# Programme Specification

**Postgraduate**

Applicable to postgraduate programmes

Please click [here](#) for guidance on completing this specification template.

## Part A: Programme Summary Information

1. **Title of programme:** Irish Studies

2. **Programme Code:**

3. **Entry Award(s):**
   
   - [ ] MA
   - [ ] MSc
   - [ ] PGDip
   - [ ] PGCert
   - [ ] PG Award
   - [ ] DPS
   - [ ] CPS
   - [x] Other (please specify below): 180 7

   **MRes**

4. **Exit Awards:**
   
   - [ ] PGDip
   - [ ] PGCert 60 7
   - [ ] PG Award 30 7
   - [ ] CPS

   Exit awards will automatically bear the name of the entry award. If an exit award is to be unnamed (i.e. it will show only the qualification achieved) or if it is to have a different name from the entry qualification you must indicate this below:

5. **Date of first intake:** September 2015
6. **Frequency of intake:** Annually in September

7. **Duration and mode of study:**
   - 1 year full time
   - 2 years part time

8. **Applicable framework:** PG Modular provision

   **Framework exemption required:**
   - X No (please go to section 9)
   - ☐ Yes (please provide a brief summary below)

9. **Applicable Ordinance:** 52(A)

   **New/revised Ordinance required:**
   - X No (please go to section 10)
   - ☐ Yes (please provide a brief summary below)

10. **Faculty:** HSS

11. **Level 2 School/Institute:** HLC

12. **Level 1 unit:** n/a

13. **Campus:** Liverpool

14. **Other contributors from UoL:** n/a

15. **Teaching other than at UoL:** n/a

16. **Director of Studies:**
   - *Ex officio* HLC PGR Academic Lead (Dr Michael Hopkins from February 2015)

17. **Board of Studies:** HLC AQSC

18. **Board of Examiners:** HLC

19. **External Examiner(s):**
   - Name: Dr Eamonn Hughes
   - Institution: Assistant Director, Institute of Irish Studies and Senior Lecturer, School of English. Queen’s University Belfast
Part B: Programme Aims & Objectives

26. Aims of the Programme

MRes Irish Studies provides students with the opportunity to develop and complete a substantial research project in preparation for a future career in the academic or other research environment.

No.   Aim:

1. To provide students with the opportunity to develop an original research project with guidance from a specialist academic supervisor (or supervisors).

2. To provide students with research and methods training appropriate to their area of research, skills which can be transferred to future research work either within or outside the academic environment.

3. To facilitate students’ participation in HLC research community and encourage their contribution to wider academic debate.

4. To allow students to demonstrate their ability to act autonomously in planning and implement tasks at a high level.
### 27. Learning Outcomes

#### No. Learning outcomes – Master’s degree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Learning outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>To acquire and demonstrate a systematic knowledge of subject- or disciplinary-specific theories, and their application in research and/or scholarly contexts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>To demonstrate high-level skills in academic writing and the critical evaluation of sources through the presentation of research in an essay and other written work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>To conceive and plan and autonomously conduct a research project in the chosen field of study, taking into account existing scholarly work in the field and the feasibility of the project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>With the guidance of one or more academic supervisors to present a piece of academic research, usually in the form of a dissertation, that demonstrates the ability to evaluate critically the current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline and to communicate original research coherently in writing through the development of an appropriate academic voice.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Learning Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Learning outcomes – Postgraduate Diploma</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Learning Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Learning outcomes – Postgraduate Certificate</th>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Mapping of subject-based learning outcomes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning outcome No.</th>
<th>Module(s) in which this will be delivered</th>
<th>Mode of assessing achievement of learning outcome</th>
<th>PSRB/subject benchmark statement (if applicable)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>IRIS507 Research Methods</td>
<td>Coursework portfolio, including two essays (totalling 4,000 words) and a research proposal (4,000 words)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>IRIS507 Research Methods</td>
<td>Coursework portfolio, including two essays (totalling 4,000 words) and a research proposal (4,000 words)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HLAC503(S1)/HLAC504(S2) Research project development by directed study</td>
<td>Two pieces of coursework providing input into the dissertation, typically: feasibility study; literature review, draft chapter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HLAC501 Dissertation</td>
<td>Dissertation (25,000-30,000 words)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>HLAC503(S1)/HLAC504(S2) Research project development by directed study</td>
<td>Two pieces of coursework providing input into the dissertation, typically: feasibility study; literature review, draft chapter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>HLAC501 Dissertation</td>
<td>Dissertation (25,000-30,000 words)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Skills and Other Attributes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Skills and attributes:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Conception and planning of an original research project involving the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Identification of scholarly resources and other research materials through the use of academic libraries, electronic databases and other appropriate facilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Critical evaluation of primary and secondary sources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Advanced academic writing skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Advanced oral communication skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Autonomous working, demonstrating the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Mapping of skills and other attributes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Module(s) in which this will be delivered and assessed</th>
<th>Learning skills, research skills, employability skills</th>
<th>Mode of assessing achievement of the skill or other attribute</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>HLAC501; HLAC503/504</td>
<td>Learning/research/ employability</td>
<td>Assessment: coursework; dissertation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>IRIS507; HLAC501, HLAC503/504</td>
<td>Learning/research/ employability</td>
<td>Assessment; in particular in HLAC503 (research proposal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>All modules</td>
<td>Learning/research/employability</td>
<td>Assessment; in particular in HLAC501 (dissertation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>All modules; in particular HLAC501</td>
<td>Learning/research/employability</td>
<td>Written assessments; in particular through production of 20,000 word dissertation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>HLAC501; IRIS507</td>
<td>Learning/research/employability</td>
<td>HLAC501 allows students to present their research at the annual HLC PGR conference. IRIS507 includes an assessed presentation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>All modules</td>
<td>Employability/research</td>
<td>All modules, in particular HLAC 501 (dissertation)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Career opportunities:

MRes Irish Studies students typically continue to doctoral research or gain employment in research or policy-based environments.

### Part C: Entrance Requirements

#### 30. Academic Requirements:

First class/high 2:1 degree.

#### 31. Work experience:

n/a

#### 32. Other requirements:

Acceptance onto the programme is subject to the availability of appropriate academic supervision. Agreed supervisory arrangements should be in place at the start of the programme; these are likely to be the result of an interview or discussion between prospective supervisor(s) and/or the programme director and the applicant.
### Programme Structure:

**MRes Full-time**

**Semester 1:**
1. IRIS507 Research Methods (30cr)  
2. HLAC503 Research project development by directed study (30cr)

**Semester 2/summer:**
3. HLAC501 MRes Dissertation (120cr)

**MRes Part time**

**Year 1**

**Semester 1:**
1. IRIS507 Research Methods (30cr)

**Semester 2:**
2. HLAC504 Research project development by directed study (30cr)

**Summer**
3. HLAC501 MRes Dissertation (120cr)

**Year 2**

Completion HLAC501 (12 months)

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**PG Cert (60 credits)**
1. IRIS507 Research Methods (30cr)  
2. HLAC503 (Sem.1) Research project development by directed study (30cr)  
or  
   HLAC504 (Sem.2) Research project development by directed study (30cr)

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**PG Award (30cr)**
1. IRIS507 Research Methods
34. Industrial placement/work placement/year abroad:

n/a

35. Liaison between the Level 2 Schools/Institutes involved:

n/a

Part E: Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategies

36. Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategies:

The structure of the MRes Irish Studies allows those students with a clear PGR trajectory to focus on the acquisition of high-level research skills through development of their independent research project. The syllabus provides for a high degree of student-centred and focused supervision and encourages the integration of the student with the university’s PGR and wider communities. Assessment aims to develop the student as a researcher within a specific disciplinary area: IRIS507 introduces the broad range of theoretical and methodological approaches. In addition, as this module is available to other PGT programmes, it may also provide the opportunity for MRes Irish Studies students to work alongside a larger cohort of PGT students. HLAC503/4 allows the student to define the most appropriate approach for his/her own research project, the culmination of the process.

36a. Learning, Teaching and Assessment methods:

Learning and Teaching Methods:
One-to-one tutorials with supervisor(s)
Independent study
Seminars
Skills development

Assessment Methods:
The core assessment method is written essay or report writing
Coursework essay(s)
Presentation/poster presentation
Skills development exercises (e.g. bibliographies, reports)
Dissertation

37. Assessment information for students:

Code of Practice on Assessment

The University has a Code of Practice on Assessment which brings together the main institutional policies and rules on assessment. The Code is an authoritative statement of the philosophy and principles underlying all assessment activities and of the University's expectations in relation to how academic subjects design, implement and review assessment strategies for all taught programmes of study.

The Code of Practice includes a number of Appendices which provide more detail on the regulations and rules that govern assessment activity; these
include:

The University marks scale, marking descriptors and qualification descriptors;
The framework for modular, postgraduate programmes;
Information about students’ progress, including guidance for students;
The procedure for assessment appeals;
Regulations for the conduct of exams;
The University’s policy on making adjustments to exam arrangements for disabled students;
The code of practice relating to external examining (see also below);
The Academic Integrity Policy, which covers matters such as plagiarism and collusion and includes guidance for students;
The policy relating to mitigating circumstances which explains what you should do if you have mitigating circumstances that have affected assessment; and
The policy on providing students with feedback on assessment.

Please click here to access the Code of Practice on Assessment and its appendices; this link will also give you access to assessment information that is specific to your cohort:

A summary of key assessment information is also available in the ‘Your University’ handbook.

**General marking criteria.**
These criteria will be applied within specific disciplinary conventions, and in subject areas may have additional discipline-specific criteria.

**85–100% High Distinction**
Marks above 84% will be given to work that demonstrates the strengths listed for marks above 70%, but which also shows significant original thinking that goes beyond that in the existing literature and is backed up by appropriate reasoning. Marks above 90% will be given to work that is of a quality suitable for refereed publication.

**70–84%: Distinction**
Work suggests definite potential for pursuing research at doctoral level, and shows evidence of most, if not (in the higher range of marks) all, of the following features:
- very high degree of reflexivity and critical insight
- excellent use and grasp of relevant concepts, issues and debate
- very extensive knowledge of relevant sources, texts and other materials, and of their contexts
- very clear aims and objectives
- sophisticated handling of appropriate theoretical concepts and/or discipline-specific research methods
- sensitivity to the complexity of the issues and material discussed
- highly developed sense of argument, sense of style and expression
- excellent use and understanding of references and bibliography

**Dissertations**
The dissertation will have a very clear research agenda, carried through systematically to a research result. It will show real substance and accuracy in the presentation of data, and/or survey of argument, theory and methodology. It will demonstrate that the candidate has read widely and achieved a thoroughly autonomous grasp on the subject. Conclusions will be well argued and justified. Unavoidable defects or incomplete conclusions will be recognised by the candidate and explained satisfactorily. The work displays complete command of the conventions of scholarly presentation. The very best work will demonstrate a clear understanding of the current limits of knowledge, and ways to address and expand those
limits, and as such may be of publishable quality.

**60–69%: Merit**

Work suggests at least some possibility of pursuing research at doctoral level and shows evidence of most, if not (in the higher range of marks) all, of the following features:

- high degree of reflexivity and critical insight
- good use of relevant concepts, issues and debates
- extensive knowledge of relevant sources, texts and other materials, and of their contexts
- clear aims and objectives
- developed sense of argument, style and expression
- good use and understanding of references and bibliography

**Dissertations**

The dissertation will have a clear research agenda, and the work will be substantial in content, but there will be a degree of unevenness in its execution; either gaps in the evidence base, or the analysis. Arguments will be sound, of a reasonable depth, relevant and well presented in an appropriate context, but although the candidate will display some independence of control over the subject matter, flair or originality may to be limited, or the argument not fully carried through. The work displays a good command of the conventions of scholarly presentation.

**50–59%: Pass**

Work that shows evidence of:

- competent use and grasp of relevant concepts, issues and debates
- adequate knowledge of relevant sources, texts and other materials, and of their contexts
- aims and objectives sufficiently articulated

but is characterized by one or more of the following:

- lack of detailed reference to the material in question
- limited understanding of theoretical issues
- lack of critical analysis
- argument not always well structured or relevant
- limited sense of reflexivity and critical insight
- limited sense of argument, style and expression
- insufficient use and understanding of references and bibliography

**Dissertations**

The work will display evidence of some reading, but the methodology and criticism are likely to be under-developed, and there will be little independence of understanding. It is likely that the research agenda is poorly formed, or that the database is very limited, or that the discussion fails to demonstrate a clear relationship between evidence and argument, or that a strong narrative lacks matching analysis. The work displays an adequate command of the conventions of scholarly presentation.

**40–49%: Fail (may be compensatable)**

Work is characterized by a combination of the following:

- insufficient use and grasp of relevant concepts, issues and debates
- poor knowledge of relevant sources, texts and other materials, and of their contexts
- aims and objectives poorly articulated
- very little sense of reflexivity and critical insight

**Marks below 39% FAIL**

Unsatisfactory: demonstrates no preparation for undertaking research.
Work is characterized by

Ø inadequate knowledge and understanding of the subject area (whether primary data and scholarly literature)
Ø inability to develop or sustain arguments
Ø defective or non-existent quantitative data collection (where relevant), presentation, and analysis
Ø significant errors and omissions, lack of structure, poor presentation and lack of focus
Ø (where relevant) little or no sign of response to feedback.
Ø (in the case of translations and other language work) discontinuity in translations, and failure to display a grasp either of the language or meaning.

Dissertations
The work will contain evidence of only limited reading and is unlikely to demonstrate any depth of knowledge. Arguments and discussion will derivative and lacking in analytical or critical strength. A clear research agenda will be lacking, or very limited, and its execution will be unsystematic. The work displays a weak sense of what is relevant or important and a poor command of the conventions of scholarly presentation.

38. Student representation and feedback:

MRes students can be represented either on the HLC PGT Staff-Student Liaison Committee or the HLC PGR Committee. The HLC student handbook provides generic information about representation and feedback. See https://www.liv.ac.uk/intranet/media/livacuk/histories-languages-and-cultures/documents/hlc-student-handbook-201415.pdf and, in particular, Sections 6 (School learning teaching and assessment) and 11 (representation).

All students are encouraged to provide informal feedback, in person or by email, either directly with the teaching staff concerned, or via their allocated Academic Advisers. For MRes students, the Academic Adviser role is taken by the supervisor from the start of the programme.

For the subject-specific modules, feedback is formally solicited via routine module questionnaires, the summary results from which are reviewed by the relevant SSLC, and posted on VITAL.

Part F: Status of Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body Accreditation

39. Status of Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body Accreditation:

n/a

Part G: Diversity & Equality of Opportunity and Widening Participation

40. Diversity & Equality of Opportunity and Widening Participation:

The programme design, structure and content are consistent and consistent and compliant with the University’s Diversity and Equality of Opportunity Policy.
ANNEX 1

Annex Of Modifications Made To The Programme

Please complete the table below to record modifications made to the programme.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of modification (please include details of any student consultation undertaken or confirm that students’ consent was obtained where this was required)</th>
<th>Minor or major modifications</th>
<th>Date approved by FAQSC</th>
<th>Date approved by AQSC (if applicable)</th>
<th>Cohort affected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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