



OLLSCOIL NA
GAILLIMHÉ
UNIVERSITY
OF GALWAY

Coláiste na nDán, na nEolaíochtaí
Sóisialta & an Léinn Cheiltigh
College of Arts, Social Sciences
& Celtic Studies

Bachelor of Arts (Human Rights)



University
of Galway.ie

Course Overview

This is the only undergraduate course of its kind in Ireland, allowing you to combine the study of Arts subjects with Human Rights. Human Rights modules are taught at the Irish Centre for Human Rights, which is one of the world's premier academic human rights institutions, dedicated to the study and promotion of human rights, international criminal law and international humanitarian law.

Students will have the opportunity to undertake work placement or study abroad. The placement provides a unique opportunity to develop practical skills and experience the reality of a career in the field of human rights. Placements have been secured around the world, from Dublin to London, Genève, Madrid, Mexico, Peru and the Philippines.

Course Name: BA in Human Rights

CAO Code: GY113

Course Level: 8

Duration: 4 years

CAO Entry Points 2026: 380

Entry Requirements: Minimum Grade H5 in two subjects and passes in four other subjects at O6/H7 level in the Leaving Certificate, including Irish, English, another language, and three other subjects recognised for entry purposes.



Career Prospects

The degree will provide an excellent foundation for many types of careers. The interdisciplinary character of the programme provides students with many skills and competencies required in a competitive job market. Career prospects include working with the United Nations, the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Irish Aid, the European Union, international Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) and development cooperation agencies. Career prospects also include working in public administration, civil service, local NGOs and charities, community and social work.

Study abroad

The course offers opportunities for students to study abroad. This particularly suits students taking language modules, who in their third year may apply to study abroad through the Erasmus programme.

Work Placement

The work placement consists of a minimum of 200 hours of work (on average 20 hours per week for three months) with an approved human rights organisation in Ireland or abroad. This scheme provides a unique opportunity for our students to gain practical experience of working for a human rights NGO engaged in advocacy, research, education, policy and legal work. National placements include Trocaire Community Law and Mediation, Galway and Dublin Simon Community. International placements include, Geneva for Human Rights, Geneva; Death Penalty Project, London; International Organization against Torture (OMCT), Brussels and Geneva; Mission Mexico, Mexico and Incawasi, Peru. Limited funding is available to support students during their placement through the Erasmus traineeship funding (covering placements taking place in EU countries).

Course Outline

Year One

- Introduction to Human Rights Law (Semesters 1 and 2)
- Tutorials (Semesters 1 and 2)

First Year modules provide an introduction to human rights and analyse the philosophical basis and historical development of human rights. During the first year students become acquainted with the normative foundations of International Human Rights and the various international human rights mechanisms of promotion.

Year Two

- Regional Systems of Human Rights Protection (Semester 1)
- Contemporary Issues in Human Rights (Semester 2)

In second year, students undertake the study of the regional human rights systems, structures and instruments, including the Inter-American, the European, the African and Asian Systems of Human Rights. Semester 2 modules have more thematic approach providing students with knowledge and understanding of some contemporary human rights issues such as migrants and refugees rights, LGBTIQ+ rights and women's rights.

Year Three

In the first semester, students have a number of core and optional modules from which they can choose, including:

- Thinking Politically: The Power of Ideas
- Administrative Law • Irish Legal Systems
- Health Law and Policy • Health Law & Policy • Contemporary American Politics
- Equality, Diversity and Collective Action
- Constitutional Law • Criminal Law
- Legal Methods and Research • EU Law

In the second semester, students will have the opportunity to either undertake work placement with a national and international human rights organisation, study abroad or undertake an Applied Human Rights Project.

Year Four

Students will complete their studies in their two core degree subjects and may, if suitable, incorporate the specialist skills and knowledge they have gained in human rights over the previous three years in their final year projects. All modules are assessed using a combination of continuous assessment, group project work and end-of-term essay.

Find Out More

Dr Anita Ferrara
School of Law & Irish Centre for Human Rights

T: +353 91 49 2819

E: anita.ferrara@universityofgalway.ie

W: universityofgalway.ie/gv113