, how it got there, stays there or moves or changes over time and what processes drive these distributions and what features occur because of these processes.

Geography helps us to understand this world around us, our place in it, how we affect nature and in turn nature affects us, how we need to understand the past, manage the present better and plan for the future.

Through the many modules offered by the Geography Department we will explore together many different geographies of the Earth and our role in it and eventually we will no longer be lost.

Along this journey we will learn many skills in field work, in laboratory work, in computer work, in critical thinking and analysis, in problem solving, in academic writing and others all of which will give us the tools to make the world a better and more sustainable place for all.

Whether you have studied geography before or are approaching it as a new area of study, we hope that during your time here you will become as enthusiastic about the geographies of the world as we are.

Please read this booklet carefully and ensure that you are aware of any regulations or policies relevant to you. Check your student email, the departmental website and CANVAS daily so that you are kept up to date with any changes during the year.

**We wish you a stimulating and enjoyable year as a student
in the Geography Department!**

What is Geography?

“Geography is the study of earth as the home of people”. Yi-Fu Tuan

Geographers examine the cultures, societies, physical landscapes and environments of the Earth using a unique combination of the humanities, social and natural sciences.

We view the Earth and its inhabitants through the processes that form and transform the world we live in using a spatial perspective. This particularly geographical way of looking at the world allows for an inter-disciplinary exploration of processes as they operate in a specific place. As a student of geography, you will learn to view the world using this geographical lens.

You will also learn the skills of producing geographical information through data collection and analysis. Methods such as questionnaire surveys, field observation, interviews, field measurement and satellite remote sensing allow us to develop a geographical understanding of the world. These methods are taught from First Year and practiced in field-work in a variety of urban and rural locations.

Field work is central to geographical education, so every Major and Joint honours student completes a week of field-work during the second year of the degree. Other modules offer additional opportunities to develop your field research skills.

The ancient art of cartography has developed in the digital age to encompass much more than mapmaking. Geographic Information Systems (GIS), which you will be introduced to in Geography, allow us to manage and analyse geographical data.

Geographers examine geographical processes in a variety of thematic areas within geography including landscape, heritage, migration, culture, food, tourism, environment, economy, cities, climate, geomorphology, development etc.

As a first-year student of geography you will be introduced to the thematic areas and methods of geography and in subsequent years you will have the opportunity of developing your particular interests.



Field group studying mountain landscapes in Italy. Photo: P. Mac Éinrí

Graduate Profiles

Graduates of the Geography Department work in many careers, some directly related to Geography and some using the transferable skills learnt while studying geography. Many have gone on to study for specialist qualifications.

Graduates of this Department have gone on to careers in Urban planning, Ordnance survey, GIS, Transport management, Housing, Social research, Overseas development, Environmental management, Met Éireann, Teaching, Marketing, Civil service, Real estate, Rural development, Administration and Coastal management.



Fearghal Ó Nualláin

(BA Geography and Economics) Fearghal further developed his interests by taking the MSc in Environment and Development and trained as a secondary school teacher. Having spent several years in the classroom, he is now an explorer film maker, curious about the potential for adventure to make the classroom come alive. He's currently exploring the Indus river and making an adventure film that teachers can use to bring water issues alive.



Catherine J Neill

(BA Geography and Sociology)

After her degree, Catherine went on to do the MPlan and worked as an Urban Planner at the City of Vancouver, Canada. In that role, she was involved in the management, creation and design of public spaces in the downtown area. Recently Catherine moved to America and currently lives in Boston where she works as a Senior Planner at the City of Boston. She attended the Harvard Kennedy School (of Government), completed a Masters in Public Administration (MPA) and founded an organization to connect housing planners across the US and Canada to transformative ideas. She tells us that the skills she learned in geography, particularly her cartographic skills, have been invaluable in her current job.

Careers using Geography

Geographers work in a wide range of areas in the private and public sectors. The skills learned while studying for a geography degree can be used to develop careers in a variety of fields.

A BA in Geography provides you with several options as you take the next step after graduation. You may decide on one of the following:

- to follow a career path directly related to the knowledge and skills you learned while studying geography (GIS, tourism etc.).
- to follow a career path using several of the transferable skills that you learned while studying geography (administration, marketing etc.).
- to continue to postgraduate study in order to obtain a specialist qualification (urban planning, teaching etc.)

Academic References:

You are likely to need academic references when you apply for a job or further degree. Lecturers in the Department can provide an academic reference, given reasonable notice. Always ask their permission before you use their name on an application form. Choose someone who knows you, for example a field trip leader or dissertation supervisor. When you request a reference, send the lecturer your CV along with information relating to the position(s) or course(s) you are applying for.

Transferable skills:

All Geography students are taught to think critically and creatively. You will also learn many practical skills that can be used in geographical work and transferred to a wide range of other career areas.

Depending on modules you take, you learn and practice skills such as:

Oral presentation

Producing information posters

Archival work

Report writing

Teamwork

Research design

Field research

Data analysis

IT skills

Problem solving

As you draft your CV for applications for further study and for jobs, consider making an inventory of the skills you have learned and incorporating them into your CV.

First Year

Year Coordinators

Dr. Ray O'Connor (ray.oconnor@ucc.ie) (Semester 1 & Semester 2)

Dr. Michelle McKeown (mmckeown@ucc.ie) (Semester 1 only)

The First-Year Geography Introductory Lecture takes place on Tuesday 15th September 2026 at 10am in Boole 4.

First year students take a common programme in Geography. Three modules are included in this programme - GG1013, GG1014, GG1015. These are 'core' modules and are obligatory. You must pass each of these modules to progress to second year.

GG1013 module is offered in semester 2.

GG1014 module is offered in semester 1.

GG1015 module runs throughout the year; in semester 1 and semester 2.

Module descriptions

NB. Geography lecturers will be recording lectures and all recordings will be available on each module's Canvas site for 72 hours. Please note the 72-hour access limit. Power point slides and other relevant materials (readings etc) will be available on each module's Canvas site. These slides and materials will not be time restricted.

Human Geographies: Approaching Global Challenges GG1014 (Semester 1)

Module Coordinator – Dr Andrew McCartan

Tues 10:00 Boole 4, Thurs 12:00 Boole 4

This module will explore some of the most pressing social and environmental challenges facing humanity today using a geographical lens. Human geography offers a unique perspective on the world and seeks to describe and explain the uneven distribution of human activity across the surface of the earth. In this module, we will introduce you to the three central concerns of human geography: society and space, place and the cultural landscape, and human–environment interactions. Students will discover and engage some of the most insightful and relevant geographical work on themes such as global population and human migration concerns, inequalities, gender and identity, geopolitics, environmental justice, among others. The module themes explore the intersections between society and space and people and places at a variety of spatial scales and in a range of global sites.

Geographies in Action GG1015 (Semesters 1 & 2)

Module Coordinator – Dr Ray O'Connor; lectures and workshops from Geography Staff

This module is designed to develop your geographical skills and to encourage the development of a geographical 'world-view'.

In semester 1, students will be introduced to the analysis of geographical data and to geographical writing. Students will reflect on core ideas in geography, learn to apply them and engage in data interpretation and analysis.

Small-group workshops will be held in the Geography Library, located on ground floor of the Geography Department. Each student must sign up for one workshop which will take place every week. These sessions are obligatory.

The introductory lecture for GG1015 takes place in Boole 4 on Friday 18th September 2026 at 12 noon. At this lecture the procedure for signing up for workshops will be explained.

Workshop times will be allocated, using Canvas, during the second week of term (week beginning 21st September 2026). These workshops will commence on the week of **5th October 2026**. A series of online and hard-copy resources will be used during these sessions. Your workshop leader will refer you to the appropriate resources, as required.

In semester 2, GG1015 students will be introduced to Geographic Information Systems.

Planet Earth: Exploring Environmental Geography GG1013 (Semester 2)

Module Coordinator – Dr Kieran Hickey

Tues 10:00 Boole 4, Thurs 12:00 Boole 4

Understanding the environment is essential in order to address key issues facing our planet such as climate change, conservation and sea level rise. The principals of physical geography are at the heart of these issues. This module aims to introduce students to the various disciplines within geography and demonstrate their relevance to modern environmental challenges. To demonstrate its multidisciplinary nature, the module is taught in three themes: climate, biodiversity and geomorphology.

First year assignments and examinations:

GG1013

Continuous Assessment 100 Marks

- Quiz(zes) - MCQ (10 Marks)
- Assignment - 2 online practical activities (50 Marks)
- Assignment - Report (1500 words) (40 Marks)

GG1014

Continuous Assessment 100 Marks

- Quizzes - 3 x MCQs (30 Marks)
- Project - 1,500 word report (70 Marks)

GG1015

Continuous Assessment 100 Marks

- Assignment – 600-word project (25 Marks)
- Essay – 1000-word Illustrated Research Essay (35 Marks)
- Project – 1000-word Research Report (group and individual components) (35 Marks)
- Attendance & Participation - Workshop participation (5 Marks)

Progression to Second Year

To pass First Year and progress to Second Year, candidates must achieve an average of at least 40% across their four subjects combined **and** achieve at least 40% in each of three subjects **and** achieve a mark of at least 30% in the remaining subject. This is known as a pass 'by compensation'. Important: A subject passed by compensation cannot be taken in 2nd or 3rd year. However, students can opt to repeat this subject at the Autumn Supplemental Examination - for a higher mark. To progress into Second Year Geography all three geography First Year modules must be passed (i.e. you must achieve a minimum mark of 40% in each module).

Pathways to a Geography Degree

Geography is a broad discipline where you can build a degree pathway that reflects your particular interests.

As you plan your degree, you could think about postgraduate and career options and select your modules accordingly. First Year Geography consists of foundational modules. The pathways below outline complementary module combinations in 2nd and 3rd year.

Second Year

These are suggested module combinations. Students can speak with staff about alternative paths. Remember that you still need to comply with the 2nd and 3rd year requirements outlined in this handbook:

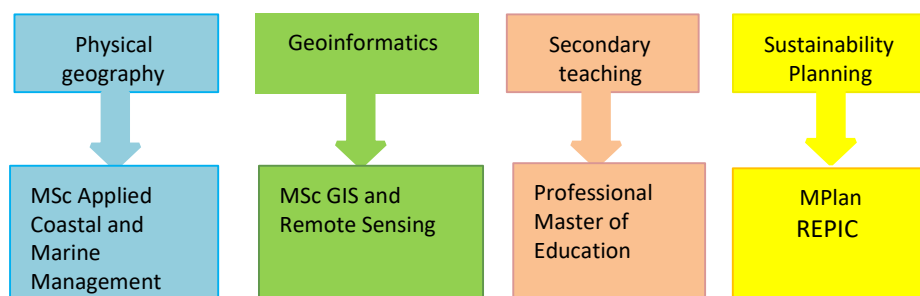
	Human Geography	Physical Geography	Geoinformatics	Secondary Teaching	Sustainability	Planning
GG2005 Ice Age Quaternary Environments and Geomorphology		✓		✓		
GG2010 Cities of Diversity	✓			✓	✓	✓
GG2014 Geography of Tourism	✓			✓	✓	
GG2023 Rural Geography	✓			✓	✓	✓
GG2024 Social Geographies of Sustainable Development	✓			✓	✓	✓
GG2037 Introduction to Geoinformatics	✓	✓	✓			✓
GG2040 Global Environmental Change		✓		✓	✓	
GG2046 Atmosphere, Weather and Climate		✓		✓		
GG2048 Political Geography	✓			✓		
GG2060 Cultural Geographies & Geo - Composition	✓			✓		

Third Year

These are suggested module combinations. Students can speak with staff about alternative paths. Remember that you still need to comply with the 3rd year requirements outlined in this handbook:

	Human Geography	Physical Geography	Geoinformatics	Secondary Teaching	Sustainability	Planning
GG3006 Research Methods and Dissertation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
GG3007 Marine and Coastal Geosciences		✓		✓	✓	✓
GG3009 Nature-Based Solutions for Sustainable Development		✓		✓	✓	
GG3010 Global urbanism: sustainable cities and communities	✓				✓	✓
GG3012 Advanced Geographical Information Systems	✓	✓	✓			✓
GG3027 Regional and Local Planning Issues and Policies	✓				✓	✓
GG3037 Geography of Heritage	✓			✓		✓
GG3041 Environmental Remote Sensing		✓	✓			
GG3046 Geopolitics and Geostrategies	✓			✓	✓	
GG3049 Historical Geographies of Ireland	✓			✓		
GG3051 Landscape Palaeoecology and Palynology		✓		✓		
GG3056 Climate Change and Historical Climatology		✓		✓		
GG3060 Geoimaginaries of the Sciences and the Arts	✓			✓		

Continuing pathways to UCC postgraduate qualifications



Our students have gone on to a wide range of other Postgraduate programme in UCC and elsewhere in Ireland and around the world. If you are interested in postgraduate study then speak with the staff member whose teaching and research interests most closely match your own and ask them for advice and recommendations. See page 28 of this handbook.

Many of our students have gone on to the Professional Masters in Education, but it is essential that the Teaching Council requirements are met. At the time of writing these are defined (at teachingcouncil.ie) as:

“The study of Geography during the degree must show that the holder has acquired sufficient knowledge, skills and understanding to teach the Geography syllabus to the highest level in post-primary education (see www.curriculumonline.ie).

To meet this requirement the degree must include the study of all of the following:

- (a) minimum of 15 ECTS credits (or equivalent) in Physical/Environmental Geography*
- (b) minimum of 15 ECTS credits (or equivalent) in Human Geography”*

<https://www.teachingcouncil.ie/assets/uploads/2026/01/05.01.26-Curricular-Subject-Requirements.pdf> Geography details can be found on p.22

It is recommended that students who are interested in teaching monitor the Teaching Council website to ensure that they are up-to-date with the requirements going into the third year of their degree. While the above credits are defined as a minimum over the course of the three years, most students will achieve more than 15 credits of Physical/Environmental or Human Geography and this provides added certainty in case of Teaching Council changes.

Second Year

Year Co-ordinators

Dr. Jesse Peterson: jpeterson@ucc.ie (Semester 1 only)

Dr Andrew McCartan: amccartan@ucc.ie (Semester 1 & Semester 2)

Carry forward

33.33% of the total 2nd year Geography mark is carried forward to 3rd year. The final Geography degree mark consists of 33.33% of 2nd year mark and 66.66% of 3rd year mark.

For example:

- a student with 58 in 2nd year and 75 in 3rd year could receive a final mark of 69
- a student with 75 in 2nd year and 58 in 3rd year could receive a final mark of 63
- a student with 65 in 2nd year and 75 in 3rd year could receive a final mark of 71

Degree: Major Honours, Joint Honours, and Minor Honours

Geography Major Honours 40 credits (8 modules)

- **Core Requirement: GG2022 Field Work & GG2038 Geographical Research Methods**
- *Additionally*, students must complete **30 credits** of electives, including **at least 5 credits in physical geography and 5 credits in human geography**.

Geography Joint Honours 30 credits (6 modules)

- **Core Requirement: GG2022 Field Work & GG2038 Geographical Research Methods**
- *Additionally*, students must complete **20 credits** of electives, including **at least 5 credits in physical geography and 5 credits in human geography**.

Geography Minor Honours 20 credits (4 modules)

- **Core Requirement: GG2038 Geographical Research Methods**
- *Additionally*, students must complete **15 credits** of electives, including **at least 5 credits in physical geography and 5 credits in human geography**.

2nd Year Elective Modules

- Physical Geography: GG2005, GG2037, GG2040, GG2046
- Human Geography: GG2010, GG2014, GG2023, GG2024, GG2048, GG2060

NB.

- Students must register for the correct number of modules according to their Degree.
- Students must take their Core Requirements and at least one module in each of Physical and Human Geography.
- It is recommended that students split their credits as evenly as possible across the two semesters, with no more than 35 credits per semester between the two subjects studied.

Second Year Module Descriptions, Semester 1

Note: † = physical geography module; * = human geography module

Core Module (semester 1)

GG2038 – Geographical Research Methods

This **core** module provides an introduction to the wide variety of research methods and techniques for the collection and analysis of geographical data. Techniques of primary data collection of relevance to geography and earth science are considered, and secondary sources of data examined. Maps and case studies are an integral part of the module, and underpin research design and data collection strategies

Continuous Assessment 100%

- 2 x practical assignments, approx. 1000 words, (30 marks each)
- 1 x practical assignment, approx. 1200 words, (40 marks)

Module Electives (semester 1)

GG2005 – Ice Age Quaternary Environments and Geomorphology†

The study of the geomorphology and associated sedimentary processes of key environmental system(s), for example, glacial-cold regions, fluvial, and marine. Quaternary environmental changes of, for example, glacial/inter-glacial cycles, linked climate changes, plant and animal history, human impacts on the environment and key analytical techniques in Quaternary studies and geomorphology will be treated.

Continuous Assessment 100%

- Laboratory Report - Practical Assignment (30 Marks)
- Case Study - 1,200 word case study (50 Marks)
- Quiz(es) - 1 x Multiple Choice Questions (20 Marks)

GG2014 – Geography of Tourism*

This module will examine the rapidly changing geographical relationships and environmental impacts of the tourist industry. Particular attention will be focused on the geography of sustainable tourism development in Ireland and more generally in Europe. Special emphasis will also be placed on the heritage industry in Ireland.

Continuous Assessment 100%

- Essay - 3000 word Research Assignment (100 Marks)

GG2024 – Social Geographies of Sustainable Development*

Social Geographers have developed an engaging and critical platform to conceptualise, describe and analyse the spatial conditions of social life. The Geographer's interest with the 'social' is mainly concerned with the study of its powerful effects on the organisation of society and space. Geographers are also keen to understand how issues of politics and power shape the material conditions of cities and impact the life-chances of individuals living and working in neighbourhoods, regions and networks. In this module, questions about how to theorize and investigate the spatial organization of difference and the

reproduction of inequality are thematically distributed through an investigation of recent urban transformations and consideration of how issues such as gender, aging, well-being and sexuality intersect with changes and challenges in The City. Reflecting on global developments, the module will show that at times the intersection between society and space can have devastating consequences, in terms of the ways space can be used to exclude and oppress individuals and social groups or the ways space can be acted upon by social forces such as racism, poverty and prejudice.

Continuous Assessment 100%

- Project - Research Project Report 2000 words (60 Marks)
- Discussion Board(s) - In Class Primary Research Activities 1000 words (40 Marks)

GG2040 – Global Environmental Change†

Global Environmental Change focuses on the natural world and our relationship with it. This module offers an in-depth exploration of topics in environmental geography, focusing on the biological, chemical, and physical processes that sustain life on Earth, human impacts on these processes, and strategies for mitigating environmental damage. Students will engage with concepts of sustainability, conservation, and environmental policy through lectures, readings and in-class discussions. Topics addressed in the module include biodiversity loss, water, air and soil pollution, climate change, land modifications, environmental technologies, environmental policies and management decisions. By fostering critical thinking and problem-solving skills, this module aims to prepare students to become capable professionals who can contribute positively to environmental conservation, policy development, and sustainable management practices in various sectors.

Continuous Assessment 100%

- Assignment Report - 2,500 words (65 marks)
- Assignment Infographic (20 marks)
- Portfolio Scrap book and Report (15 marks)

GG2046 – Atmosphere, Weather and Climate†

The module consist of three components; the atmosphere, the weather and the climates of the Earth.

Continuous Assessment 100%

- Assignment - 1 X 2,500 word report (60 Marks)
- Essay - 1 X 1,500 word essay (40 Marks)

GG2060 – Cultural Geographies & Geo-Composition*

In the context of frameworks found in Cultural Geography, this course introduces students to forms of "geo-composition" as it relates to the production of geographic inquiry, thought, and practice - such as fiction, poetry, essays, maps, photography, and/or other art forms. To do so, students will read a variety of works drawn from geohumanities, cultural and creative geographies, psychogeography, geopoetics, nature writing, essay, science writing/journalism, and/or other relevant topics or areas

Continuous Assessment 100%

- Attendance & Participation, including oral and written (20 marks)
- Portfolio – A collection of geo-compositions and reflective statement (80 marks)

Second Year Module Descriptions, Semester 2

Note: † = physical geography module; * = human geography module

Core Module (semester 2)

GG2022 – Field Work (Core Module)

In lectures students will be introduced to the cultural, economic, historical and physical background of the areas they are to study. Students will then spend five days based in a location either in Ireland or abroad during which time they will carry out assignments that require the use of geographical field research methods, attend visits/lectures on local issues and discuss issues related to research in the area at course seminars.

Continuous Assessment 100%

- Portfolio - Developed from a series of field exercises, research assignments, seminar presentations (100 Marks)

Module Electives (semester 2)

GG2010 – Cities of Diversity*

This module examines the social, cultural and economic processes that have shaped and transformed cities over the last several decades. It considers the impacts of these transformations on the people living in urban areas and whether they enhance or hinder the opportunities of different social groups in the city, and what this might mean for our global efforts to meet the UN SDG, especially goals 5 (gender equality), 10 (reducing inequalities) and 11 (sustainable cities and communities). Through the use of case studies, the module explores notions of difference, encounter and inequality in the city. Students actively participate in geographical enquiry through independent research on difference and diversity in the city. This module utilises active and action-orientated pedagogies to work with students to build their own knowledge of the city and urban experiences and to develop a range of graduate attributes to enable students to be confident researchers, effective communicators of geographic knowledge and socially responsible global citizens who understand the complex nature of social life and inequalities in cities across the globe.

Continuous Assessment 100%

- Research Project (100 marks)

GG2023 – Rural Geography*

This module explores ideas of 'rural' and 'rurality', how these ideas are constructed, and evaluates different definitions of these terms. It identifies both historical and ongoing processes that shape (and cause conflict) in rural spaces. As part of the European Union, Ireland is subject to a wide range of EU policies that influence agricultural, environmental, economic, and social sustainability. These policies and their impacts will be discussed in conjunction with issues and processes that underpin rural decline.

Continuous Assessment 100%

- Assignment - 1,200 word Photographic assignment (40 Marks)
- Assignment - 1,600 word Research assignment (60 Marks)

GG2037 – Introduction to Geoinformatics†

To give students an introduction to the key concepts, principles and theory of GIS, Remote Sensing, global satellite navigation systems, and related geoinformatics technologies, their use in Geographical, Earth and Environmental sciences, and practical techniques of spatial data analysis

Continuous Assessment 100%

- Assignment - 4 practical exercises 20 marks each, 1 x MCQ 20 marks (100 Marks)

GG2048 – Political Geography*

This module seeks to explore how core geographical concepts (space, place and territory) shape politics, power and policy - in the real world. Students will be introduced to the core concepts and theories used by geographers in these studies of power. Current and innovative ideas will be used to show how world events are created at many different scales - from the local to the global. Key themes and actors will be concisely presented and students will study the spatialities of power exertion, at all levels. The module is global in intent but a range of regional case studies will be presented. Common regional case studies will include themes in the geopolitics of Middle East-North Africa (MENA), Russia and EurAsia, China and the Pacific region, United States-Europe and the North Atlantic axis. A variety of concerns, approaches and theories will be introduced. Key themes will include, territory and territoriality, the place of the state, electoral geography, citizenship and identity, the nation and nationalism, geopolitics and geo-spatial intelligence, resources and resource-stress, global risk and, sustainability in the international political economy.

Continuous Assessment 100%

- Assignment - 2,500 word practical assignment (100 Marks)

** = human geography module*

† = physical geography module

NB.

- All modules comprise 5 credits
- Geography lecturers are asked to record lectures and make them available on each module's Canvas site for 72 hours. Please note the 72-hour access limit. Power point slides and other relevant materials (readings etc) will be available on each module's Canvas site. These materials will not be time restricted.

Third Year

In the final year of the BA in Geography you have the opportunity to focus on your particular interests in the discipline, as a wide range of thematic modules is offered.



Street art in Malmö, Sweden. Photo: Denis Linehan

The core module, **GG3001 Geographical Ideas**, is required for all Major and Joint Honours students. It provides students with a clear insight and understanding into the major organising ideas, key individuals and formative contexts in the development of Geography as a discipline.

Year Co-ordinators

Dr. Denis Linehan: d.linehan@ucc.ie (Semester 1 & Semester 2)

Dr. Maedhbh Nic Lochlainn: mniclochlainn@ucc.ie (Semester 2 only)

Carry forward (2026-27 academic year onwards)

33.33% of the total 2nd year Geography mark is carried forward to 3rd year. The final Geography degree mark consists of 33.33% of 2nd year mark and 66.66% of 3rd year mark.

Geography Major Honours 40 credits (8 modules)

GG3001 Geographical Ideas plus 35 credits from the list of 3rd year modules

Geography Joint Honours 30 credits (6 modules)

GG3001 Geographical Ideas plus 25 credits from the list of 3rd year modules

Geography Minor Honours 20 credits (4 modules)

Any FOUR GG modules (excluding GG3001 and GG3006)

Notes: Only students who have attained at least 55% overall in Second Year Geography may select GG3006.

See [Academic Programme Catalogue](#) for list of 3rd year modules.

Students must register for the correct number of modules according to their degree. In Third year BA Geography there are no physical/human geography module requirements. If you plan a career as a second level teacher, please check the requirements of the Teaching Council and select modules accordingly (see p. 10 of this handbook).

It is recommended that students split their credits as evenly as possible across the two semesters, with no more than 35 credits per semester between the two subjects studied.

Module Descriptions Semester 1

NB. Geography lecturers will be recording lectures and all recordings will be available on each module's Canvas site for 72 hours. Please note the 72-hour access limit. Power point slides and other relevant materials (readings etc) will be available on each module's Canvas site. These slides and materials will not be time restricted.

Note - # = physical geography module; * = human geography module

GG3009 Nature Based Solutions for Sustainable Development #

Students will gain foundational knowledge in environmental geography and learn about the critical role of natural ecosystem functioning and environmental integrity. Gaining a comprehensive grasp of these principles is essential for the practical application of Nature-Based Solutions (NbS). The module further guides students through the processes of designing, implementing, and managing NbS projects that not only enhance ecosystem services and biodiversity but also address issues such as climate change, water management, urban development, and disaster risk reduction. Focusing on the utilisation of natural resources, the module aims to address global challenges such as climate action (SDG 13), clean water and sanitation (SDG 6), sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11), and life on land (SDG 15), among others

Continuous Assessment: Total Marks 100.

Case Study - Report 2500 words (60 Marks), Groupwork - Video Documentary (15 marks), Portfolio - Infographic (15 marks), Quiz(zes) - MCQ (10 marks).

Note: Students who have completed GG2040 in 2024/2025 are not permitted to register for GG3009 in 2025/2026 onwards.

GG3010 Sustainable cities and communities *

The study of cities has never been more important than it is today with the greater part of social and economic life across the globe is now shaped by urbanisation. This module will explore some of the major urban conditions and challenges in the world today. In doing so, a range of themes and topics are explored which include: uneven urban development; cities and sustainability; urban infrastructures; human insecurity and war; and new types of inequalities. This module is both an empirical and theoretical exploration of the contemporary city, and case studies will be drawn from cities internationally including Cork, Sydney, London and Shanghai. **Continuous Assessment:** Total Marks 100.

Project - Research Project (Podcasts) (100 Marks)

GG3037 Geography of Heritage *

This module examines the meaning of heritage in contemporary societies. It will specifically deal with issues of conservation and representation. Important heritage landscapes continue to be threatened by modern development. By focusing on specific case studies, it will examine the value placed on heritage in society. The politics of heritage will also be explored. Questions of identity, nationalism, and multiculturalism are central then to any discussion of the geography of heritage.

Continuous Assessment: Total 100 Marks

Essay - 2,500 words (100 Marks)

GG3041 Environmental Remote Sensing #

Through analysis of examples taken from across the world the application of air and space borne remote sensing in studying environmental change will be investigated. Topics covered include changes in the biosphere, cryosphere, hydrosphere, atmosphere, and urban areas. The role of remote sensing in contemporary natural disasters and in policy formation will also be addressed, and ethical issues examined. **Continuous Assessment:** Total 100 Marks

- Essay - 2,500 word illustrated report (60 Marks)
- Learning Log(s) - 1,500 word review (40 Marks)

GG3060 Geoimaginaries of the Sciences and the Arts *

To assist students to develop an **interdisciplinary approach** to the multiple challenges presented by **environmental change** and how it's imagined, including environmental degradation, biodiversity loss, and other contemporary environmental topics.

Continuous Assessment 100 Marks

- Attendance & Participation - Attendance and participation (15 Marks)
- Project - Experimental geographic project (65 Marks)
- Groupwork - Assignments/project assigned to a group, including group evaluations, etc. (20 Marks)

Module Descriptions Semester 2

NB. Geography lecturers will be recording lectures and all recordings will be available on each module's Canvas site for 72 hours. Please note the 72-hour access limit. Power point slides and other relevant materials (readings etc) will be available on each module's Canvas site. These slides and materials will not be time restricted.

GG3001 Geographical Ideas (Core module)

This module is required for all Major and Joint Honours students. It presents geography as a critical and reflective discipline and enables students to appreciate the plural, dynamic and contested nature of the discipline. It aims to communicate to students how reflection on the theoretical approaches that underpin geographical ideas offers opportunities to develop their own arguments and research as geographers. **Continuous Assessment:** Total Marks 100.

Assignment – Journal (50 marks) Case Study (50 marks)

GG3007 Marine and Coastal Geosciences #

The study of geomorphological and other physical Earth surface process controls influencing the development of coastal and marine environments, from local to global scales. Themes covered include wave studies, coastal sediments and beach development, coastal erosion, seabed mapping and sea-level changes, coastal management and planning.

Continuous Assessment: Total 100 Marks

- Laboratory Report - 1 x Practical write up (20 Marks)
- Quiz(zes) - 1 x Multiple Choice Questions (20 Marks)
- Case Study - 1 x Marine/Coastal data and Geomorphology case study (60 Marks)

GG3012 Advanced GIS #

This module will provide students with advanced studies in computer-based techniques and systems for geographical information management and spatial analysis. The module will explore the conceptual and practical aspects of spatial problem solving within a GIS environment. Integrated lectures and practical exercises expose students to real-world applications of GIS modelling, geo-statistical analysis, and geo-visualisation.

Continuous Assessment: Total 100 Marks

- Assignment - Geospatial skills portfolio (80 Marks)
- Groupwork - StoryMap (20 Marks)

GG3027 Regional and Local Planning Issues and Policies *

Regional and local planning issues, dialogues and strategies, the public administrative and policy context of planning within Ireland and the wider global setting.

Continuous Assessment: Total 100 Marks

Essay/Field Report - 4,000 words + illustrations (100 Marks)

GG3046 Geopolitics and Geostrategies *

We live in an era of intense political and economic interconnection. Many parts of the world are extremely interdependent. These interdependencies can be a source of great strength but they can also cause conflict, and power is yielded in many different ways, geographically. In GG3046, you will explore the workings of this interdependent world, at different scales and come to an understanding of the spatial consequences of power, at the level of the world. You will be introduced to patterns and processes in geopolitics and to the actors that operate in geopolitical space. You will be asked to engage with different geopolitical visions and assess the traction of different ideologies in different parts of the world. **Continuous Assessment:** Total 100 Marks

- Attendance & Participation In-class geopolitical visualisation exercises and in-semester participative learning exercises (30 Marks)
- Essay - Reflective position paper (800 words) (30 Marks)
- Portfolio - Guided reading journal (1600 words) - guided exploration of core concepts and theories in geopolitics (40 Marks)

GG3049 Historical Geographies of Ireland: Social, Economic and Cultural Transformations *

This module will focus on social movements, and cultural and economic transformations. Themes addressed include: place, patronage, politics in seventeenth and eighteenth century Ireland; the impact of landlordism and landscape transformation; the distribution of secular and religious institutions; the origins and expansion of banking in Ireland; the impact of railways and canals; the Great Irish Famine; the Catholic Church; the co-operative movement; representations of emigration; ideas of commemoration (including monuments, place names and street names); the impact of EU membership; the Celtic Tiger.

Continuous Assessment: Total 100 Marks

- Assignment - Research Assignment (3000 words) (70 Marks)
- Assignment - Illustrated Research Proposal (20 Marks)
- Attendance & Participation - Participation (10 Marks)

GG3051 Landscape Paleoecology and Palynology #

The lectures will introduce students to the theory and method of palynology, with subsequent practical classes allowing students to develop 'hands on' laboratory skills, including microscopic identification of pollen grains, data presentation, interpretation and analyses. Case studies illustrate the application of palynological data in understanding the extent and timing of long term patterns of climate change and the role of human communities in modifying and disturbing environmental systems.

60% Written Exam and 40% Assignments.

GG3056 Climate Change and Historical Climatology #

The module consists of two broad components: the causes of climate change and the history of climate change on Earth, and the contribution of historical climatology to this understanding. **Continuous Assessment:** Total 100 Marks

Assignment - 1 x 2,500 word report (60 Marks)

Assignment - 1 x practical (40 Marks)

Dissertation GG3006 (10 credits)

An undergraduate dissertation is an extended in-depth piece of research on a Geographical topic. Research projects usually involve field work and an opportunity to work one-on-one with a faculty member of Geography. It is a great opportunity to learn how to carry out a research project and to put into action the research methods, theoretical approaches and knowledge that you have gained throughout your degree.

Students who opt to undertake a dissertation are required to have achieved at least 55% in Second Year Geography. To calculate your second year mark look at the value out of 600 (joint students) or 800 (major students) on your second year transcript and convert that to a percentage.

The module GG3006 Research Methods and Dissertation consists of a final piece of work approximately 8,000 words in length (80%), a written literature review (10%) and an oral presentation (10%).

Workshops:

Dissertation workshops have been timetabled for Mondays at 1-2pm. These sessions are aimed to provide a formalised setting for you to develop specific research methodologies with a departmental expert in the subject.

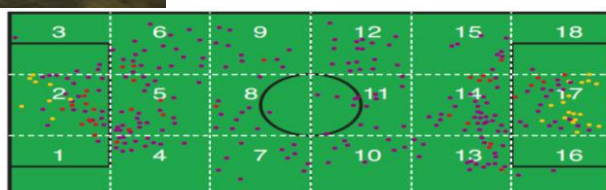
Supervisors: You will be assigned a faculty supervisor, who you will meet through the year to develop your research. These meetings will either be undertaken virtually through MS Teams or through appointment in person. This will be determined on a per-case basis.

Key Dates:

- Monday 14th September 2026 1-2 pm
Introduction to dissertation workshop (no workshop in the first week!)
- Friday 18th September 2026:
Last day to change modules online on MyStudentAdmin
- Friday 25th September 2026:
Written proposal due with agreed date and time for meeting supervisor on front page
- Week September 28th – October 2nd 2026:
Meet to discuss proposal with your supervisor.
- The Literature Review and/or Research Methodology for your dissertation is to be submitted in two stages. The first draft, which is not assessed, is to be submitted to your supervisor by 4pm Friday 30th October 2026. The second which will be assessed is to be submitted by 4pm Friday 27th November 2026.
- Presentation sessions scheduled for Monday January 18th and 25th 2027 have been organised.
- The submission date for the dissertation is 1p.m. Monday 12th April March 2027.

Previous Dissertation Titles

- Assessing the rights to the city that the metal subculture has in Cork City
- Priority Research Questions for Irish Peatlands: Scientific vs Public Perspective
- Junior ocean citizens: Exploring children's connections with blue spaces in Cork harbour villages
- The Historical Knowledge and Lore Embedded in Farm Field Names in Ireland from the Pre- Famine Era to Post CAP Administration
- The effects of urbanisation on the overall health of the Curraheen river
- The Experience of Growing Up In Suburban Ballyphehane As A Young Woman: Exploring Relationships With Public Space
- How Online Queer Space and Physical Queer Space Impacts One Another in Cork City
- Case Study to Evaluate of plans to Implement Public Transport in Wicklow Town.
- Navigating Life on Campus: A Study on the Diverse Experiences of Students with Intellectual Disabilities in the Social Spaces of a University Campus
- Creative Placemaking and the Role of Place-Based Arts Spaces in Cork, Ireland
- Satellite Observation of Wheat Production in Ukraine 2019-2024
- Rocky Shore Ecological Report: An Investigation into the Presence of Invasive Species along the Coast of Crosshaven, Co Cork
- An Exploration of Social Attitudes Towards the Legality of Street Art and Graffiti in Cork City
- Spatialities of Protest in Ireland: Climate Justice Caravan Ireland, Extinction Rebellion, Cloughjordan Ecovillage, and Interstitiality
- An analysis of the development of tourism in Northern Ireland with case studies related to dark tourism (black cab tours) and film tourism (game of thrones)
- Evaluating the impact of social media on participation rates in adolescent females in sport
- A Cultural Geography of Cork's English Market: A view from the inside out
- Ecology Preservation, Roadkill, and People's Perceptions
- Is Ireland Still Attractive for Heritage and Cultural Tourism?
- Revitalizing Ireland: Involvement in the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant
- To what extent does environmental awareness translate into the sustainable shopping habits of UCC students?



Grade Descriptors

WRITING ESSENTIALS

The required task is completed according to guidelines (e.g. title is explicitly addressed, all elements required are present).

The required task is referenced using Harvard system and in-text citation in Harvard system is used.

Captions and figure numbers are used.

Layout includes introduction, body and conclusion.

Correct grammar and sentence structure used.

Essay has been proofread for typographical errors.

As a guideline to the expectations from Geography staff for different

Upper first (80+)

A well-structured, well-supported and coherent argument/approach that is novel and **insightful**

Takes a leap into **original ideas** relevant to task.

First (70-79)

Coherent argument(s) throughout

Situates topic in a wider context Excellent analysis/interpretation of reading, information and/or figures.

Synthesises good level of knowledge and understanding in conclusion. Demonstrates excellent understanding of concepts.

2h1 (60-69)

Well-structured and well-supported argument(s)

Ideas are developed rather than simply stated

Combines **Interpretation/analysis** of information/data with concepts and theory

Demonstrates clear understanding of concepts and information presented.

Writes in a measured and formal style

2h2 (50-59)

Logical organisation of material

Analysis and/or interpretation of information/data

Writing Essentials in place

Recognises and uses reliable sources

Pass/3h (40-49)

Relevant information provided

Some knowledge and understanding.

Writing Essentials addressed

Limited interpretation/analysis of information/data

Fail (30-39)

Writing Essentials not addressed

Significant misunderstanding of key concepts

Disorganised content

Some plagiarism

Low Fail (< 30%)

Significant plagiarism

Very short work

No relevance to title

Little to no understanding of key concepts

Very disorganised content

Note that individual modules may have additional criteria.

Academic Integrity

Students are required to familiarise themselves with the University's [Academic Integrity for Continuous Assessments Policy](#) and with the supports for best practise in academic work which are available from the [Skills Centre](#) and the [Library](#). Work that you submit for assessment must be written entirely by you and all of the sources that you quote or use to research your assignment must be referenced appropriately.

Referencing

Your particular attention is drawn to the need for meticulous referencing in all submitted essays, dissertation etc. Details of how to reference sources can be found on the [UCC Library website](#).

In keeping with the University's policy, all presented and/or submitted material should acknowledge the influence of all sources quoted directly and/or paraphrased at the appropriate point through the work. At a minimum a clear indication as to when any material is being quoted directly (e.g. quotation marks) must be provided in addition to a citation of the source. Note that copying of maps, diagrams or other graphic elements, without due attribution of source, will also constitute evidence of plagiarism and thus be subject to sanctions.

Generative AI

In keeping with the University's policy, academic integrity is breached if students submit the products of generative AI as their own work without acknowledgement and without authorisation to use generative AI in fulfilling the task. Students should note that the use of generative AI can vary across disciplines and from module to module, as modules may have different learning outcomes that are evaluated through different forms of assessment. The use of generative AI is inappropriate in cases where doing so bypasses key learning and is detrimental to the development of foundational skills like critically engaging with material or developing your own argument. You should not use generative AI to prepare an assignment unless a) your module co-ordinator has authorised this, and b) you have acknowledged when and how you have used generative AI.

Remember that the marks you gain for a piece of work are for your contribution. Assessment is an opportunity to demonstrate that you have achieved the learning outcomes of the module or programme, and assessments are designed to help you focus on the key knowledge and skills that you need to develop and feel confident that you can practice. A piece of work consisting of large chunks of material quoted from another source or the generic and potentially inaccurate phrasing of generative AI leaves very little room for your ideas.

Academic misconduct

Students are advised to avoid any attempts to bypass or shortcut their learning by engaging in any form of academic misconduct (e.g. copying, submitting materials produced by generative AI). If a student feels unable to complete an assessment, they should discuss this with their lecturer and engage with the supports for best practise in academic work which are available from the [Skills Centre](#) and the [Library](#). Students should note that a section of work is considered to be plagiarised if it does not adhere to the standards above.

Penalties for academic misconduct

More information on how instances of academic misconduct are investigated can be found within the [UCC Academic Integrity Policy](#). Except in extreme circumstances, incidences of academic misconduct or poor academic practice will be addressed directly by the appropriate lecturer/tutor, and if a student accepts responsibility for the academic misconduct, the possible outcomes are described below.

	Level 1: Poor Academic Practice	Level 2: Minor Academic Misconduct	Level 3: Major Academic Misconduct	Referral to Deputy President and Registrar
Possible Penalties	Marked appropriately for academic content without punitive reduction in marks	Marked for academic content with an appropriate additional reduction in marks. The sanction will not exceed assigning a mark of zero in the piece of work to which the matter relates. Note: Where reasonably practicable, students will be able to re-submit the corrected piece of work, capped at pass mark.	One of the following: - Marked for academic content with an appropriate additional reduction in marks - Mark of zero for work - Refer to Deputy President and Registrar	One or more of the following: - Marked for academic content with an appropriate additional reduction in marks - Mark of zero for work - Mark of zero for entire module - Refer to Student Discipline Committee – a range of penalties are outlined in the <i>Student Rules</i> - Refer to Student Fitness to Practise – a range of penalties are outlined in the <i>Fitness to Practice Policy</i> and the <i>Fitness to Continue Study Policy</i>
Education and Support	- Refer Student to advice and support - Student to complete the <i>Academic Integrity Fundamentals Course</i> in the first instance or - Student to meet with Academic Integrity Education Officer in the Skills Centre or nominee	- Refer Student to advice and support - Student to complete the <i>Academic Integrity Fundamentals Course</i> in the first instance or - Student to meet with Academic Integrity Education Officer in the Skills Centre or nominee	- Refer Student to advice and support - Student to complete the <i>Academic Integrity Fundamentals Course</i> in the first instance or - Student to meet with Academic Integrity Education Officer in the Skills Centre or nominee	- Refer Student to advice and support - Student to complete the <i>Academic Integrity Fundamentals Course</i> in the first instance or - Student to meet with Academic Integrity Education Officer in the Skills Centre or nominee
Recording	Record on the <i>Academic Misconduct Register</i>	Record on the <i>Academic Misconduct Register</i>	Record on the <i>Academic Misconduct Register</i>	Record on the <i>Academic Misconduct Register</i>

General Information

Semester dates 2026/27

See [UCC website](#)

Communication

The Department communicates with you through your UCC email and through Canvas. It is your responsibility to keep an eye on both for important information.

All communications to staff must be signed. Staff will not respond to anonymous emails.

Degree and module grade classes

70%+	1 st class
60-69%	2 nd class grade 1 (2h1)
50-59%	2 nd class grade 2 (2h2)
45-49%	3 rd class
40-44%	Pass
30-39%	Compensating fail
Under 30%	Fail

Timetable

Students must ensure that they select modules that do not clash either within Geography or with their other subject. The timetable cannot be changed.

It is recommended that students split their credits as evenly as possible across the two semesters, with no more than 35 credits per semester between the two subjects studied.

Assignment submission All Assignments, unless otherwise informed, are to be submitted ONLY through Turnitin on Canvas with a cover sheet attached.

Late submission penalty Where work is submitted up to and including 7 days late, 5% of the total marks available shall be deducted from the mark achieved. Where work is submitted up to and including 14 days late, 10% of the total marks available shall be deducted from the mark achieved. Work submitted 15 days late or more shall be assigned a mark of zero.

Students are strongly advised to contact the relevant staff members and/or year co-ordinators if work is going to be submitted late.

Attendance

Students are required to attend, physically or virtually, lectures, tutorials, workshops, practicals and field trips of all modules for which they are registered.

Lectures normally begin at 5 minutes past the hour and students should have taken their places by then. If late arrival is unavoidable, enter quietly and take the first available seat.

Lectures end at 10 minutes to the hour. Mobile phones must be switched off during classes.

General Information

Individual modules

Content, prerequisites, requirements, assessment, repeat procedures etc. for individual modules are contained in the UCC Book of Modules. [UCC Book of Modules](#)

Programme requirements

Required modules, optional modules, credit requirements etc. for CK101 and other programmes can be found in the UCC Academic Programme Catalogue.

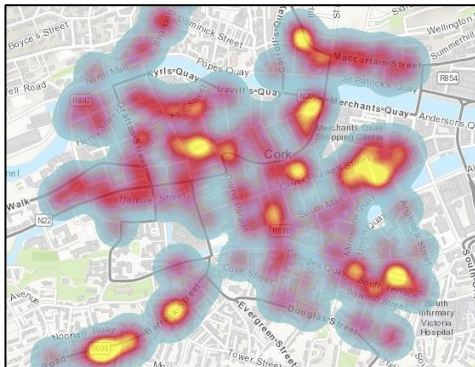
[Academic Programme Catalogue](#)

Passing/failing/compensating

Regulations governing pass/fail, repeat, compensation etc. for a given year of the BA programme can be found in UCC Marks and Standards. [UCC Marks and Standards](#)

Repeating the year

Note that attendance is important as module content may change from one year to the next. Regulations governing repeat years can be found in [UCC Marks and Standards](#)



First year students identified and mapped vacant properties in Cork city. Yellow areas have more vacant properties.

Further Study

After graduation, many students continue their study of geography by taking a postgraduate degree. This allows you to deepen your understanding in an area of particular interest and involves undertaking a piece of independent research.

The Department of Geography offers 1-year taught master's degrees. Read notices in the Department and on the Departmental Website to see which degrees are currently being offered.

Next academic year, we are offering programmes in:

MSc in Applied Coastal & Marine Management

MSc in Geoinformatics

Postgraduate Diploma in GIS

The Department also contributes to the **MPlan** (2 year degree), the professional qualification for a career in planning.

The Department offers research degrees which are open to students with at least an upper second class BA degree: the **MRes (1 year)** and **PhD (3-4 years)**. If you are interested in a research degree, for further details and requirements, speak to lecturers in your area of programme – contact details can be found on the Department Website. Geography Postgraduate web-pages.

Redesigning the Post-Industrial City (RePIC).

Redesigning the Post-Industrial City (RePIC) is a two-year, English-taught Master's programme jointly designed and delivered by the UNIC alliance – where the ambition is to build a vibrant knowledge and innovation community committed to the rethinking of more sustainable urban futures. RePIC fosters transformative modes of teaching, research, and learning - responding to the specific challenges and characteristics of post-industrial cities and their increasingly super-diverse populations.

<https://www.ucc.ie/en/repic/>

Departmental Facilities

Further information about access to these facilities will be made available by relevant staff during the semester.

Computer Labs

The **O'Connell Computer Room** at the end of the second floor corridor, immediately opposite the lift, is used as an open access computer lab for 2nd to 4th year undergraduate students, when not in use for teaching.

The **Fahy Computer Lab** halfway down the second floor corridor is used by taught postgraduate students taking modules in the Department, and when needed for large class undergraduate teaching.

If you have a class in a computer lab, please make sure you know which lab you need to be in.

Computers have GIS, remote sensing and statistics software. Logon is the same username and password as used across campus/your UCC account.

The **Postgraduate Teaching Lab** is used by students taking master's degrees in the department.

Physical Geography lab ("phys lab") is used for physical geography practical teaching.

Wi-Fi

Access to Wi-Fi (Eduroam) is available in the Geography Building using your UCC login.

Environmental lab

Equipped with diatom and water quality analysis resources and a fume cupboard, the environmental lab is used by students doing research projects.

Instruments

The department has a range of instruments for meteorological measurement, surveying and soil analysis available for student research projects. Details of equipment and procedures for their use can be found online at <https://sites.google.com/site/physicalgeogucc/>

Maps and cartography

The department has a paper and digital archive of historical and current OS maps. Computer cartography is taught to all students and mapping software is available on departmental computers.

Geography Library

The library is used as a teaching space and houses the department's collection of undergraduate dissertations.

Academic Staff



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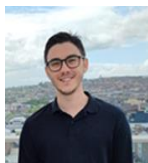
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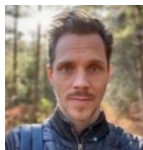


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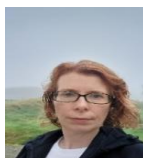
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Administrative office hours

Mon –Fri
10:00 – 11:00
11:30-12:45
14:45-16:00



Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information/material contained in this booklet, the Department assumes no responsibility for and give no guarantees, concerning the accuracy, completeness or up to date nature of the information provided. Please ensure that you read emails from the department and announcements on [Canvas](#) for updates.