



Trinity College Dublin

Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath

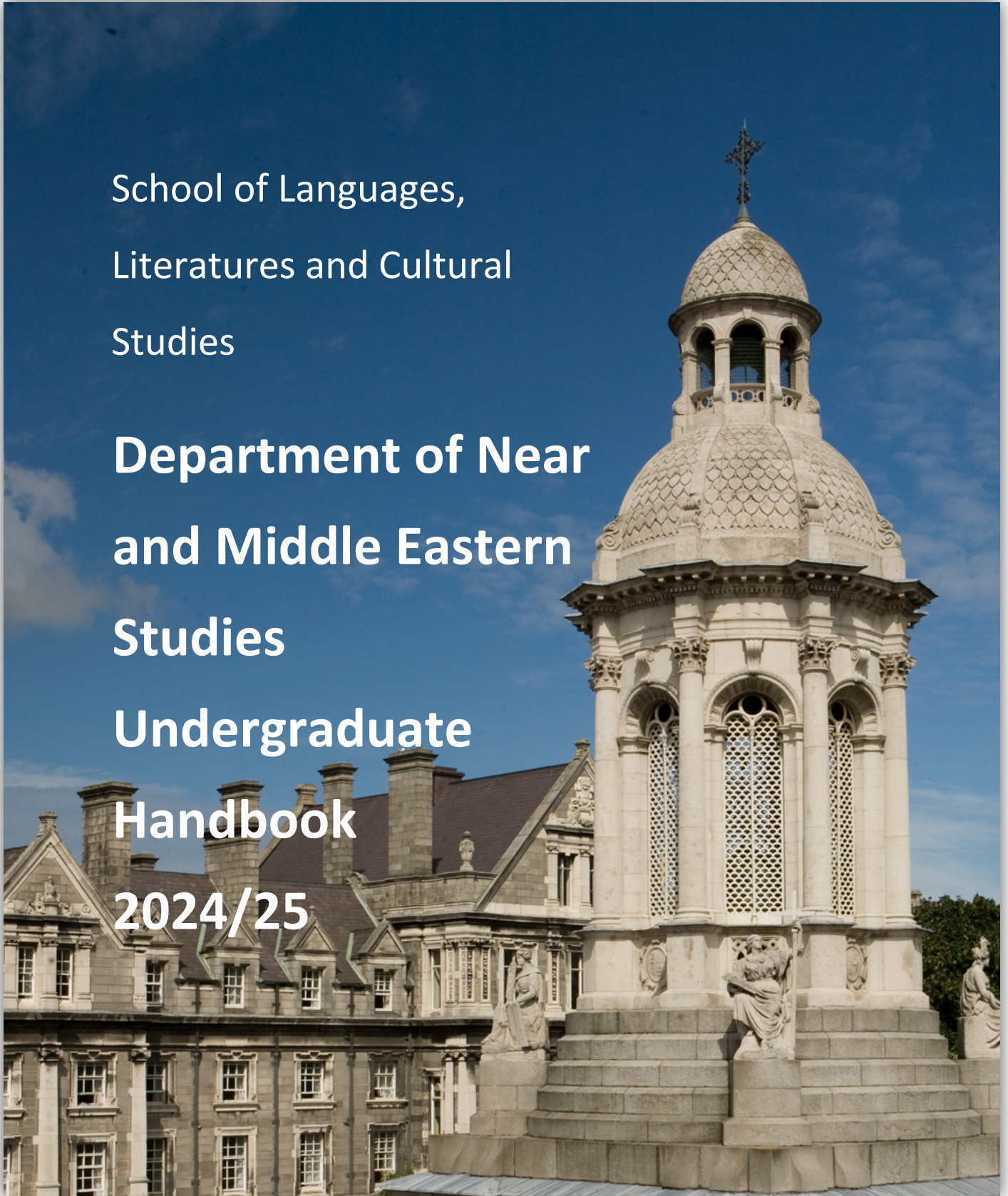
The University of Dublin

School of Languages,
Literatures and Cultural
Studies

**Department of Near
and Middle Eastern
Studies**

**Undergraduate
Handbook**

2024/25



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Alternative formats of the Handbook can be made on request.

1. GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION

1.1 Introduction

The Department of Near and Middle Eastern Studies is a dynamic and diverse hub for teaching and research focused on the societies and cultures of the Middle East, North Africa, as well as Jewish and Islamic civilizations. Our TJH undergraduate programme in Middle Eastern, Jewish, and Islamic Civilisations (MEJIC) offer foundational modules in the first year, allowing students to explore various areas of expertise. From the second year onward, students can tailor their studies by selecting a pathway that aligns with their interests. Additionally, students may choose to study a language starting in the second year, with options including Arabic, Turkish, Modern or Ancient Hebrew, Sumerian, or Middle Egyptian Hieroglyphs.

1.2 About this handbook

This Handbook serves as a comprehensive guide to the MEJIC programme. It should be read in conjunction with the School Handbook.

It is the responsibility of students to familiarize themselves with the regulations governing their programme. In addition to the information provided in this handbook, students should carefully review the details related to individual modules. It is equally important to consult the handbooks and guidelines provided by other relevant departments where you are enrolled in their modules, as these contain critical information on assessment deadlines, submission procedures, marking criteria, and other regulations.

If you are uncertain about how these regulations apply to you, please contact your lecturer, College tutor, or the School UG team for clarification. Additionally, the University Calendar, available at www.tcd.ie/calendar/, provides a comprehensive outline of all regulations.

For specific information regarding Trinity Joint Honors (TJH) and Two-Subject Moderatorship (TSM) regulations related to assessment and progression, please visit: [TJH and TSM Regulations](#).

1.3 Contacting the Dept of NMES

In the first instance, queries should normally be addressed to the School UG team (marked MEJIC in the subject line) or the module coordinator or instructor in the first instance.

The Head of the Department of NMES is Prof. Murat R. Şiviloğlu (sivilogm@tcd.ie).

Email is the primary mode of communication between the department and students. Please ensure that you use only your TCD email address when contacting the School office or any department staff.

1.4 NMES Dept staff

- **Dr. Mohamed Ahmed**
Al Maktoum Associate Professor in Middle Eastern Studies
ahmedm4@tcd.ie
- **Dr. Tylor Brand**
Assistant Professor in Modern Middle Eastern Studies
branda@tcd.ie

- **Dr. Anne Fitzpatrick**
Associate Professor in Biblical Studies and Second Temple Judaism
fitzpa@tcd.ie
- **Dr. Lesley Grant**
Elrington Teaching Fellow
grantlm@tcd.ie
- **Dr. Idriss Jebari**
Al Maktoum Assistant Professor in Middle Eastern Studies
jebarii@tcd.ie
- **Dr. Maya Petrovich**
Yunus Emre Institute Assistant Professor in Turkish Cultural History
petrovim@tcd.ie
- **Dr. Zuleika Rodgers**
Associate Professor in Jewish Studies
rodgersz@tcd.ie
- **Dr. Murat R. Şiviloğlu**
Associate Professor in Islamic and Middle Eastern Civilisations
Head of Department
sivilogm@tcd.ie
- **Dr. Martin Worthington**
Al Maktoum Associate Professor in Middle Eastern Studies (Ancient Near East)
worthinm@tcd.ie

1.5 Key Dates

For key dates in the current academic year refer to the School Handbook and/or to <https://www.tcd.ie/calendar/academic-year-structure/>.

1.6 Timetable

Your timetable will be accessible via MyTCD. In the first few weeks of Term check it regularly, since changes may occur in order to resolve clashes. All queries relating to your timetable should be sent to timetables.sllcs@tcd.ie.

Reference/Source:

My TCD

1.7 Study Abroad/Erasmus

MEJIC students can apply to study abroad for a Term in third year. Places are awarded on a competitive basis. An information session for Second Years will be held by the MEJIC coordinator for Study abroad, who in 2024-2025 is Professor Petrovich, in Week 7 (starting October 7th). You will be emailed an invitation.

2. SCHOLARSHIPS AND PRIZES

2.1 Foundation Scholarships

The primary objective of the Foundation Scholarship examination, which is sat in early January of the Junior Fresh Year, is to identify and recognize outstanding academic potential in the fields covered by the degree course in Middle Eastern, Jewish, and Islamic Civilisations. The examination encompasses material taught during the two semesters of the Junior Freshman year and the first semester of the Senior Freshman year. Further details and specific guidance regarding the examination will be provided by the Schols coordinator for MEJIC. In 2024-2025 this is Dr Lesley Grant.

Reference/Source:

Calendar Part II, D 10: Foundation and Non-Foundation Scholarships

2.2 Prizes

MEJIC students are eligible for a number of prizes, listed at <https://www.tcd.ie/calendar/undergraduate-studies/prizes-and-other-awards.pdf> (sub 'Near and Middle Eastern Studies')

3. ACADEMIC WRITING

3.1 Academic Integrity and Referencing Guide

Maintaining academic integrity is a key part of your degree, and failure to do so could cost you dearly. It is imperative that you familiarize yourself with the information about academic integrity (and the consequences of breaches thereof) in the School Handbook.

Breaches of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, plagiarism and unacknowledged use of AI. The consequences of breaching academic integrity can be very serious.

3.2 Research Ethics

On relevant programmes, Schools should provide relevant links and information regarding good practice in research, as well as information on College and Faculty policies and procedures.

You should consult information about research ethics in the School Handbook. This will be especially important when you write your fourth-year capstone.

Reference/Source

Research Ethics

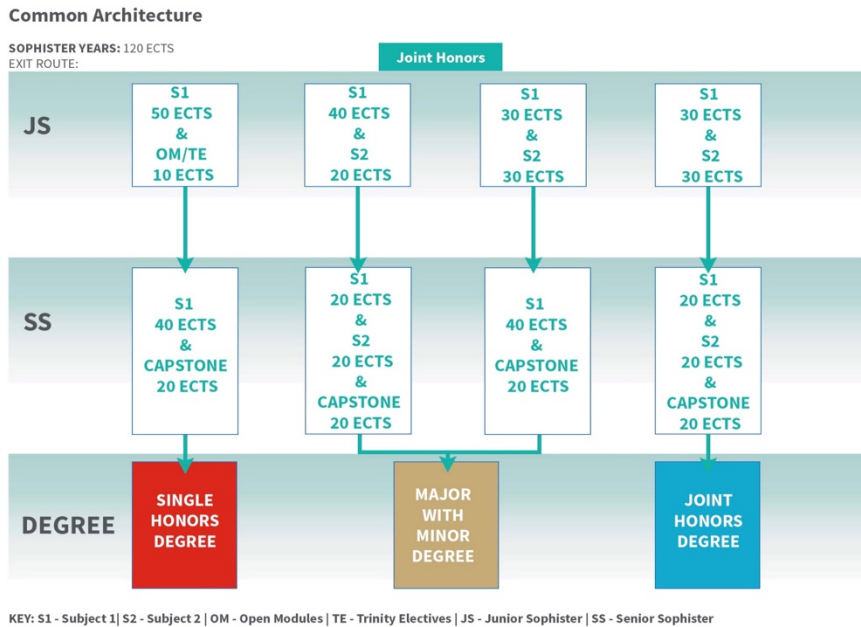
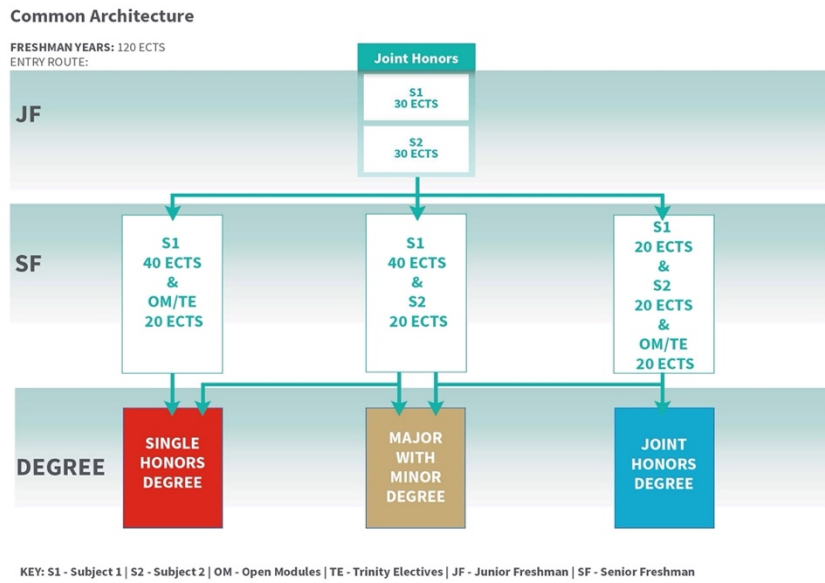
Policy on Good Research Practice

Ethics Policy

4. TEACHING AND LEARNING

4.1 Programme Structure and MEJIC Modules

MEJIC is a Subject within Trinity Joint Honours. The pathways and degree awards offered by the TJH pathway are detailed below:



In the academic year 2024-2025, MEJIC students can choose from the following modules:

(i) Junior Freshman Year (30 ECTS)

During the Junior Freshman year, students are required to take the following six modules:

- Semester One
 - o Introduction to the History of the Ancient Near East
 - o Introduction to Jewish History and Culture
 - o Introduction to Ancient Egypt: World of the Pharaohs
- Semester Two
 - o Introduction to Islamic Civilisation
 - o Introduction to the Modern Middle East
 - o Literary Cultures of the Middle East

(ii) Senior Freshman Year

Senior Freshman students select from the following modules, with the number of modules depending on each student's chosen pathway. Note that students may take only one language:

- Semester One
 - o Jews and European Society
 - o History of the Ottoman Empire
 - o The Middle East: Regional Perspectives
- Semester Two
 - o Islam in Europe
 - o Comparative Politics of the Middle East
 - o Early Jewish History and Literature
- Languages (offered in both semesters)
 - o Modern Standard Arabic Level 1
 - o Introduction to Modern Hebrew
 - o Introduction to Turkish
 - o Introduction to Biblical Hebrew

(iii) Junior Sophister Year

Students in the Junior Sophister year select from the following modules:

- Semester One
 - o Sexuality in the Middle East
 - o Media and Politics of the Middle East: Tunisia, Turkey, and Egypt
 - o Jerusalem: The Making of a Contested City
 - o Managing the Gods in Sumer, Assyria and Babylon
- Semester Two
 - o Great Jewish Books: Identity, Culture, and Society
 - o The History and Politics of the Modern Arab Gulf
- Languages
 - o Modern Hebrew 2: Intermediate Level
 - o Modern Standard Arabic Level 2
 - o Biblical Hebrew: Intermediate Level

(iv) Senior Sophister Year (60 ECTS)

All students must prepare a dissertation or capstone project of 10,000 words (20 ECTS). The submission date is specified on the module Blackboard page. In addition, students take two modules per semester, worth 10 ECTS each:

- Semester One
 - o Biblical Narratives and Popular Culture
 - o Colonialism and Postcolonialism around the Mediterranean
 - o Modern Standard Arabic: Level 3
 - o Reading Gilgamesh
- Semester Two
 - o The Jews of Ancient Egypt
 - o Media Arabic and Regional Variations
 - o Holocaust Representation in Film and Literature
 - o Sick Man of Europe? State and Society in the Late Ottoman Empire
 - o History of Disease and Disaster in the Middle East

Students can choose to take an ancient or modern language as part of their studies, including Arabic, Modern or Biblical Hebrew, Turkish, and (subject to availability) Sumerian, Akkadian, or Middle Egyptian hieroglyphs. Studying a language not only provides students with a greater understanding of cultures and societies but also expands their career options.

4.2 Coursework Requirements

All students must adhere to the course and module requirements, particularly regarding attendance and coursework submission. Coursework must be submitted by the agreed deadlines. If you encounter difficulties in keeping up with coursework or face issues submitting it on time, please contact the module coordinator or the Head of Department. You may also seek assistance through your College tutor.

You can find your tutor on my.tcd.ie or contact the Senior Tutor's office directly at:

Senior Tutor's Office - Undergraduate Students

Penalties for late submission of written coursework without an approved extension or acceptable explanation (e.g., medical certificate) are as stipulated in the School Handbook. You should familiarize yourself with this information.

Reference/Source:

Student Learning Development

Accessible Information Policy

4.3 Capstone Project

This information is for MEJIC students planning to do their capstone in NMES, and for MEELC students who plan to do their capstone with an NMES supervisor. (It does *not* apply to MEELC Dual Degree students, who should refer to the MEELC Dual Degree Handbook, online). **Please read it carefully.**

The Capstone project is weighted at 20 ECTS. It requires a significant level of independent research by the student.

The Capstone should:

- be an integrative exercise that allows students to showcase skills and knowledge which they have developed across a range of subject areas and across the four years of study
- result in the production of a significant piece of original work by the student
- provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate their attainment of the four graduate attributes: to think independently, to communicate effectively, to develop continuously and to act responsibly.

At the start of 4th year you will be enrolled on the relevant Blackboard module (NMU44CPY or MLU44CPY), which will contain information about deadlines, word length, citation format, etc. You should refer to the Blackboard page as the only authoritative source of information on such things (in the event that any such information is missing, you should contact the module coordinator).

Worth twenty credits, a capstone counts for a third of your fourth year, and so has a huge weight in your overall degree mark. It cannot be done at the last minute, and the sooner you start planning it, the better.

While the precise word limit will be on the Blackboard page, it will not be less than 10,000 words (excluding bibliography). It will need acknowledgments, a table of contents, the main text, conclusions, the bibliography, and any appendixes (for raw data, not for additional discussion).

The main text should include an introduction, review/survey of existing scholarly literature, explanation of the data set (i.e. of the sources you are using), explanation of the methods you will be using, and of how you will be circumventing any methodological problems which attach to the project, plus of course your own analysis (which will constitute the lion's share of the work).

As well as a *topic* ('I'm interested in the issue of migrants'), you will need a specific *research question*. This needs to be carefully chosen, as the markers will be interested in how well you answer it. It is quite normal for the research question to be refined along the way (many students

start off with one which is too broad to be answerable, and/or cumbersomely worded), and the same is true of the title.

While the capstone is your own original research, and you have ultimate responsibility for it, you are supported by a supervisor. For MEJIC students doing their capstone in NMES this will be a member of NMES academic staff, for MEELC students it can (subject to availability and depending on your pathway) be any academic staff member in the School.

Your supervisor's job is to make suggestions, answer your questions, advise you on what is and is not likely to work well, make critical-constructive comments on writing and content, and generally help you achieve your and the project's potential. You can expect five hours of contact supervision hours over the year, and how you divide them up (five 1-hour slots, ten 30-minute slots, etc.) is to be agreed between yourself and the supervisor. You can also expect your supervisor to read one full draft of the piece, providing you send it to them a reasonable length of time (stipulated in advance) before the deadline.

It is advisable to meet with your supervisor before the start of the summer, and to update them on your progress by email over the course of it (every month, say).

The Dept of NMES will have a series of deadlines in advance of formal submission. For example, you will have to give a presentation on your topic at some point in Michaelmas. While only the final submitted work (and not the earlier deadlines) will count towards the mark, it is important to meet them: they are there to help you break down the large task into manageable chunks.

Your first deadline will be in the first week of Michaelmas teaching Term: you will need to send in a brief document including: the research question (and sub-questions), a description of the primary sources to be used (data set), a list of relevant scholarly literature which you have already read, and a list of works which you plan to read. The document does not need to be long (a page or a page and a half should do it), but it should reflect actual work and thinking rather than being a last-minute scramble.

It is, therefore, advantageous to do as much preparatory work as possible over the summer.

The capstones which usually work best are those where the author conducts independent analysis of a discrete group of primary sources. If your topic looks like simply leading you to lots of secondary literature, this does not mean you will get a *bad* mark, but you will probably get an

even better mark if you can work in at least a component of primary source analysis. If it's not obvious how to do this, your supervisor is the person to talk to.

Generally, it is a good idea to listen to your supervisor: if they say 'I think you should also talk about X' and you reply 'No, I think the project is better off without that', it *may* be the case that you are right, but given the supervisor's greater experience, the chances are that following their advice will make it easier for the University to recognize and reward the value of your work, so at the very least make sure you understand where your supervisor is coming from.

If you plan to do interviews you will need authorization from the School Research Committee before embarking on these. There is a form which you need to fill in. Information about this will be circulated closer to the time (see also the School Handbook).

Finally: particularly with issues in current affairs, it is important to distinguish academic research from activism. The two do sometimes overlap, but for the purposes of planning a capstone, it is useful to think of them as being different. Supposing there is a terrible plague in Ruritania, and millions are dying every day. This is, obviously, horrific, and as concerned citizens we can all send money to Oxfam, write letters to our elected representatives, or even (for the super-bold) go out and volunteer to help. But – is this a capstone? Where is the academic problem to be addressed? Where is the intellectual complexity? If you want to impress the marker with your skills as an academic thinker and researcher, simply saying that 'The plague in Ruritania is a terrible thing, the World Health Organisation needs to do more, etc.' is unlikely to cut it. Which is not to say that a plague in Ruritania *cannot* make a good capstone topic. But you need to think about how to find a properly analytical way in.

Reference/Source:

Capstone website

Policy on Good Research Practice

4.4 Attendance Requirements

In certain modules, students are required to meet specific attendance criteria and complete non-examined written work. It is the responsibility of students to understand and fulfill the requirements for all modules they are enrolled in. If you are uncertain about any expectations, please consult the module coordinator.

Reference/Source:

Calendar Part II, B: General Regulations and Information, 'Attendance'

4.5 Absence from Examinations

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Reference/Source:

Calendar Part II, B: General Regulations and Information, 'Absence'

Academic Policies

4.6 Awards

You can exit the TJH programme with Single Honours, Joint Honours, or Major with Minor.

References/Sources:

National Framework for Qualifications

Trinity Pathways

Trinity Courses

4.7 Student Feedback and Evaluation

Statement on College requirements for evaluation and feedback, as well as an outline of additional feedback practices at a local level.

Students will be asked by each module coordinator to provide anonymous feedback on each module, which the coordinator will respond to.

Students can also give feedback via class reps and/or the School Convenor (i.e. the School-wide student representative appointed by the student union).

References/Sources:

Student Evaluation and Feedback

Student Partnership Policy

Procedure for the Conduct of Focus Groups for Student Feedback on Modules and Programmes

5. ASSESSMENT

5.1 General information

Assessment methods vary across the different modules within your programme. It is essential that you consult the specific information provided by your lecturers or module coordinators to understand exactly what is expected in terms of assessed exercises and examinations.

It is the responsibility of each student to determine the time and date of their examinations and to familiarize themselves with examination regulations by visiting the College Examination Office website at www.tcd.ie/academicregistry/exams/.

Students who do not pass during the annual examination session, either outright or by compensation, must complete supplemental assessments in all failed modules during the designated supplemental examination period.

For more details on assessment and progression for Trinity Joint Honors (TJH), consult: [TJH Assessment and Progression](#).

5.2 Grade boundaries and marking scale

The following grade boundaries apply:

- **I:** 70 - 100%
- **II.1:** 60 - 69%
- **II.2:** 50 - 59%
- **III:** 40 - 49%
- **F.1:** 30 – 39%
- **F.2:** 0 - 29%

Please note that in cases where an assessed work component is not submitted, a grade of 0% will be awarded.

For language modules, the maximum grade is capped at 80%.

For the marking criteria which will be applied to your work, see information provided for individual modules.

Reference/Source:

Calendar II, Part B: General Regulations and Information

5.3 Submission of assessed work

All assessed work must be submitted with the appropriate coversheet, which can be downloaded from Blackboard or obtained from the module coordinator. All submissions should be through Blackboard.

5.4 External Examiners

External examiners review work in the Sophister years, and are responsible for ensuring that the standard of assessments is both fair and in line with best practice nationally and internationally.

In the academic year 2024-2025, the External Examiners are:

Professor Sarah Pearce (Southampton) – Antiquity

Professor Eugene Rogan (Oxford) – Modern Middle East

Professor Aslı Niyazioğlu (Oxford) – Ottoman Studies

Where Externals are based outside the EU/EHEA, your personal information, i.e. exam script and coursework, will be sent outside the EU/EHEA.

Reference/Source:

Procedure for the Transfer to External Examiners of Students' Assessed Work