

GY101 - BA (Joint-Honours) Subject Information

Students of GY101, Bachelor of Arts (Joint-Honours), study 3 subjects in First year, from a selection of 21 subjects. Each subject belongs to one of 7 groups, and you cannot select more than one subject from a group.

Find out more...

Click on the bookmarks on the left, or the list below, for information on each subject that BA (Joint-Honours) students can choose to study. The descriptions tell you what the subject is, a little about the course content and career options available to graduates.

In NUI Galway we refer to the department that teaches a subject as a 'Discipline'. There is a link to the Discipline website for each subject on the top right of each subject description page.

Group 1

Archaeology
French
Mathematics

Group 2

Law
Psychology
Celtic Civilisation

Group 3

Classics
Geography
German
Léann na Cumarsáide
Irish Studies

Group 4

English
Economics

Group 5

Sociological and Political Studies
Information Technology
Léann an Aistriúchán

Group 6

History
Spanish

Group 7

Gaeilge
Italian
Philosophy

[Back to Index page](#)

[Visit the Archaeology website](#)

Archaeology

Archaeology is the study of peoples of the past through the analysis and interpretation of surviving material remains; their artifacts, architecture and cultural landscapes. We also study the supporting evidence of historical documents, oral histories and community knowledge in addition to the scientific ecofacts and biofacts evidence.

Archaeology at NUI Galway is distinguished by its student-focused approach to teaching and mentoring in the classroom, the laboratory and in the field. We will introduce you to the wide scope of our discipline throughout your BA degree, looking at the prehistory and historical archaeology of Ireland and Atlantic Europe and our human origins from the earliest Stone Age to the present day. The unique archaeological landscapes of the west of Ireland are actively explored in our teaching.

A BA degree in Archaeology provides an avenue to many different career paths above and beyond working as a professional archaeologist. Many of our former students also work in related areas such as heritage, tourism, museums and education.

[Back to Index page](#)

[Visit the Celtic Civilisation website](#)

Celtic Civilisation

Celtic Civilisation is the study of the legacy of the Celts in the world, from our first historical encounters with the Celts in the sixth century BC, through their encounters with the ancient Greeks and Romans, to the formation of the peoples and the nations of Ireland, Northern and Western Britain and France in the early Middle Ages, and to aspects of the Celts in early-modern and modern western Europe.

The degree in Celtic Civilisation takes an interdisciplinary approach to the study of the Celtic-speaking world, by examining the history, archaeology, languages, literatures, mythologies and cultures of the Celts through the centuries.

Graduates of our programme in Celtic Civilisation acquire essential research, analytical and communication skills that avail them in many diverse paths of employment. In particular, our graduates may go on to enjoy careers in the areas of heritage, tourism or education.

[Back to Index page](#)

[Visit the Classics website](#)

Classics

Classics is about origins: the rise of civilization, the growth of literature, and the historical processes that have moulded our world. We orient ourselves first from ancient Greece and Rome and then broaden the scope, moving back into prehistory and forwards towards the rise of Christian Europe and the Middle Ages, emphasising Irish origins and creativity throughout.

Our modules follow three strands of study: literature and thought, art and archaeology, languages and texts, assuming no prior knowledge of the subject and presenting a multi-disciplinary view of Antiquity and its legacy. Presentations skills and independent research skills are a key component. In the higher years you have the option to begin learning ancient languages, such as Latin and Greek.

Graduates often make careers in the cultural and heritage sectors, including museum work and publishing. Others pursue postgraduate study, starting usually with our MA in Classics or MA in Medieval Studies, and make new contributions to the growth of human knowledge.

Economics

Economics is the study of the choices that we as citizens, workers and consumers make in markets, and how those choices connect with wider social purposes.

It's an exciting and challenging area of study, and has never been more relevant for so many people. Studying economics in the BA provides a rigorous foundation in the analytical tools which underpin economic policy analysis. Economics in the BA is focused on the core of micro- and macro-economic analysis and extends to cover particular applied areas, such as the economics of health, public policy, economic history, environmental economics, and the economics of financial markets.

Economics graduates are in high demand for their analytical skills and their capacity to interpret real-world data carefully, in private companies, especially in the financial sector, in government departments and agencies, civil society interest and lobby groups, in the media, and in research and consultancy roles.

English

The Discipline of English is staffed by dedicated, research-active academics drawn from universities across the world. Research and teaching strengths run from the medieval to the contemporary: Chaucerian studies, early modern literatures, book history and print culture, theatre history, colonial and postcolonial literatures, Victorian literature, Irish writing, digital humanities, creative writing, travel writing, and journalism.

Studying English involves asking fascinating questions about literature and its many relationships to culture, history and society. Students of English benefit from a diversity of teaching approaches and modes of assessment, from lectures to discussion-based seminars, from research essays to blogs. Such study fosters a creative and enquiring mind, and develops invaluable analytic and communicative skills.

Employers value the reading, writing and critical thinking skills that are cultivated over the course of a degree in English.

An English degree from NUI Galway opens the door to further postgraduate study--vocational, professional and research; we are currently ranked as in the top 150 English Departments worldwide.

French

French is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world, both as a first language in Europe and North America, and as a second language globally.

Students of French acquire a high level of written and speaking skills so that they can communicate accurately and effectively. Cultural production in the French language is particularly rich, and students broaden their knowledge and understanding by exploring French and Francophone societies. Students of French also typically spend a year abroad on the Erasmus exchange programme, either as a full-time student or employed as a language assistant, significantly enhancing both linguistic abilities and intercultural skills.

Bloomberg Business Week has rated French as the third most useful language for business, behind only English and Chinese. Our students acquire a high level of communication skills, finding employment both in Ireland and abroad in a wide range of fields, including education, administration, media, marketing, translation and interpreting.

Note: Students wishing to take French in First Arts will be expected to have attained a minimum of Grade C1 in Honours French in the Leaving Certificate.

Gaeilge

Ó 1909 i leith, tá léann na Gaeilge á shaothrú ag Roinn na Gaeilge. Tá éagsúlacht idirdhisciplíneach ag baint le réimsí taighde agus teagaisc na Roinne, an litríocht, an tsochtheangeolaíocht, an béaloideas, agus staidéar ar na meáin ina measc.

Is cúrsa ceithre bliana í an chéim sa Ghaeilge. Cuirtear béim ar leith ar na scileanna seo a leanas:

- Sárchumas i labhairt agus i scríobh na Gaeilge.
- Tuiscint mheabhrach chriticiúil ar phobal, ar litríocht agus ar chultúr na Gaeilge.
- Feasacht teanga agus deiseanna fostaíochta a chothú trí sheimeastar Gaeltachta agus trí shocrúchán oibre.

Oibríonn céimithe dár gcuid i réimse leathan earnálacha: na meáin chumarsáide, an mhúinteoireacht, aistriúchán, an earnáil stáit, turasóireacht agus oidhreacht.

Since 1909, the Discipline of Irish has been at the forefront of innovative teaching and research in the Irish language. The teaching and research areas of the academic staff are varied and interdisciplinary in nature, encompassing contemporary and earlier literature, sociolinguistics, folklore, media and performance studies, for example.

The degree programme in Irish is of four years' duration emphasising the following skills:

- Attainment of a high level of ability in spoken and written Irish.
- Acquisition of further knowledge of the Irish-speaking community, its literature and culture.
- Development of linguistic awareness, and future employment opportunities for students, through the provision of a Gaeltacht semester and work placement.

Graduates of our programme find employment in a wide range of career opportunities within education, the public service, broadcast and print media, translation, and the tourism and heritage sectors.

Geography

Geography is a multi-faceted, diverse and exciting field of study. It is the key bridging subject linking the humanities, the social sciences and the natural sciences. It provides an insight into each of these broad areas of human knowledge. People's impact on the Earth, as reflected in the environment, forms the central theme.

In taking Geography as a subject with GY101, not only will you acquire an understanding of the highly complex relationships between society and the environment , you will also develop a skill set (research, computing/ Geographical Information Systems (GIS), field- and lab-based instruction/'work-based training') that is applicable in many sectors of employment.

This combination of numerical and analytical skills is highly sought after by many sectors of employment. Recent graduates have excelled in lecturing, teaching, environmental consultancy, heritage work, renewable energy sector, planning, tourism, government and policy institute research, and NGO and CSO development work.

German

Studying German means to learn a language spoken by more than 100 Million people as a native language! Small language classes emphasize all relevant skills - speaking, listening, reading and writing. Modules focusing on literature, film, and art familiarise students with the cultural treasures of Austria, Germany and Switzerland. There are also modules on the history of the German speaking countries, on their societies, and on German lifestyle.

Language classes are offered at beginners and intermediate level. Teaching is supported by multimedia laboratories and the extensive use of authentic materials such as blogs and video clips. Students are encouraged to spend an Erasmus year in Germany – for example in Bamberg, Bochum, Berlin, Frankfurt, Freiburg, and Leipzig.

Knowledge of German equips students for work in the Europe of today. It enhances employment prospects both at home and abroad. Career opportunities exist in the areas of business, media, education, government services, and travel services.

History

The word history comes from the Latin 'historia', which means 'story'. Historians build stories about people in the past on the evidence of the sources that survive. Historians try to find out what life in the past was like for those who lived through it, and why and how big, world-changing events like revolutions and wars happened, and the equally important, subtler changes which occurred in people's relationships with each other - husbands and wives, parents and children, landlords and tenants, employers and workers, priests and people, and many more. Studying history at NUI, Galway introduces the political systems, societies and economies of the past and the ideas people lived by (and died for).

In asking questions of the past, students of history acquire skills that will prove valuable for life, such as textual analysis and critical thinking (how to read primary and secondary sources and how to separate fact from fiction); information management (how to find information and how to cite it); fluent oral and written expression (how to organize information into a coherent argument for presentation as a talk or as an essay.) On completing their studies, undergraduates of history at NUI, Galway will not know everything that ever happened, everywhere, in the past, but they will be equipped with the skills to understand historical change in any time or place.

History graduates have pursued careers in teaching, broadcasting and journalism, academic life, heritage management, librarianship & archives, the civil service, international relations, NGOs and the voluntary sector and many other fields.

Irish Studies

Irish Studies (Literature & Music) provides an integrated interdisciplinary programme of learning for students with a particular interest in modern and contemporary Irish culture. The literature strand of the programme includes thematic and theoretical approaches to the close reading of some of Ireland's most accomplished writers in Irish and in English from the nineteenth century to the present with Irish language material presented in translation. The music strand provides a historical and theoretical approach to Irish music practice during the same period, spanning traditional and popular genres, including an exploration of the development of Irish music studies.

The skills developed by our students include the capacity for individual initiative and independent research, critical thinking and a high degree of oral and written presentation, precisely the skills required by employers across a broad range of occupations in the modern workplace including education, journalism and communications, arts and heritage, publishing and the public service.

Information Technology

The study of IT within the BA Degree at NUI, Galway, develops the cognitive and applied skills needed for the design, application and support of computerised systems. It also covers the study of the social impacts of IT at community, national and international levels.

During first year, you are introduced to the fundamentals of IT and computing methods, and also develop immediately useful skills in computer programming and internet applications. Building on this foundation, second and third year courses expose you to more advanced topics in programming information systems and computing systems and their application (e.g. internet development, graphics, artificial intelligence, human computer interaction, and other topics).

Italian

Students study Italian from beginners level and no previous knowledge of the language is required. Italian is taught in small groups and the quality of care, individual attention, and successful teaching devoted to students ensure high academic standards, provide a rewarding learning experience, and help develop presentation, communication, time management, and team work skills necessary to succeed in today's challenging work environment.

A thorough introduction to all aspects of the language is provided in first year, along with the study of modern Italian society and culture. In second and third year, courses on advanced language skills are provided, as well as modules on contemporary Italian culture, translation techniques, medieval and modern literature, children's literature and cinema.

Italian equips student with practical and transferrable skills in the area of cross-cultural communication, teaching and translation, leading to employment as primary and secondary teachers or as professionals working for private business or government bodies in Ireland, the European Union, and internationally.

Law

The BA (Joint-Honours) in Law programme gives students the opportunity to combine the study of law with the study of other Arts subjects. In First Arts, students take Law as one of their three subjects and they take two other subjects from the Arts group of subjects. The average class size in first year is 200.

The BA in Law gives you a solid grounding in law while also providing you with a well-rounded degree with a wide variety of subjects to choose from. Furthermore, those who wish to qualify as a solicitor or barrister may proceed into the final year of the LLB programme in NUI Galway so that they can complete some additional core law subjects necessary to meet the entrance and examination requirements of the legal professional bodies.

A BA degree in Law is a recognised qualification for many other careers, including working in journalism, the civil service, administration, non-governmental organisations and private industry

Note: Limited numbers of students are admitted to Second Arts in Legal Studies (100). Places will be decided on merit, based on the results of the First Sitting (Semester 1 and Semester 2) of the First Arts examination in the student's first year of attendance, where the student must have passed all four subjects outright (40% or higher). Students who avail of exemptions on the basis of appropriate prior learning are not entitled to compete for a place.

Léann an Aistriúchán

Tá borradh faoi réimse an aistriúcháin anois le tamall agus béim mhór ar aistriúchán leabhar scoile, tuarascálacha, suímh ghréasáin, gan ach cúpla sampla a lua. Tá tábhacht dá réir le scileanna aistriúcháin agus le cáilíochtaí aistriúcháin. Is é seo an t-aon chúrsa iomlán fochéime in Éirinn i Léann an Aistriúcháin sa tír, agus tá céimithe dár gcuid ag teacht i dtír anois le blianta anois ar dheiseanna oibre anseo in Éirinn agus thar lear.

Ó thaobh Léann an Aistriúcháin de, déanann na mic léinn staidéar ar ghnéithe den teoiric agus den obair phraiticiúil a bhaineann leis an aistriúchán ó theanga amháin go teanga eile. Cuirfear oiliúint orthu i scileanna an aistriúcháin, agus beidh an bhéim ar an nGaeilge mar sprioctheanga aistriúcháin san oiliúint sin. Tugtar léargas sa chúrsa freisin do mhic léinn ar obair an aistritheora ghairmiúil: áireofar oiliúint i dteicneolaíocht cheannródaíoch anseo, agus tá an t-aistriúchán ríomhchuidithe agus an fotheidealú ar chuid den oiliúint sin.

Mar gheall ar an bhforbairt atá tagtha le tamall anuas ar an aistriúchán mar réimse léinn, gnó agus fostaíochta, tá dualgas ar aistritheoirí deimhin a dhéanamh de go mbainfidh a gcuid oibre caighdeán an-ard amach. Is tábhachtaí anois ná aon uair roimhe seo, dá bhrí sin, cáilíocht aitheanta a ghnóthú agus dea-scileanna aistriúcháin a bhaint amach. Daoine a bhfuil cáilíocht aitheanta acu i Léann an Aistriúcháin agus/nó sa Ghaeilge, tá deiseanna fostaíochta den scoth ar fáil dóibh mar gheall ar an stádas atá ag an nGaeilge anois mar theanga oifigiúil san Aontas Eorpach agus na dualgais atá ar eagraíochtaí stáit in Éirinn faoi Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla, 2003. Tabharfaidh an chéim seo seans do mhic léinn fostaíocht a bhaint amach in earnáil an aistriúcháin agus in eagraíochtaí a fheidhmíonn trí Ghaeilge nó eagraíochtaí a bhfuil dualgas orthu an Ghaeilge a úsáid.

Léann na Cumarsáide

Léann na Cumarsáide, a course in media, covers the latest thinking and research in the fast-changing world of digital media, and provides a balanced mix of academic study and practical, hands-on learning in journalism, television and radio production, broadcasting and multimedia. A key aim is to develop the critical and analytical skills needed to become a ‘reflective practitioner’ in the media. The course is taught entirely through the medium of Irish on the Galway campus.

Graduates will be skilled storytellers who will be equally at home telling stories with pictures, in soundscapes or with words. They will also have strong television presentation skills, and an ability to express themselves with confidence and persuasion.

There are many potential employers at home and abroad, including RTÉ, TG4, BBC, local radio stations, television production companies and public relations firms. A course in media is also a strong foundation for a career in politics, business, management, the non-profit sector including NGOs and charity organisations, and the public service.

Note: Léann na Cumarsáide is taught entirely through the medium of Irish and focuses on media and journalism. Students intending to take this subject are encouraged to choose Gaeilge and Léann an Aistriúcháin as their other subjects in First Year.

Mathematics

Mathematics and Mathematical Studies incorporate Mathematics, Statistics and their applications. Mathematics is the language for the logical study of the structure of our world. It has developed from counting, calculating and measuring, through the use of abstraction and analogy, by recognizing the fundamental role that comparisons play in the mental process of ‘understanding’. It is an area of great beauty based on highly evolved concepts and language. It provides a continuous link through the intellectual, cultural and technological development of the human race over the last 5,000 years.

Mathematics or Mathematical Studies?

The subject Mathematical Studies is broadly based and offers opportunities for study across a wide range of topics in Mathematics and its applications, whereas the subject Mathematics involves a particular emphasis on theoretical and abstract aspects of mathematical activity. In both you will acquire the ability to think rationally, process complex data reliably, and construct and use mathematical models.

Graduates find employment in a wide range of areas, including the financial sector, the IT and software industry, the MET service, the civil service and the teaching profession. Opportunities for further study and research in Mathematics and its applications also exist.

Note: Students must achieve 45% in Mathematics in first year to proceed to Mathematical Studies in second year. Students must achieve 60% and pass the module MA186 in Mathematics to proceed to second year Mathematics.

Philosophy

Philosophy investigates the basis of human knowledge, conduct, and values. Philosophy students learn to comprehend difficult material quickly and accurately, to analyse arguments carefully and critically, to think creatively, and to write and speak persuasively.

Studying philosophy at NUIG allows for a rigorous and disciplined investigation into fundamental questions under the guidance of internationally recognized scholars. We teach and do research in all the main philosophical subject-areas and historical periods, but with particular attention to modern and contemporary philosophy, East Asian philosophy, aesthetics and bioethics. We focus on philosophical work that investigates human experience, values and the impact of globalization and new technologies on human life.

Philosophy provides an excellent training for today's world of fast-paced change, where philosophy students can rely on having gained useful transferable skills, including abilities to carefully evaluate complex information, think flexibly and critically, and communicate clearly and convincingly.

Psychology

Psychology is the study of behaviour and mental processes, and the study of psychology includes individual and social, human and animal, normal and abnormal aspects. Psychology students acquire a wide range of valuable skills and qualities including social skills, information gathering, analysis and synthesis skills, project planning, excellent understanding of the capabilities and limitation of people (cognitive, perceptual, physical, emotional, social, development, and personality), numerical and communication skills.

You might consider studying for a psychology degree if interested in becoming a professional psychologist in applied areas such as clinical psychology, the health services, education or industry; lecturing in psychology in a third-level college; carrying out psychological research in a university or other research centre; or improving their general education by studying an interesting and useful discipline with careers of a more general type in mind, for example, the media, information technology or management.

[Back to Index page](#)

Visit the website of the School of Political Science and Sociology

Sociological and Political Studies

The undergraduate BA programme in Political Science and Sociology provides an introduction to basic concepts in political science and sociology, Irish society and politics, political sociology, political and social theory, social science research methods and skills, European society and politics, public policy, gender, development theories and practice.

A core theme in sociology and political science concerns how and why societies change, and what alternatives might be possible? This course encourages students to explore the links between sociological and political perspectives in relation to contemporary real world issues and problems.

Students will have the opportunity to study how the social and political landscape is formed and transformed, not only in regard to political parties, government and state, but also in terms of gender, race, class and religion in Ireland and elsewhere. The impact of social movements and ideologies in the context of key challenges in the 21st century are also considered,. Students critically and practically engage with debates about the personal, political and global challenges of living in modernity and searching for the 'good society'.

A wide variety of career options are open to our graduates to include Social Work , Teaching, Child, Youth and Community Work , Human Resource Management , Public Relations , Politics , Social Researcher , Social Planning, Information Officer, Diplomat / Foreign Affairs, Trade Unions Advice Work , Counselling, Education, Welfare Officer

Trainee Management , Civil Service, Journalism , Political Science, Banking/Finance, Advocacy , Health Promotion, Probation Service, Prison Service, Occupational Therapy, Development Work , Local Government Administration, Mediation

Spanish

We offer a range of courses in Spanish, covering many areas of Hispanic language and culture, including literature and cinema. There is a strong emphasis on developing proficiency in Spanish in our language modules, while cultural courses address key issues of relevance to contemporary Spain and Latin America. The latter include courses on major Spanish and Latin American writers and topics such as cinema, Spanish linguistics and of translation.

Beginners students take our intensive Spanish course as first year undergraduates. Students with Leaving Cert Spanish take a separate strand. Most of our undergraduate students take the BA International, a programme that entails studying abroad in either Spain, Chile or Mexico.

There are many career opportunities with Spanish, even beyond the obvious ones relating to teaching or translation. Graduates with competence in Spanish are in demand by potential employers for all kinds of positions, especially those that have an international or global dimension; for example, in business and international trade and in non-governmental organisations.