

## THE FACULTY OF ARTS

***Dean: Professor Robert Welch, BA MA PhD FEA***

The Faculty of Arts operates across three of the University's campuses: Magee, Coleraine, and Belfast. The academic work of the Faculty is located in five Schools:

- Creative Arts
- History and International Affairs
- Languages and Literature
- Media, Film and Journalism
- Research Graduate School

The School of Creative Arts is based at the Magee Centre for the Creative and Performing Arts, based in the old Foyle Arts Building, acquired for this purpose by the University from the City Council in 2003. The building, one of the finest in the city, brings together for the first time on the island of Ireland the Creative Arts: Music, Dance, Drama, Design, Digital Arts, and Creative Technologies. It is an incubator for the Creative Industries and reflects the University's commitment to enhancing all aspects of the region's economy. Programmes (with Dance supported by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland) include undergraduate provision on all the Creative and Performing Arts, integrated with Design and the new Technologies, which themselves have their own programmes. It is a vibrant and creative environment.

History and International Affairs operates at Coleraine (where the main History activity is concentrated), and at Magee. History has undergone a major rebuild as a distinguished body of historians retires and new blood is drawn in to fortify existing teaching strength in Peace and Conflict Studies, European and Irish History, American Studies, and Contemporary and International Politics. Philosophy and thought have discovered new relevancies in relation to Ethics, Religious Studies, and Media issues.

Languages and Literature is concentrated at Coleraine and Magee. Programmes include the recently consolidated and strengthened English undergraduate programme at Coleraine which involves a creative writing strand; many language programmes at all levels in French, German, Spanish and Irish; and collaborations with Media, Film and Journalism in new undergraduate programmes.

Media, Film and Journalism operates at Coleraine. It houses very successful Media Studies and Media Arts programmes at undergraduate level, at Coleraine, as well as new programmes in Journalism and Film Studies. Media Studies is one of the longest-running Media degrees in the UK (founded in the late 1970s). It has a reputation for quality in practice-based teaching as well as outstanding research across the entire field, from Journalism to Film, to Media technology, policy issues, and cultural theory, expertise reflected in teaching excellence. It is ranked in the top 10 in the UK.

The Faculty offers a wide range of part-time provision based primarily at the Belfast and Magee campuses, with some activity also at Coleraine. The part-time offerings embrace full diploma, certificate, and degree programmes, as well as short courses, 'taster' modules from attractive areas, and recreational and leisure-based learning. Subjects include: Irish Language and Literature; Jazz Workshops; Local History; English Literature; Irish History;

Conversational Spanish; the Ulster-Scots Tradition; Music in Film; Dance Workshops; Drama Workshops; and much more.

The Research Graduate School caters for all the research students in the Faculty and has oversight of the relation between taught postgraduate programmes, research training, and the progression from MRes to PhD. It evolves Research policy for the Faculty and considers funding and issues relating to Research Council priorities as well as cross-border and trans-European initiatives. The MRes in Arts offers a programme of research-based study, with training in research methods geared to PhD. After one year at MRes students proceed to PhD for three years. It is also possible to enter the PhD programme directly, depending on qualifications and appropriateness of topic.

The Faculty is one that has undergone profound and, we believe, positive change in the last number of years as it re-aligned its courses to make them more relevant to our operating environment and more exciting in themselves.

The Faculty has around 2,200 students (including over 80 research students and 120 taught postgraduates) and approximately 200 full-time staff.

### **Postgraduate Taught Programmes**

The Faculty operates highly successful MAs in Fine and Applied Arts, Design, Irish Literature in English, Irish Cultural Heritages, Film and Television Production, International Media Studies, Peace and Conflict Studies, and more. These programmes are keyed to the Faculty's Research strengths.

### **Research**

Research within the Faculty is organised and managed through recognised Units which map into the Higher Education Funding Council's Units of Assessment. These are:

- Celtic Studies
- Drama
- English
- European Studies
- French
- German
- History
- Media Studies
- Music
- Spanish

Each Unit has a Co-ordinator, who has responsibility for the management of the Unit's activities, including the setting of the Unit's strategic objectives and the management of its financial support.

Research in the Faculty is vibrant: we did well in the UK's Research Assessment Exercise in 2001, with very good performances in Celtic, Media Studies, English, History, French, and Music. We have established, with £3.5 m external funding, the Academy for Irish Cultural Heritages at Magee, bringing together research into Celtic Studies, History, English, Music, and European Studies in various groupings and projects. At Magee also we have the Institute for Ulster-Scots Studies, funded by the Ulster-Scots Agency. At Coleraine, The Centre for Media Research brought in £3.1m external funding. With £.25m won for Dance, and with

other external funding successes we have drawn into the Faculty some £14m of external funding since 2000.

In preparation for RAE 2007/08 the University has re-inforced its policy of selectivity by creating 13 Research Institutes to which is devoted the great bulk of research funding. We have four of these in Arts:

Academy for Irish Cultural Heritages  
Media Studies  
Irish and Celtic Studies  
Humanities

Each of these is led by a Director and provides support for key researchers in these areas. Strong researchers outside these areas are also supported. The Faculty's research base is now a very strong one. Recruitment in the past six years has focused on research excellence as a key criterion. The influx of new academic talent has allowed the Faculty to consolidate and expand its research strengths and to evolve new areas of excellence, such as European Studies, Journalism, and Photography.

Professor R Welch  
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