

Northern Ireland Report UCML November 2022

NICILT's excellent work continues with popular Francofest and Hispanofest competitions planned for February 2023. Over 30 Schools have registered to take part in each. NICILT will also host Spelling Bee competitions for beginning pupils of Irish and German in addition to two Languages for Employability webinars. These will highlight the importance of language skills in the global workplace, and aim to encourage an increase in GCSE languages uptake. A new initiative for NICILT is a dedicated Languages Week, in February 2023, to give teachers and pupils an opportunity to celebrate Languages, and shine a light on the fantastic work happening in schools.

The work of the CCEA Languages Programme Board continues.

St Mary's University College and CCEA are collaborating to develop an Irish language framework for use in guiding pupils' acquisition of Irish in our local immersion education system in Irish Medium schools at the primary phase. As part of the Teaching Profession Project hosted by St Mary's, Dr Seán Mac Corraidh presented research in second language acquisition in immersion education and a discussion with two experienced practitioners from the primary and post-primary phases. Both have been made available online.

Stranmillis University College continues to work in partnership with local schools facilitating a Languages in School course for final year BEd (primary) student teachers with A-Level language qualifications.

In June 2022, Queen's University Belfast was pleased to host the very successful 63rd Annual Conference of the Society for French Studies. The French department reports that students took part in the prestigious Choix Goncourt, and that a full engagement programme with feeder schools is underway. In October, Dr Claire Moran presented the work of Berthe Morrisot in Melvyn Bragg's BBC Radio 4 In Our Time Programme which attracted some 2 million listeners, and she published a related article in The Conversation with a similarly impressive reach.

There was a full house for the recent ESRC Festival of Social Science event, 'Taighde Úr ar Stair an Phobail: New research on history of the community', which was held in collaboration between the Department of Irish and Celtic Studies at QUB and community organisation Glór na Móna. The event, held on 3 November, showcased new research by recent and current QUB postgraduate students on the social history of West Belfast.

Queen's University Belfast/ An Cumann Gaelach were nominated for a prestigious Aisling Award under the category 'Foras na Gaeilge Outstanding Contribution to the Irish-Language Community'. Eibhlín Nic Cormaic, who graduated with a BA in Irish this year, has been invited to present on her undergraduate research project at the "Feminisms from the Peripheries" symposium in Brussels on 29 November.

A 'historic day' was marked in October as Irish language accommodation at Queen's University was officially launched. The Queen's University Irish-Language residential scheme opened on 12 October 2022, providing university accommodation space for 12 Irish-speaking students.

Dr Sharon Jones
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