



ARCHAEOLOGY AT NUI GALWAY- Subject Introductory Information

Introduction

Welcome to Archaeology!

Why Archaeology?

Studying how human beings have adapted to every conceivable environment and cultural circumstance, how different peoples grappled with challenges as basic as survival and as abstract as the mysteries of the cosmos, archaeology is about understanding the social, cultural and technological forces that have shaped human civilisation across the globe from earliest times to the present day, and how this story is of relevance today.

Archaeology as Degree Subject

Archaeology has played a central role in the social sciences in universities throughout the world, providing important insights into the story of humankind and our shaping of the planet.

Our staff lead projects that are providing exciting, new information about aspects of our shared past, from megalithic tombs and ancient DNA to using digital technology to discover and communicate hidden heritages and landscapes, Gaelic lordships, Medieval castles and Famine villages. The coming together of teaching and research makes archaeology at university a unique experience: we don't just impart knowledge, we create it!

Archaeology at NUI Galway is at the forefront of Irish archaeology, producing quality graduates and postgraduates who are employed across the full spectrum of the heritage profession and forensic sciences in Ireland and abroad. Archaeology provides you with interpretative, analytical and communication skills sought after in a wide variety of professions.

No previous knowledge of Archaeology is required to take it as a subject at BA level, and there are no Leaving Cert subject requirements.

The BA in Archaeology

The three-year programme offers a mix of practical, technical and theoretical learning, with plenty of field-based and hands-on learning. On our doorstep are some of the best preserved archaeological sites and landscapes in Europe. We use them as our classroom.

The 1st Year archaeology course combines online lectures, discussion groups and on-campus tutorials. The modules provide a general introduction to the subject, covering important aspects of both Irish and European archaeology, as well as exploring the practice of archaeology, such as how to recognize, record and analyse monuments and artefacts, and assess their value to contemporary society.

We have links with five **Archaeology Field Schools**, so our students can get excavation experience during the summer months.

Archaeology in Society

Archaeology is professional field in its own right, with its own institute and regulatory and legal framework. Today there are over a thousand archaeologists working in Ireland, in private companies, universities, museums and the civil service. The BA in Archaeology is also a **gateway qualification** for careers across the heritage- and landscape-management sector.

As we strive for more sustainable use of the earth's resources and to tackle climate change and biodiversity loss, archaeology offers a unique and important perspective on our own footprint and on the human-environment interface, how humans have negotiated changing environments, culturally as well as technologically. Archaeologists also contribute to debates about identity, community, cultural exchange and migration.

Our archaeological heritage is an important economic, social, recreational and educational resource, and staff and graduates from NUIG regularly share the results of their research with communities throughout Ireland, and further afield.

Archaeology combines humanities, social and earth-sciences and is compatible with all of the subject areas on offer in the College of Arts, Social Sciences and Celtic Studies.

Structure of the Programme

Students of Archaeology take 16 modules over three years; four in 1st year and six in years two and three. Students can also do an Erasmus year abroad through archaeology (links to Glasgow University and Charles University, Prague) or their other degree subject, and graduate with a BA International.

<https://www.nuigalway.ie/colleges-and-schools/arts-social-sciences-and-celtic-studies/geography-archaeology-irish-studies/disciplines/archaeology/undergraduate/ba-joint-honours-archaeology-course-options/>

While there are practicals and field-based learning across the three years, the 2nd year of the BA is slightly more weighted in favor of field-based projects. Nearly all of our modules have a field component, visiting monuments and landscapes, as well the National Museum of Ireland.

The 1st year modules are:

Recording Monuments in the Landscape
Prehistoric Ireland and Europe
Museums and Material Culture
Medieval Ireland and Europe

For further information on these modules see: <https://www.nuigalway.ie/colleges-and-schools/arts-social-sciences-and-celtic-studies/geography-archaeology-irish-studies/disciplines/archaeology/undergraduate/ba-joint-honours-archaeology-course-options/first-year/>

Continuous assessment is the norm in Archaeology, involving project work, essays and in-class tests. Assessments are designed to demonstrate knowledge of the subject area, how the student approaches the topic(s) and makes use of published sources. Assessments will be posted online and students will submit their completed work digitally, through Blackboard. Reading materials for these all assignments are available on Blackboard.

Online Learning and Teaching

The challenge of online teaching and learning is going to demand a team effort of staff and students. We have adapted our programme by moving the field-based modules to the second-half of Semester 2 when we should have a greater certainty on Covid-19 restrictions applying to outdoor activities, and, hopefully, nice weather. In Semester 1 Archaeology will offer a combination of online lectures, prescribed reading and chat-room discussions, three extended on-campus classes as well as artefact labs (subject to Public Health Advice). These will focus on learning about how archaeologists approach their subject, how to critically read, assess, summarize and harvest information from academic literature on Archaeology.

Live Introductory Question and Answer Sessions

The first live online Introduction to Archaeology and Q & A session will take place between 11am and 12pm on Wednesday 23rd September 2020. If you miss it, don't worry there will be another live session from 12 noon on Friday 25th September 2020.

Useful Links

<https://www.nuigalway.ie/archaeology/>

<https://www.nuigalway.ie/colleges-and-schools/arts-social-sciences-and-celtic-studies/geography-archaeology-irish-studies/disciplines/archaeology/news-events-socialmedia/>

<https://www.facebook.com/Archaeology-NUI-Galway-610798632305750/>

<https://www.nuigalway.ie/covid-19/videoswebinars/#sharing>