

## MA (Taught) in Social Work (MSW)

*"While it is without a doubt a challenging and demanding course, it has given me the foundations for social work practice; both through the theory and discussion in the classroom and through the hands-on experience as a trainee practitioner over the two excellent placements. Respecting values, working within an ethical framework and practicing in a diverse cultural society are core components which are applied to my every day work in a voluntary organisation, and I have been able to specialise in areas that are of particular interest to me to improve my social work 'toolkit'".*

- Holly Sheeran | MA IN SOCIAL WORK (MSW) GRADUATE

### **COURSE OVERVIEW:** 2 Years, Taught, Full Time.

The MA in Social Work (MSW) programme is located within the School of Political Science and Sociology. It is an innovative programme and dynamic programme, one of the newest programmes in the country, committed in particular to the promotion of human rights and social justice. In high demand from its inception in 2004, the MA in Social Work programme provides accredited professional education and training in social work. It is a Postgraduate qualification (level 9) and professional training in social work.

The programme is currently accredited by the statutory regulatory agency, CORU (see <http://www.coru.ie/>), the Health and Social Care Professionals' Council.

One of the strengths of the Master of Arts in Social Work Programme (MSW) at NUI Galway is the small size of class membership (20 maximum), which facilitates supportive relationships between students and staff members. The programme is delivered as part of the provision of the School of Political Science and Sociology, also home to the UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre.

Throughout the teaching, the connection between academic learning and practice application is central. We organise and deliver joint training seminars between TUSLA and the MSW programme. We benefit from excellent partnerships with practice teachers and statutory and voluntary organizations which employ social workers across individual, family and community services. We are continually striving to develop and foster these relationships. Where possible, opportunities for international placements are also offered. The Social Work Programme is well placed to provide high quality theoretically informed research and up-to-date practice applied professional education. We have a dedicated Social Work Staff Group that works alongside School colleagues to provide students with a broad range of teaching and learning experiences and access to knowledge and expertise from local, national and international perspectives. Social Work staff are also active in research and publishing, and the course provides opportunities for students to engage with agencies around research.

We offer joint teaching and learning opportunities with other disciplines within the School (e.g. Social Policy & Community Development) and are connected to the Child and Family Research Centre (see <http://www.childandfamilyresearch.ie/>) and a range of research clusters, which are partnered with the Life Course Institute (see <http://www.nuigalway.ie/lifecourse>). This means that staff throughout the School play a key role in relation to teaching and supervising research dissertations by students. The Programme also benefits from inter-disciplinary training with colleagues in other schools (e.g. School of Health Sciences), professionals in practice and service users and carers.

The maximum annual intake of Social Work students is 20. A dedicated teaching room, with extensive computer facilities, is available to students. The programme adheres to the definition of social work provided by the International Federation of Social Workers (see <http://www.ifsw.org/>) and expects Social Work students to adhere to both professional and university codes of conduct (see <http://www.iasw.ie/> and <http://www.coru.ie/> for codes of ethics and practice).

### **Who teaches this course**

Prof. Caroline McGregor (Director of Social Work)

Ms. Marguerita McGovern (Practice Learning Co-ordinator)

Dr. Paul Michael Garrett (Year One Co-ordinator)

Dr. Declan Coogan (Year Two Co-ordinator)

\*Other staff members of the School of Political Science & Sociology and the UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre staff are members of the programme board, module convenors and contributors.

### **ENTRY REQUIREMENTS**

Candidates applying for admission to the programme must have completed a Level 8 primary undergraduate degree (minimum of Second Class Honours, Grade 2) in one of the following: Bachelor Degree with a major in Social Work, Sociology, Psychology Social Policy, Social Science, Social Studies, Social Care, Public and Social Policy, Youth and Family Studies, Childhood Education, Childhood Studies, Health and Social Care, Community Development, or B.Soc.Sc or other relevant qualifications deemed equivalent by the College of Arts, Social Sciences, and Celtic Studies. These may include undergraduate/postgraduate degrees such as Law, Economics, Theology, Philosophy if such degrees have included a significant proportion of social science related subjects (transcripts will be required to assess this dimension).

Prior work experience is compulsory and candidates must have obtained six months (approx. 960 hours) of voluntary or paid work experience relevant to the social work profession in order to be eligible to apply. Relevant supervised placement learning will normally count for up to a maximum of 240 hours (6 weeks).

### **Additional Requirements**

Garda Vetting/Police Clearance is necessary and required for students participating in this programme. Students will be expected to pass all modules, including the practice component of the first year before progressing to the second year. Each module will be assessed through a variety of assessment methods including written assignments, individual and group presentations, podcasts, written examinations and minor dissertation. Students will require at least a 50% pass in each module. All Year 1 academic and fieldwork modules must be passed before progression to Level 2. No 'compensation' between modules allowed.

### **HOW TO APPLY**

**Online:** to the Central Applications Office (CAO) on the [www.cao.ie](http://www.cao.ie)

**Paper Application:** which you can download from the [www.cao.ie](http://www.cao.ie) and by sending to the following postal address:

**The Central Applications Office**  
Tower House, Eglinton Street, Galway  
353 91 509800

**PAC Code:** GYA40.

**The closing date for applications:** Feb 2017.

Short listed applicants will be called for interview in March and successful applicants will be notified in April. Places on this course cannot be deferred. It is the candidate's responsibility to demonstrate clearly in their application how they have met the required 6 months/960 hours experience and the relevant experience form in the PAC application must be completed and submitted as part of the application.

Two letters of reference one academic and one work related and a well written and convincing personal statement (300 words) must also be submitted. Advertising for applications for the MA in Social Work (MSW) usually takes place in early January.

#### **COURSE FEES**

Fees: EU

€6,015 p.a. 2015/16

**Fees: Tuition**

€5,791 p.a. 2015/16

**Fees: Student levy**

€224 p.a. 2015/16

**Fees: Non EU**

€13,250 p.a. 2015/16

Postgraduate students in receipt of a SUSI grant – please note an F4 grant is where SUSI will pay €2,000 towards your tuition. You will be liable for the remainder of the total fee. An F5 grant is where SUSI will pay TUITION up to a maximum of €6,270. SUSI **will not cover** the student levy of €224. Postgraduate fee breakdown = tuition (EU or NON EU) + student levy as outlined above

#### **Scholarship Opportunities**

NUI Galway's Postgraduate Scholarship Scheme for full-time Taught Masters. For more details, click <http://www.nuigalway.ie/courses/fees-and-funding/funding.html#tab2>

#### **CAREER OPORTUNITIES**

Graduates will be eligible to apply for registration with CORU as qualified social workers in a range of public, private and voluntary sector organisations. TUSLA, Health Service Executive, County Council, Community and Local Government and Department of Justice and Equality are examples of employers of social work in the public sector. The nongovernmental sector includes services to children and adults such as, Ability West, Enable Ireland, Brothers of Charity Services, Western Region Drugs Task Force, Jigsaw and COPE Galway. Graduates have also found employment internationally in the U.S.A., Canada, Scotland, England and Australia for example. With regard to further study, we encourage qualified social workers to consider post graduate study and or further professional training (e.g. PhD study or a recently established Higher Postgraduate Diploma in Practice Teaching, Supervision and Management).

#### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

**Academic curriculum queries:**

Prof Caroline McGregor

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**Practice placement queries:**

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**General Enquiries:**

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**FURTHER INFORMATION****LINK TO PDF BROCHURE IF AVAILABLE**

FAQ: For Frequently Asked Questions click on the following link and go to the bottom of the page:

<http://www.nuigalway.ie/colleges-and-schools/arts-social-sciences-and-celtic-studies/political-science-and-sociology/postgraduate-programmes/ma-in-social-work/>

Next Intake of Students: September 2016