

WEEK 3:

GLOSSARY

OF TERMS

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1.1

College grade of 70% or above. First-class honours.

2.1

College grade of 60%-69%. Higher second class honours.

2.2

College grade of 50%-59%. Lower second class honours.



ACADEMIC CALENDAR

A schedule of all the important dates and events occurring during the academic year.

ACADEMIC YEAR

The period of the year during which students attend university, usually calculated from the beginning of the autumn semester (term) to the end of the summer semester (term).

ADVOCATE

An advocate is someone who can help you speak up so that your needs are heard, your rights are understood and your problems are resolved. Advocates may be employed with a community organization, volunteer with an agency, or community members who want to provide assistance.

ASSESSMENT

Process of checking and marking coursework. Depending on the degree course, assessments may include examinations, essays, project work, reports or a combination of any of these.

ASSIGNMENT

Assignments take the form of essays or project work, which require reading and independent research. A certain amount of marks will be given for assignments, and these will contribute to the overall grade for continuous assessment each year. In first year, students are given guidelines on how to prepare and present assignments

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Assistive Technology can help support students with disabilities overcome challenges like note-taking, reading and examinations.

Assistive Technology allows students with disabilities to perform tasks they might otherwise be unable to complete.

AUTISM SPECTRUM CONDITION

A developmental condition which means that the way a person communicates, interacts and understands other people, and the world, is different to those who do not have the condition. It can be described as a "spectrum" which means it impacts different people, in different ways, to differing degrees at different times and in different situations.

B

BACHELOR'S DEGREE

Undergraduate degree qualification awarded by the University.

C

CAO APPLICATION

The process of filling out and submitting the CAO form.

CAO FORM

This is submitted if you wish to apply for college in Ireland. It is a form in which you list the different courses you wish to apply for. These are listed in order of preferences.

CLASS REPRESENTATIVE (CLASS REP)

At the beginning of the academic year, each class elects at least one class representative. Elections are usually organised by your lecturer or a Students' Union Officer at the beginning of a class. The role of a class rep is to act as a communication link between your class, the College and the Students' Union in order to raise any issues affecting your class and to share information on Students' Union campaigns and initiatives.

CLUBS & SOCS

Clubs (sports) and Socs (interests) are student led bodies that students can join in order to learn new hobbies and sports, or to meet others with similar interests.

COLLEGE GRADE

These are marks received after each assignment or set of exams you complete. Each mark received for the exams and assignments completed as part of a module are all put together to get an average, which is used as your total mark for that specific module.

CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT (CA)

Refers to the assessment of students' ongoing work, rather than an end of term examination or essay.

An assessment method where students are examined continuously throughout the academic year. The feedback received via continuous assessment (also known as 'coursework') can be a helpful way for students to track their performance during the year. Completing your continuous assessment reduces some of the pressure associated with exams.

COUNSELLING SERVICE

A space to tease out stress related issues, worries or mental health challenges in a confidential setting. Any student can avail of these services.

COURSE

Usually refers to a specific programme studied by a student over a number of years. The words 'course' and 'programme' are often used interchangeably. A course or programme comprises individual modules (see below). Universities set out specific rules determining which modules you need to complete each year to graduate with the relevant degree title.

COURSE OUTLINE

An outline of a module (or, less commonly and a bit confusingly, course). They are provided as a guide to the module content for the specific academic semester or year. They may include details about module topics and lectures, assignments and reading for the module

COURSE WORK

A piece of work required as part of a degree course.

Written or practical work completed by a student during a course of study, usually assessed in order to count towards a final mark or grade. See continuous assessment above

D

DARE (DISABILITY ACCESS ROUTE TO EDUCATION)

A third level alternative admissions scheme for school leavers whose disabilities have had a negative impact on their second level education. DARE offers reduced points places to school leavers who, as a result of having a disability, have experienced additional educational challenges in second level education.

DEFERRAL

To defer is basically to postpone something - to put it off for now and do it later. If you apply for a deferral of the CAO course place you were offered, and if the deferral is granted, it means that the course place you were offered will be held over for you until the next year.

The course offer will remain open to you regardless of any changes to the points or entry requirements for that particular course that may happen between now and next year.

Keep in mind a deferral may not always be granted, and is up to the particular college.

DEGREE

Usually three/four years full-time or four to six years part time leading to the University award of Bachelor or Master.

DIAGNOSIS

The process of identifying a disease, condition, or injury from its signs and symptoms. Those with autism can receive a formal

diagnosis which will allow them to avail of disability supports in college.

DIGS

A type of accommodation in which you can rent out a room in someone else's home. The price includes bills and sometimes can include meals.

DISABILITY

Any condition which makes it more difficult for a person to do certain activities or interact with the world around them. These conditions, or impairments, may be cognitive, developmental, intellectual, mental, physical, sensory, or a combination of multiple factors.

DISABILITY OFFICER/ADVISOR

This is a person assigned to you when you disclose your disability or learning difficulty. This will normally be a faculty member from the relevant school who will be able to inform you about what your department or school can do from their end to help you.

DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES

The Disability Support Service in college supports students who have a disability, long-term health condition, or specific learning difficulty. Services provided for registered students include: assistive technology, academic support, applying for exam accommodations, arranging swipe card access to lifts on campus, and more.

DISABLED STUDENTS ALLOWANCE (DSA)

Extra money for higher education students used to cover some of the extra costs you have because of a mental health problem, long term illness or any other disability.

DISCLOSURE

The action of making your autism diagnosis known to those around you. This does not have to be done but can be helpful in order to secure support from your college.

DISSERTATION

A major written piece of work or research project undertaken in the final year of an undergraduate honours degree course.

E

E-PORTFOLIO

A collection of work that a student has created during the course of their studies. -Portfolios can consist of text based and multimedia content illustrating artefacts students may have created from their learning e.g. essays, videos, presentations and other digital content. It also allows learners to reflect on what they learned and how it was applied.

ENROLMENT

The process where students become registered with a college.

ENTRY REQUIREMENT

A minimum standard that must be met in order to be admitted to programmes. Some programmes have multiple entry requirements.

ERASMUS

A Higher Education exchange programme for students, teachers and institutions, Erasmus schemes can last between three months and a year. You may be required to do Erasmus as part of your degree, or you might simply decide to spread your wings and spend a few months in another country.

ESSAY

A written piece of work on a particular topic.

EVIDENCE OF DISABILITY FORM

This form is used by HEIs to provide verification of the applicant's disability and helps to determine appropriate supports at third level. This form is also used by DARE to help assess an applicant's eligibility for DARE.

EXAMS

Exams usually take place at the end of the first and second semesters. These are usually written tests of a student's knowledge in the relevant module.

EXTENSION

If you are struggling to meet an assignment deadline due to certain circumstances or difficulties, you can ask your lecturer for an extension. This is extra time given in which you can complete and submit your assignment without getting marks taken off for late submission.

EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES

Serious, unforeseen circumstances beyond your control (i.e. serious illness, family bereavement, etc.) which prevent you from meeting the requirements of your programme. If these circumstances affect your academic performance in an assignment or exam, you can apply to redo these assessments at another time.

F

FACULTY

A faculty is a division within a university or college comprising one subject area or a group of related subject areas.

FRESHERS/ FRESHERS WEEK

Intensive orientation activities occur this week so you know which way is up when lectures start the following week.

FURTHER EDUCATION/ TRAINING

Education and training which takes place after second-level schooling but which is not part of the third-level system. e.g. PLC.

G

GRADUATE

Someone who has successfully completed a degree programme at the University.

GROUP WORK

A form of assessment in which students are required to work together to complete a piece of work or a project. E.g. a presentation on a certain topic.

H

HEAR (HIGHER EDUCATION ACCESS ROUTE)

A college and university scheme that offers places on reduced points and extra college support to those who are resident in the Republic of Ireland and underrepresented at Higher Education due to their socio-economic background. HEAR applicants must meet a range of financial, social and cultural indicators to be considered for a reduced points place and extra college support.

HIGHER BACHELOR'S DEGREE

NFQ level 8. The Honours Bachelor Degree generally takes three to four years to complete. Some courses, like architecture and medicine take longer. There are also several one-year programmes for people with an Ordinary Bachelor Degree to obtain an Honours Bachelor Degrees.

HIGHER CERTIFICATE

A third level education award at level 6 on the National Framework of Qualifications in the Republic of Ireland. The Higher Certificate is awarded by various Institutes of Technology. A Higher Certificate academic programme is two years of full-time study.

HONOURS DEGREE

A full undergraduate degree that usually requires completion of a final year dissertation or research project. This is a Level 8 award on the National Framework of Qualifications.

HPAT (HEALTH PROFESSIONALS ADMISSIONS TEST)

An admissions test used to assist with the selection of students into medicine and health professions degree programs. The test measures a candidate's logical reasoning and problem solving skills as well as nonverbal reasoning and the ability to understand the thoughts, behaviour and/or intentions of people.

I

INDEPENDENT LEARNING

When an individual is able to think, act and pursue their own studies autonomously, without the same levels of support received from a teacher at primary/secondary school. In other words, you need to be able to do your own research instead of expecting a teacher to give you all the background material you might need. To become a good independent learner you need to be: motivated; resilient (to overcome challenges); and an excellent time manager.

J

JAM CARD

A card which allows people with a learning difficulty, autism or communication barrier to tell others they need 'Just A Minute' discreetly and easily.

L

LABORATORIES

Labs provide students with first-hand experience to practise and develop a wide range of course concepts and personal skills with discipline-based techniques. A laboratory session has particular challenges and opportunities that differ from those in a standard classroom environment. Students studying subjects such as Science, Engineering and Health Sciences will often have lab sessions as part of their weekly academic workload.

LEAP CARD

This is a card that is used to make it easier and cheaper to travel. Travel credit can be loaded onto your card and used to pay for travel on Leap enabled services. Every time you use the card to travel the cost of the journey is deducted. If there is no credit on the card it cannot be used for any further journeys until it is Topped Up.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Learning outcomes describe what you should be able to do when you have completed some (or all) components of a particular module. They can be a useful tool for assessing how your learning is progressing.

LEARNING SUPPORTS

A service in college that works with learners and staff to promote a positive and successful learning experience for learners with disabilities and specific learning difficulties.

LECTURES

Students are expected to attend each one of a series of lectures as part of the degree. Lectures address the core of the subjects, introducing the main ideas, and providing a guide to further research and reading. Lectures are delivered to groups of students, varying in size from 40 to 450 people.

Lectures are delivered to a class to provide instruction, and are often held in the bigger lecture theatres on campus. Lectures provide an introduction to the topics for each module - it is up to you to learn more through further reading, research, and study.

LECTURERS/TUTORS

Lecturers and tutors are members of the University academic staff and have responsibility for teaching and helping students with their studies

M

MASTER'S DEGREE

An academic degree awarded by the University upon completion of at least one year of prescribed study beyond the Bachelor's degree.

MATURE STUDENTS

An applicant who is 23 years of age on January 1st of the year of entry to the University. For part-time degrees the mature age requirement is 21 on January 1st of the year of entry.

MCQ

Multiple Choice Question. Some exams are assessed through multiple choice questions only. In this format, you must choose one option from a list of possible answers to a question.

MODULE

Degree programmes are made up of modules in a range of subjects. A module is a self-contained fraction of the workload for the year, and carries a unique examination or assessment mark. Within the chosen degree programme, there is a range of modules – some compulsory, some required, and some optional. Core modules are compulsory modules that must be taken as part of your course. Optional modules are modules that you choose (subject to availability) when you register online.

Modules are the subjects you will be studying on your course. You should make sure that you are aware of the key learning outcomes, content or topics, assessment, and compulsory reading or other learning for each of the modules that you take.

MODULE DESCRIPTOR

The module descriptor provides various details about the module including who the module tutor is, what you will be studying, how you will be assessed and what you will have learned once you have completed the module.

NATIONAL FRAMEWORK OF QUALIFICATIONS (NFQ)

The National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) is a single-structure mechanism for recognising all education and training in Ireland. Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) has responsibility to develop, promote and maintain the Irish NFQ. QQI also facilitates the recognition of foreign qualifications.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Confidential meeting to assess learning needs and the learner's accompanying documentation in order to agree the appropriate supports that may be required in college.

NEUROTYPICAL

Those individuals who do not have a diagnosis of autism or any other intellectual or developmental difference.

NEURODIVERGENT

Those individuals who have a diagnosis of autism or any other intellectual or developmental difference.



OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST

Assesses and treats physical and psychological conditions in students to maximise their levels of independence in everyday life.

OPEN DAY

Sometime before the CAO application deadline, colleges will host open days in which potential students are invited to look around the campus and attend talks on specific aspects of the college, including talks on specific courses. This is an opportunity to gather more information about an institution, learn more about any courses you may be interested in, experience the campus, and meet current students and staff.

ORDINARY BACHELOR'S DEGREE

A Level 7 qualification. It mostly takes three years to achieve this award.

ORIENTATION

The period prior to the start of the academic year at a college or university where a variety of events are held to welcome and acclimate new students.



PERSONAL STATEMENT

This is submitted as part of the DARE application process. This is an opportunity for you to tell us about your experience of being in school and the challenges you faced. The personal statement is primarily used by the Disability Support Staff in the colleges to help determine what supports you may need in college. It can also be

used by DARE to complement the information you and your school provide as part of the Educational Impact Statement.

PHD

Short for Doctor of Philosophy. This is an academic or professional degree that, in most countries, qualifies the degree holder to teach their chosen subject at university level or to work in a specialized position in their chosen field. The degree normally takes between three and four years of full-time work towards a thesis offering an original contribution to your subject.

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is the act of copying, including or directly quoting from the work of another without adequate acknowledgement, in order to obtain benefit, credit or gain. Plagiarism can apply to many materials, such as words, ideas, images, information, data, approaches or methods. Sources of plagiarism can include books, journals, reports, websites, essay mills, another student, or another person. Self-plagiarism, or auto-plagiarism, is where a student re-uses work previously submitted to another course within the university or in another institution. Plagiarism is considered an academic offence.

PLC (POST LEAVING CERTIFICATE)

Full-time programmes for young people who have completed their Leaving Certificate and adults returning to education. The course lasts one to two years and leads to an award on the National Framework of Qualifications at NFQ Level 5 or NFQ level 6.

PROGRAMME

The entire course of study which takes place over the academic year. A programme can also refer to an undergraduate programme, such as a degree programme of three years duration.

PROGRESSION

Progression refers to continuing on to the next year of your programme of study. For example, you must pass first year in order to be able to progress to second year.

Q

QUALITY AND QUALIFICATIONS IRELAND (QQI)

An independent State agency responsible for promoting quality and accountability in education and training services in Ireland. They are responsible for maintaining the NFQ.

R

RAG WEEK

Also known as Raise and Give Week. An annual event in many universities where students engage in unusual activities to raise money for charity.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

Reasonable accommodations aim to remove the impact of a disability within the learning environment, so that learners can demonstrate their full level of academic potential. Examples include: spelling and grammar waiver, additional time, scribe and reader support and low distraction venues during examinations.

REGISTRATION

What you must do online before coming to college in Freshers' Week.

Registration is the act of registering to be a student at college. All students must register for each year of their programme. If you do not register correctly, you may not have access to key module information online, or be able to sit exams in your chosen modules.

REPEATS

If you fail an exam or an assignment, you will be able to repeat it later on during the year. This is also when you can repeat assignments or exams that you could not complete due to extenuating circumstances.

RUBRICS

Rubrics are typically an evaluation tool or set of guidelines used to promote the consistent application of learning expectations, learning objectives, or learning standards in the classroom, or to measure their attainment against a consistent set of criteria. Rubrics help to define academic expectations for students and help to ensure consistency in the evaluation of academic work from student to student, assignment to assignment, or course to course. Rubrics are also used as scoring instruments to determine grades or the degree to which learning standards have been demonstrated by students.

S

SCHOOL

An organisational unit within the University which is composed of a number of Disciplines (for example, the School of Humanities incorporates the Disciplines of English, History, and Philosophy, among others). NUI Galway has 16 Schools.

SEMESTER

The academic year is divided into two semesters (or terms). Different colleges have different semester lengths, though they usually range from 10-13 weeks. At the end of the semester there is usually a study period followed by exams.

SEMINAR

Provide an opportunity for a group of students to discuss and analyse a range of new material, ideas and concepts together with the tutor. In some schools such classes are referred to as seminars and in others they are called tutorials.

SENSORY OVERLOAD

Happens when something around us overstimulates one or more of our senses. There's suddenly too much information coming in through our senses for our brain to process. Many colleges have dedicated areas or rooms for when this happens. It may be useful to read up on where these are located so you can use them if this happens.

SENSORY PROCESSING

The effective registration (and accurate interpretation) of sensory input in the environment (including one's body). It is the way the brain receives, organises and responds to sensory input in order to behave in a meaningful & consistent manner. Sensory processing problems are commonly seen in developmental conditions like autism spectrum disorder. Autism's sensory issues can involve both hyper-sensitivities (over-responsiveness) and hypo-sensitivities (under-responsiveness) to a wide range of stimuli.

SENSORY SPACE

Specially created environments created to provide an immersive sensory experience. For those on the autism spectrum, sensory rooms are designed to have a calming effect that reduces anxiety and improves focus.

STIMMING

Self-stimulating behaviours, usually involving repetitive movements or sounds. Everybody stims in some way. Yet frequent or extreme stimming more commonly occurs with neurological and developmental differences

STUDENT ACCOMMODATION

Housing built or designated for students and used for the sole purpose of providing residential accommodation to students during the academic term.

STUDENT CONTRIBUTION

Most colleges charge an annual student contribution.. It is also known as a registration fee and it covers student services and examinations. The amount of the contribution varies from one

institution to another. If you qualify for SUSI, they will pay this fee for you.

STUDENT ID CARD

Your Student ID card is your official identification card for all college related matters. Your Student ID card will give you access to many of the facilities/services across the campus. You may need your Student ID when presenting to sit a university exam, accessing and borrowing books from the library, accessing certain buildings and rooms, availing of student services (e.g. Health Centre) or signing up for clubs and societies.

STUDENT NUMBER

Your eight-digit student number is your user ID, which is also your CAO number e.g. 18000000.

STUDENT SERVICES

A group of services that are involved in your student journey from the time you start your studies until the time you graduate. They produce your ID cards, advice about fees and forms for your academic options as well as manage your registration and exam information. They can also direct you to the relevant service or information you are looking for, such as learning support.

STUDENT'S UNION (SU)

An organisation run by your fellow students to represent your views, protect your rights and provide the services that make college life run more smoothly.

The Students' Union (SU) is the independent voice of students, and aims 'to represent its members and promote, defend and vindicate the rights of its members at all levels of society'. Services provided by the Students' Union include: representing students individually and collectively, lockers, second hand book store, Grinds Register, campus shop, Sult, Cafes, Cloakroom, CÉIM academic peer learning, Life Skills courses, and guidance with academic issues, mental health, fees and so on.

SUPERVISOR

An academic person allocated to support you with planning and following through on your work/thesis-make contact regularly.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADMISSIONS

This is the route of entering college through the DARE scheme.

SUSI

Student Universal Support Ireland (SUSI) is the single grant-awarding authority handling all applications for student grants. Students with an economic disadvantage can be awarded a grant by SUSI if they meet the criteria.

T

TUTORIAL

A form of tuition with smaller groups of students than would usually be found in lectures. Generally more interactive than a lecture (and sometimes known as a seminar), a tutorial seeks to teach by example and to supply the information to complete certain tasks. Students are often expected to attend tutorials as part of their academic workload, and often may be expected to have completed a specific homework problem in advance of the tutorial.

TUTOR

Responsible for you should something go wrong. Advisor and advocate. They can also help you with college work you don't understand.

U

UCAS (UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES ADMISSIONS SERVICE)

The U.K version of the CAO. This is used if you want to attend college in Northern Ireland, Scotland, England, or Wales.

UNDERGRADUATE

The description given to a student who is undertaking a degree level academic course at a college or university. Following completion of the relevant examinations, you can enter a third level institution as an undergraduate student.