



NUI Galway
OÉ Gaillimh

LL.M. in International and Comparative Disability Law and Policy

An innovative programme focusing on contemporary issues in Disability Law and Policy





“Our ethos is change. This new programme aims to equip students not just with knowledge and insights but also with the skills and motivation to help transform the lives of the 650 million persons with disabilities in the world. It is one of the first of its kind in the world.”

Professor Gerard Quinn, Director of the Centre for Disability Law and Policy at the NUI Galway School of Law.

What is the LL.M. in International and Comparative Disability Law and Policy?

The LL.M. in International and Comparative Disability Law and Policy offers students an innovative and internationally focused programme dealing with the process of law reform and policy in the field of disability. This area of law is experiencing huge growth, with the introduction of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which in turn has resulted in the development of disability strategies at regional and national level.

The mandatory modules address two issues, firstly, to provide students with an in-depth understanding of the core foundational themes in disability law and policy, secondly, to provide students with the necessary research skills to complete their programme of study. The optional modules address law and policy at international and regional level as well as some very topical subjects such as Legal Capacity, Independent Living and Inclusive Education.

Programme aims and objectives

This programme will provide a solid grounding for future practitioners, policy-makers and academics in the field of disability reform and policy. The main objective is to give students an in-depth understanding of the developments internationally, regionally and nationally with a view to understanding best practice in this field of study.

Led by a dynamic team of experts at NUI Galway, students will acquire expertise in their chosen subjects along with an ability to critically appraise the problems which arise for law and policy-makers in this rapidly changing area. The programme will be further enhanced by international experts who will participate in the provision of elements of various courses throughout the year. Students will also be given the training and practical experience necessary to develop their research and writing skills, which are so important for high achievement and effectiveness. Students will benefit greatly in their academic and professional development from this vibrant, intellectually challenging and forward-looking degree programme.

Programme Outline

Students must take all of the mandatory modules listed below, together with the dissertation, and four optional modules.

Mandatory modules

- Foundational Theoretical Framework for Disability Law and Policy
- Advanced Legal Research and Methods
- Law, Regulation and Policy
- Introduction to Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methods
- Dissertation

Optional modules

- US Disability Law and Policy
- Irish Disability Law and Policy
- Regional Disability Law and Policy
- Law and Policy on Independent Living
- Legal Capacity Law and Policy
- Mental Health Law and Policy
- Inclusive Education Law and Policy
- Advocacy and Access to Justice
- Contemporary Challenges in Disability Law and Policy
- Lifecourse issues in Disability Law and Policy

* Module list subject to change.

Career opportunities

The majority of countries in the world are currently in the process of ratifying the new UN treaty creating a real demand for skilled knowledge workers to help States draft their legislation and policy in this field. The programme will be particularly useful to people working in the field of disability law and policy. The course is aimed at those who work in governmental and non-governmental organisations at international, regional or national level: such as the United Nations, the European Union, the Council of Europe, the European Disability Forum, Amnesty International, Mental Disability Advocacy Centre, Disability Rights International and positions of legal advisor to national governments. The programme would also benefit people working with Disabled Persons' Organisations, and change managers in disability service providers as well as those who wish to pursue a legal career both nationally and internationally. The programme will also be of significant benefit to those who wish to progress to doctoral research in this area.

Duration

This programme is available full-time over twelve months, starting in September.

Entry requirements

Applicants must hold a degree in law, or an interdisciplinary degree which includes a substantial law component, in which they have attained at least a Second Class Honours Grade 1 or its equivalent. In exceptional circumstances, applications may also be considered from students who hold a degree other than a law degree and who have other educational and/or professional experience in Law or Disability Rights.

Application procedure

Applications to this programme are made online via the Postgraduate Applications Centre: www.pac.ie

Programme Co-ordinator:

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About the Centre for Disability Law and Policy

The Centre for Disability Law and Policy (CDLP) is a research centre of excellence at the School of Law, National University of Ireland, Galway (www.nuigalway.ie/cdlp). The CDLP is dedicated to producing research that informs the debate on national and international disability law reform and policy. The formation of the Centre coincided with one of the most intensive periods of disability law reform in Ireland as well as internationally. In 2007 the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was adopted, which should accelerate the worldwide trend of disability reform. The CDLP is committed to producing high quality research to contribute to that process.

Professor Gerard Quinn is the Director of the Centre for Disability Law and Policy at the NUI Galway School of Law. Professor Quinn is one of the leading international experts in the field of disability law reform and policy. Professor Quinn led the delegation of Rehabilitation International during the UN Working Group that elaborated the basis for the new Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. He has worked in the European Commission and has formerly held the posts of Director of Research for the Irish Government's Law Reform Commission and Vice President of the European Committee of Social Rights (Council of Europe), and is a member of the Irish Human Rights Commission.

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Image of Donal Toolan a Disability Rights Activist and Actor who has been connected with the Centre from the outset.