

The Graduate Entry Medical School's (GEMS) research activities build on the considerable strengths of UL and involve collaborations with government, community and industry stakeholder groups, experts in the humanities, in addition to biomedical/healthcare researchers locally, nationally and internationally.

GEMS is implementing a research strategy organised around the themes of metabolic mediators of chronic disorder, lifestyle-specific conditions including aspects of ageing, and the provision of prophylactic guidance & therapeutic care in the community and acute facilities.

The University has provided the essential research infrastructure required to implement the research strategy, including development of sophisticated core medical research facilities both on the University campus and at the University's lead teaching hospital, the recruitment of experienced leaders across the clinical specialities who are actively engaged in relevant top-tier health-oriented research.

#### Staff within GEMS are associated with a number of research clusters, including:

- ◆ Centre for Interventions in Infection, Inflammation and Immunity (4i)
- ◆ Centre for Physical Activity and Health Research (C-PAHR)
- ◆ Centre for Applied Biomedical Engineering Research (CABER)
- ◆ Materials & Surface Science Institute (MSSI)

#### Areas of Ph.D. supervisory expertise within GEMS:

Medical education; Anatomy; Biostatistics, Microbiology; Biochemistry; Immunology; Physiology; Health & Nutrition; Public health and epidemiology; Primary healthcare; Pre-hospital care; Respiratory medicine; General practice; Mental health, addiction & substance abuse; Psychiatry, delirium & dementia, cognition; Paediatric medicine, obesity & diabetes; Obstetrics & gynaecology; General medicine, cardiology, medical software; General, colorectal & vascular surgery; Pharmacology; Medicine-related humanities; Health economics; Medical device, diagnostic & therapeutic development.



**Shane Knox** (Ph.D. candidate)  
Programme Development Officer  
Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council



I commenced my Ph.D. studies with the GEMS just more than a year ago. I am delighted with the assistance and guidance I have received thus far. You might think this is only to be expected of such an Institution but what sets GEMS apart is the level of support, the personal interest and the down-to-earth direction and commitment offered by experienced supervisors and faculty. This brings a very welcomed 'human' influence to the research experience.



**Suzanne Dunne** (Ph.D. candidate)  
Quality Management Executive  
Irish Pharmaceutical Industry



I found the GEMS to be welcoming, with a very streamlined process for managing Ph.D. applications. My supervisors have an open door policy, are always interested in hearing about my progress, and their guidance is always extremely useful. Also, UL provides regular and relevant training for postgraduate students, which isn't always available elsewhere.

#### Example for someone doing a Ph.D. in Primary Care & Youth Mental Health

Year	Autumn	ECTS	Spring	ECTS
1	<b>Research project</b> <b>Core module:</b> Intro doc studies <b>Elective:</b> Substance use: Theoretical Foundations (EN3061)	12 6 6	<b>Research project</b> <b>Core module:</b> Research Integrity <b>Elective:</b> Substance use: Community, Social and Policy Perspectives (EN3052)	15 3 6
	<b>Research methods:</b> Models of Interventions Theory and Practice 1 (EN3071)	6	<b>Research methods:</b> Research Methods (PS4033)	6
2	<b>Research project</b> <b>Core module:</b> Entering the academic community <b>Research methods:</b> Introduction to Social Research Methods	21 3 6	<b>Thesis</b> <b>Core module:</b> PG workshops <b>Research methods:</b> Models of Interventions: Theory And Practice 2 (EN3072)	21 3 6
3&4	<b>Research project</b> <b>Core module:</b> Postgraduate professional portfolio			

The Department of Nursing and Midwifery conducts and supervises research in a range of areas and welcomes applications from researchers who wish to undertake a research degree leading to a master's by research or Ph.D. award. Our research activity aims to develop clinically focused research that enhances the health and social care of service users and the educational preparation of health care professionals.

#### Our work focuses around four main themes:

- ◆ Palliative care/chronic illness
- ◆ Intellectual disability and mental health
- ◆ Education (Nursing and Midwifery)
- ◆ Maternal and child health

These key areas are supported by a group or cluster of academic staff and research students with a shared research interest around each of the themes. The research clusters have strong alliances, both within the University and with external health care and academic agencies. These collaborations enhance the research support structures available to all members of the cluster. These themes aim to develop expertise in specific areas of nursing and midwifery education and research.

As a student in the Department you can expect a vibrant research environment and excellent supervision. Our teams of supervisors have a breadth and depth of experience which encompasses a range of qualitative, quantitative and action research methods. We also have considerable expertise in evaluation methods and systematic reviewing. Topics of research cover the 4 key themes and some examples include public health nursing and practice, palliative and end of life care and long term conditions, the relationship between global self-esteem and coping processes, mental health and cancer nursing.



#### Example for someone doing a Ph.D. in Advanced Nursing Practice

Year	Autumn	ECTS	Spring	ECTS
1	<b>Research project</b> <b>Core module:</b> Intro doc studies <b>Elective:</b> Concepts of specialist and Advanced Practice	12 6 6	<b>Research project</b> <b>Core module:</b> Research Integrity <b>Elective:</b> Consultancy in Nursing and midwifery	18 3 9
	<b>Research methods:</b> Health Research Methodology	6		
2	<b>Research project</b> <b>Core module:</b> Entering the academic community <b>Research methods:</b> Advanced research Methods in psychology 1	21 3 6	<b>Research project</b> <b>Core module:</b> PG workshops <b>Elective:</b> Strength & Conditioning (NSCA CSCS) <b>Research methods:</b> Qualitative research Methods in Psychology	15 3 6 6
3&4	<b>Research project</b> <b>Core module:</b> Postgraduate professional portfolio			



**Mairéad Hussey** RGN, BSc, MSc



Undertaking a Masters allowed me to build on previous academic qualifications and enabled me to expand and update my specialist knowledge within my chosen field. This course provides a flexible learning approach which allows students to plan an individualised study pathway which meets personal, professional and academic development needs. Additionally, following completion of the Masters, I will have the opportunity to progress to Ph.D. level.



**Professor Catriona Kennedy**  
RN Ph.D. BA (Hons) DN RNT



In the Department of Nursing and Midwifery we undertake research which improves the care and support of people and families throughout the life and illness trajectory. My own research interests are in community nursing, palliative and end of life care and chronic illness. I have led and participated in research using a range of methods including systematic reviews, action research and qualitative and quantitative approaches.

The Physical Education and Sport Sciences (PESS) department is a vibrant and rapidly growing department in the Faculty of Education and Health Sciences. The PESS department's mission is to promote and advance learning and knowledge in the area of physical education and sport sciences through innovative teaching and research. The department supports a thriving research postgraduate community and is recognized for excellence in research in Physical Education, Physical Activity, Health, Sport and Exercise Sciences and related fields. It has a strong emphasis on translating research into action and thereby continually striving to positively impact society through research and innovation.

#### Staff within the PESS Department are associated with a number of research clusters:

- ◆ The Physical Education, Physical Activity and Youth Sport (PE PAYS) Research Centre
- ◆ Biomechanics Research Unit (BRU)
- ◆ Centre for Physical Activity and Health Research (C-PAHR)
- ◆ 4i Centre for Interventions in Infection, Inflammation and Immunity
- ◆ Institute for the Study of Knowledge in Society (ISKS)

#### Areas of Ph.D. supervisory expertise within the PESS department:

Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy; Youth Voice and Participation; Physical Education Teacher Education; School-University Partnerships; Sport and Physical Education Policy; Coaching; Sport Psychology; Motor Control, Learning and Development; Physical Activity and Health; Movement and Technology; Movement for Function; Biomechanics in Sport and Performance; Lower Limb Movement Analysis and Injury; Biofeedback and Movement Variability; Movement Simulation and Musculoskeletal Modelling; Exercise Physiology; Exercise Metabolism; Exercise Biochemistry



#### Example for someone doing a Ph.D. in biomechanics of sprinting

Year	Autumn	ECTS	Spring	ECTS
1	<b>Research project</b> <b>Core module:</b> Intro doc studies <b>Elective:</b> Speed Sports	12 6 6	<b>Research project</b> <b>Core module:</b> Research Integrity <b>Elective:</b> Independent module: Biomechanics of Sprinting	18 3 9
	<b>Research methods:</b> Research Methods 1	6		
2	<b>Research project</b> <b>Core module:</b> Entering the academic community <b>Research methods:</b> Research Methods 2	21 3 6	<b>Research project</b> <b>Core module:</b> PG workshops <b>Elective:</b> Strength & Conditioning (NSCA CSCS) <b>Research methods:</b> Research methods 3	18 3 3 6
3&4	<b>Research project</b> <b>Core module:</b> Postgraduate professional portfolio			



**Dr. Michael Hanlon**  
Lecturer in Sport Science,  
Waterford Institute of Technology



Carrying out a Ph.D. in PESS was one of the most enjoyable and challenging experiences I have had.



PE PAYS Research Centre Lecture Series



**Dr. Deirdre Harrington**  
Postdoctoral Fellow,  
Population Science,  
Pennington Biomedical Research Center,  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana, USA.



The University of Limerick and the PESS department specifically was a great place to do a Ph.D. because there was freedom to develop an independent research profile while also having the opportunity to collaborate with other Ph.D. students.

The Department of Psychology strives to be a leading centre of psychological research and learning that advances knowledge and addresses contemporary social issues. Founded in 2007, the department has two accredited high demand undergraduate programmes and also provides input into a range of undergraduate and post-graduate programmes across the Faculties of Education and Health Sciences and Arts Humanities and Social Sciences. The department offers two taught postgraduate master programmes, and provides excellent opportunities for students to pursue research degrees in psychology. The Department of Psychology at UL is the only department in Ireland dedicated to the psychological study of social issues. It provides excellent research opportunities at Ph.D. level, based on the expertise of its staff, combined with a student centred and supportive environment. You can look forward to quality supervision by academics who are also world-class researchers. Ph.D. students are invited to attend research discussions and interact with a range of staff including visiting international academics, research fellows as well as other Ph.D. students, and have access to state of the art research facilities in a young and dynamic new department.

#### Areas of Ph.D. supervisory expertise:

Caregiver Health; Citizenship and National Identity in Ireland; Cognition and Psychopathology; Culture & Wellbeing; Dynamics of Power, Leadership and Surveillance; Emotion, Motivation, and Cognition; Gender and Intersexuality; Memory and Emotion-Regulation; Minorities and Majority Intergroup Prejudice in National Contexts; Mood Disorders, Anxiety, Trauma; Prosocial Behaviour Including Charitable Giving and Intergroup Helping; Psychological Analysis of Contemporary Social Issues; Stress, Self-Regulation and Subjective Wellbeing; Stress, Support and Health, Social Inclusion and Well-Being Aspects of Immigration and Homelessness; Social Cognition, Decision Making & Existential Psychology; Social Identity, Social Influence and Prosocial Behaviour; Social identity and the Experience of Trauma; Theoretical and Empirical Analyses of Political Engagement.



#### Example pathway for a Ph.D. in chronic disease

Year	Autumn	ECTS	Spring	ECTS
1	<b>Research project</b> <b>Core module:</b> Intro doc studies <b>Elective:</b> Professional Skills in Psychology 1 <b>Research methods:</b> Advanced Research Designs	12 6 6 6	<b>Research project</b> <b>Core module:</b> Research Integrity <b>Elective:</b> Professional Skills In Psychology 2 <b>Advanced Perspectives In Social Identity Research</b>	15 3 6 6
2	<b>Research project</b> <b>Core module:</b> Entering the academic community <b>Research methods:</b> Advanced Analysis 1	21 3 6	<b>Research project</b> <b>Core module:</b> PG workshops <b>Research methods:</b> Qualitative Research Methods in Psychology	18 3 6
3&4	<b>Research project</b> <b>Core module:</b> Postgraduate professional portfolio			



**Dr. Wijnand van Tilburg**



The department of psychology provided me with the ideal environment to flourish. The department's focus on addressing social issues through cutting-edge research really makes a Ph.D. count.



Studying for a Ph.D. in the University of Limerick is an exceptionally rewarding experience. The support of fellow students in contexts ranging from reading groups to conferences ensures the advantages one would expect of a lively, friendly and encouraging academic environment.

**Stephen Walsh**, Ph.D. student  
2011-1014