Department of German Studies

Student Information Handbook

1.1 Introducing the Department

German Studies has been offered at Mary Immaculate College at undergraduate and post-graduate level since 1992. We have three full-time members of staff, one Teaching Fellow and, normally, a postgraduate assistant and a Praktikant*in (intern).

For a full and current staff list, office hours and further relevant information please see https://www.mic.ul.ie/faculty-of-arts/department/german-studies?index=0.

Academic Staff

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Dr. Christiane Schönfeld (Head of Department [HoD])

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1.2. How to contact us

If you have any queries about your course, assignments, grades, etc., please contact the member of staff responsible for the particular course. You can reach us during our office hours, by telephone and e-mail, or simply talk with us after class.

Important information such as timetable or room changes, German events, etc. will be communicated via Moodle and/or e-mail. Once you are registered for a particular German module, you will have access to the module on the interactive e-learning platform Moodle, on which all information relevant to the various courses – and much more – is available.

NB: If you have queries relating to this handbook or other aspects of MIC German Studies, please contact the Head of Department at christiane.schonfeld@mic.ul.ie and see https://www.mic.ul.ie/faculty-of-

for more comprehensive information on our department.

2.1. Information on course content and assessment methods

The Department of German Studies offers an exciting and wide-ranging language programme that enables students to excel in their language and intercultural skills, be it as beginners or advanced German students. The Department provides a friendly and supportive learning environment, which allows for small group work and innovative approaches to language teaching.

German for Beginners and Advanced
Students who did not do German for their Leaving Certificate can take German for Beginners in First Year, before joining other German students in 2nd Year. Bridging tutorials will be provided for beginner students who wish to continue with German Studies in Year 2.

Modules
You will receive further details of the content and assessment of these modules from individual lecturers at the beginning of each semester.

Semester 1			Semester 2		
Code	**Title**	**Credits**	**Code**	**Title**	**Credits**
GE4701 OR GE4711	Deutsche Sprache und Kultur Ab Initio 1 (beginners) OR Deutsche Sprache, Kultur und Literatur 1	6	GE4702 OR GE4712	Deutsche Sprache und Kultur Ab Initio 2 (beginners) OR Deutsche Sprache, Kultur und Literatur 2	6
Semester 3			**Semester 4**		
Code	**Title**	**Credits**	**Code**	**Title**	**Credits**
GE4753 OR GE4713	Deutsche Sprache und Linguistik 1 (beginners) OR Deutsche Sprache und Linguistik 1	6	GE4714	Deutsche Sprache und Linguistik 2	6
GE4763 OR GE4723	Deutsche Literatur und Kultur 1 (beginners) OR Deutsche Literatur und Kultur 1	6	GE4724	Deutsche Literatur und Kultur 2	6
Semester 5			**Semester 6**		
Code	**Title**	**Credits**	**Code**	**Title**	**Credits**
OC4310	Off Campus	30	OC4320	Off Campus	30
Semester 7			**Semester 8**		
Code	**Title**	**Credits**	**Code**	**Title**	**Credits**
GE4717	Deutsche Sprache und Linguistik 3	6	GE4718	Deutsche Sprache und Linguistik 4	6
GE4727	Deutsche Literatur und Kultur 3	6	GE4728	Deutsche Literatur und Kultur 4	6
GE4737	Undergraduate Dissertation in German Studies 1	6	GE4738	Undergraduate Dissertation in German Studies 2	6

The content of the modules offered in German Studies range from very focused language learning to relevant foundations and contexts (linguistics, current affairs, literature, film, history, etc.).

Assessment in the German Studies course is varied and continuous, i.e. assessments take place during the semester (presentations, written assignments, etc.) and during the exam period (submissions of essays, portfolios, etc.). This means you will get continuous feedback regarding your work and you have a great deal of control

over your own learning.

Details regarding the content and assessment of each module will be made available to students in Week 1 of each semester. Make sure you have all the information you need before embarking on an assignment, and do not hesitate to ask your lecturer if you have further questions!

2.2. Course assessment

A variety of assessment methods are used in all modules, which are relevant to the learning outcomes and key skills of the particular module (see 4.1 below). Students **must complete and submit all assessment units for each module.** Students must also achieve **a minimum of C3** in their <u>Oral Exams</u> in order to pass the language module.

Grading Scheme

A1	A2	B1	B2	B3	C1	C2	C3	D1	D2	F
80-100%	70-79%	65-69%	60-64%	55-59%	50-54%	45-49%	40-44%	35-39%	30-34%	0-29%

2.3. Grading Criteria

NB: the assessment criteria set out below are dependant on the level at which the courses are taken.

2.3.1. Assessment criteria for essay writing (in English):

	A 70-100%	**B 55-69%**	**C 54-40%**	**D 39-30%**	**F 0-29%**
Content	Comprehensive coverage of topic; relevant, complex and cogent arguments used; in-depth critical analysis of material; obvious originality of ideas	Wide coverage of topic; relevant points made and serious critical analysis evident	Reasonable coverage of topic; some relevant points made; little serious critical analysis of topic	Superficial coverage of material; few relevant points made; no serious critical analysis	Insufficient, inaccurate or irrelevant coverage of topic
Form	Fluent essay with arguments coherently linked and correctly referenced. Broad range of vocabulary, correct and appropriate use of grammatical structures; register appropriate, full bibliography accurately and clearly presented	Most ideas linked coherently and correctly referenced. Good range of vocabulary; attempted wide range of grammatical structures; register often incorrect, bibliography is mainly accurate and clear	Some ideas are linked; predominantly simple structures used; only half the points adequately referenced; limited range of vocabulary; little use of appropriate register, contains a bibliography with some inaccuracies	Few ideas are linked; simple structures throughout; less than half the points adequately referenced; intermittent intrusive grammatical errors; no attempt at appropriate register, incomplete or inaccurate bibliography	No apparent linking of ideas; little or no referencing; repeated intrusive grammatical errors; register inappropriate, no bibliography

2.3.2. Assessment criteria for oral and written communication in German

	A 70-100%	B 55-69%	C 54-40%	D 39-30%	F 0-29%
Content	Comprehensive coverage of topic; entirely relevant, analytical approach	Wide coverage; relevant points made, largely analytical approach	Reasonable coverage; some relevant points made; little attempt at analysis	Superficial coverage; hardly any relevant points made; no analysis	Insufficient, inaccurate or irrelevant information; no analysis
Correctness	Minimal formal errors	Some formal errors	Number of formal errors, interference in communication	Frequent formal errors, communication often disrupted	Obtrusive grammatical errors disrupt communication throughout
Structure	Very well structured, coherent, cogent	Well structured, largely coherent	Adequately structured, could be more coherent	Outline of basic structure apparent, but difficult to follow; lacks coherence	Absence of structure, no logical coherence apparent
Linguistic Competence	Sophisticated level of German; very good lexical and syntactical skills; wide range of complex structures; very capable of conducting an interactive discussion	Good level of German, good lexical and syntactical skills; good range of structures; good interaction	Average level of German, limited lexical and syntactical skills; some attempt to vary structures; capable of interaction	Limited command of German, simple syntactical and lexical skills; offers basic information with minimal interaction	Very limited command of German, syntax and lexis repetitive and basic; difficulty in communicating basic information
Pronunciation and Intonation (oral)	Clear and authentic; German patterns evident throughout	Clear and authentic for the most part, some English patterns evident	Acceptable. Attempts to vary patterns, often hard to follow	Flat intonation, poor pronunciation, quite hard to follow	P & I are an obstacle to communication; great difficulty for listener to follow
Originality	Extensive use of independent formulation; absence of 'learned-off' phrases, original ideas	Good use of independent formulation; limited use of 'learned-off' phrases	Some use of independent formulation; consistent use of 'learned-off' phrases	Little use of independent formulation; over-reliance on 'learned-off' phrases	Absence of interaction, content and language use merely repetition of limited source material

2.3.3. Assessment criteria of Portfolios

Assessment criteria will be made available by the lecturer. However, the basic principles for the different parts of the portfolio written in English and German will apply as outlined above.

2.4. Disclosure of marks

Lecturers make graded work available during class as soon as possible and are available for feedback. Any marks released prior to formal approval by a full Examination Board are provisional.

After the official release of your grades, a breakdown of your marks will be available upon request.
Do not hesitate to contact your lecturer/HoD and/or the Arts Office (061-204996).

3. Key Skills and Learning outcomes

3.1. Key Skills

We encourage our students to reflect on their learning performance in key skills areas in order to recognise that these skills are transferable. Key skills are embedded in the teaching of all modules and are developed and assessed in each module.

3.2. Learning Outcomes for Language and Linguistic Courses

Language Skills	Research and Presentation Skills	Learning Skills
Linguistic skills will be developed in all areas, particularly in summary, report and essay writing; text/film analysis; oral and written presentations; grammar and basic linguistic concepts such as phonetics, semantics, morphology, etc.	You will develop skills in researching a topic, then presenting an accurate, logical, and structured argument in German (and/or English), and expressing your own ideas coherently.	You will develop learning skills in areas such as self-directed learning, effective communication skills via discussion, presentation, role-play; IT skills via language learning platforms and Moodle; team skills via group/pair work.

3.3. Learning Outcomes for Literature and Culture Courses

Language Skills	General Knowledge	Research, Writing & Presentation	Learning Skills
You will develop an ability to comprehend German texts from a wide variety of sources, improve your ability to discuss texts in German and/or English in class, reflect on them at home (i.e. in oral and written form) and increase your ability to communicate relevant contexts.	You will develop an understanding of political, cultural and social developments in German-speaking countries today and in the context of recent European history; you will develop transnational and inter-cultural awareness and skills.	You will be able to research and write an essay, produce a poster presentation, etc. You will be able to interpret filmic and literary representations through close reading; apply suitable critical techniques, concepts, and contextualisation; evaluate critically and reference secondary sources; develop and express a balanced, logical and structured argument.	You will develop learning skills in areas such as self-directed learning, effective communication skills via discussion, presentation, role-play; IT skills via word-processing, PowerPoint presentations, IT skills via language learning platforms and Moodle; team skills via group/pair work.

4. What we expect from you:

4.1. Submission of assessed work
All course work (essays, assignments, projects, presentations, etc.) must be handed in on time.
A plagiarism declaration should be uploaded to Moodle for each module as directed by your lecturer.
Your lecturer will advise you regarding the information to be included on your written work.
Some of your work will be graded anonymously.

All essays and dissertations must be typed in double spacing on A4. Usually, written assignments will be submitted via Moodle (Turnitin). If the lecturer requests a printout, please leave margins of approximately 1 inch/2.5 cm and do not bind essays. Secure the sheets with one staple at the top left corner. Refer to the MIC *Study Skills Handbook Facing New Challenges* for detailed information on the style to be used for referencing and bibliographies. It is perfectly acceptable to use styles other than Harvard (i.e. Chicago or MLA), as long as you're consistent, i.e. use only one and provide all the necessary information.

The bibliography should be in alphabetical order of the author's surname. Always give the author(s)/editor(s)

full name, the title of the book/article and the book/journal where it appeared, date and place of publication, publisher and page numbers where appropriate.

Here are some examples:

For books and articles use the following form:
Egger, Sabine, 2023. Contemporary Ukrainian writers as an 'avant-garde' of exile in the German literary field? Katja Petrowskaja and Kateryna Mishchenko, *Oxford German Studies*, 52:3, 384-98, DOI: [10.1080/00787191.2023.2227501](10.1080/00787191.2023.2227501)

Grugger, Helmut, 2018. *Trauma – Literatur – Moderne. Poetische Diskurse zum Komplex des Psychotraumas seit der Spätaufklärung.* Wiesbaden: Metzler.

Schönfeld, Christiane, 2013. Being Human: Good Germans in Postwar German Film. In: Pól Ó Dochartaigh (Hg./ed. et al.), *Representing the 'Good German' in Literature and Culture after 1945: Altruism and Moral Ambiguity.* Rochester, NY: Camden House, 111-37.

For websites: the website must be referenced in full together with the date accessed in brackets.
Jung, Britta C., 2022. Why Germany is a Country Grappling with Its Past, Present, and Future. *RTÉ Brainstorm*, https://www.rte.ie/brainstorm/2022/1212/1341328-germany-eric-scholz-zeitenwende-ukraine-russia-history-politics-war-arms-/ (18/10/2023)

For texts from the course Reader: Egger, Sabine, 2007. *GE 4723/63 Deutsche Literatur und Kultur 1. Literatur: War Rotkäppchen eine revolutionäre Gestalt? Das Kunstmärchen in der deutschsprachigen Literatur. Materialien*. Limerick: MIC (nicht veröffentlicht), **insert page no**.

For films: give time of sequence referred to as [0:56:20-1:04:10] or time of image as [hour:minute:second].

Word limits for all pieces of assessed work must be observed (within 10%). A deduction of marks will normally be imposed for work which exceeds the prescribed word limit.

4.2. Late submission
Failure to submit a piece of work by the deadline without submitting a medical cert or other appropriate excuse, will normally result in deductions to your grade.
If you have trouble handing in an assignment or keeping up with the work, do contact your lecturer as soon as possible. Communication is key and a solution can usually be found.

4.3. Failure to submit assessed work
If a student fails to submit an assessment unit for a module without providing a medical cert or any other reason, a mark of F will be given for that specific assignment (see 2.2 above).

4.4. Extenuating circumstances
If students submit a piece of work after the deadline or miss any other part of the assessment for a module as a result of illness or any other special circumstances, they must provide evidence of same to the Lecturer and/or the Arts Office. Students can apply for an i grade and defer their assessment if necessary. Do contact your lecturer and/or Head of Department if you are experiencing difficulties. Further information regarding i grades is available via MIC's Student Academic Administration Office.

4.5. Regular attendance at all classes
Attendance at lectures and tutorials is mandatory. Research indicates that there is a relationship between attendance and academic performance. Lecturers reserve the right to administer attendance checks at all/some lectures and tutorials. Students are expected to attend all lectures, seminars, language classes and tutorials.

Up to 10% of the grade achieved by a student will normally be deducted for unexplained non-attendance.

If you cannot attend a particular class, you should inform the lecturer beforehand or via email. Should this prove impossible, due to illness for example, please contact the lecturer as soon as you are able and present evidence of illness, e.g. medical cert, etc.

4.6. Honesty
Beware of plagiarism! All written work submitted must be your own and you must acknowledge all your sources. You cannot just cut and paste sections from websites or books and present this as your own work! Also, do not present AI generated texts as your own (this includes machine translation programmes such as DeepL)! When using someone else's words or ideas, you must reference these, i.e. put them in quotation marks and acknowledge them (cf. 4.1.). You sign a legally binding declaration that all of the work is your own when you submit work for grading. These rules and requirements must be taken extremely seriously. You may be required to use the turnitin programme via Moodle when submitting your essays. If so, you will be given clear instructions on the process. If found guilty of plagiarism or unethical use of AI, you will be penalised by a range of sanctions, and this will go on your student record. You must read the section on plagiarism in MIC's student handbook very carefully.

4.7. Participation in extra curricular activities
Members of the department organise regular extra curricular activities for students, such as the *German Stammtisch*, *Filmabend*, etc. and other additional opportunities for conversation in German in the Franco German House. While attendance at these events is at your own discretion, we do recommend that you participate regularly as a means of improving your German, getting to know other students at MIC studying German and generally becoming an active learner of German.
Students will be informed of all 'German Hours' at the Franco German House at the beginning of each teaching term. Do take advantage of these additional ways of improving your German and learning about German-language culture! If you have any questions regarding the use of the Franco German House, do contact the HoD.

4.8. Special needs
If you have special needs which affect your performance in assessment, please notify the HoD at the beginning of the academic year.

4.9. Exchange students
Exchange students normally follow the same course and assessment methods as home students. Alternative assessment methods, if required by the home university, should be discussed with the lecturer and/or the HoD.

5. What you can expect from us:

5.1. Professionalism and support
Our priority is to create a professional and positive learning environment for our students throughout their studies with us. We provide high quality, up-to-date courses, plenty of encouragement and support so that our students can optimise their learning and academic performance in German**.**

5.2. Grading student work
Members of staff mark all student assignments and exams as soon as possible. We gladly provide feedback on student work at the request of the student and actively encourage our students to ask for individual feedback on work submitted. A selection of student work is examined by the external examiner to ensure fair and transparent marking of all course work.

5.3. Student feedback
We welcome feedback from our students on all aspects of the courses we teach and use this feedback for our annual review. Your co-operation in completing anonymous student questionnaires at various times throughout the year is an invaluable source of information on changes to be implemented in the teaching and content of our courses. Do not hesitate to contact your lecturer and/or the Head of Department if you have any queries or concerns. Regular meetings with your class representatives take place every semester.

5.4. Writing a reference
We are happy to provide references for our students when required. If you do need a reference from us, please ask the member of staff with whom you have had the most contact during the particular semester/year. Give us at least 10 working days notice, particularly towards the end of the academic year.

5.5. Timekeeping
Teaching staff will begin and finish all classes on time. If a lecturer is unable to deliver a lecture, s/he will organise a suitable replacement and give students as much notice of same as possible via e-mail and/or Moodle.

5.6. Cancellation of Lectures
Normally, we do not cancel a lecture, but provide students with all relevant materials (including recorded lectures) via Moodle and/or arrange for a suitable substitution.

6. Useful tips on learning a language

6.1. Learning types
Language learning requires 4 basic skills: *listening, speaking, reading and writing* and you will be given plenty of opportunity in your German courses to practice these. To make your learning experience easier and more enjoyable, try to identify your learning type, e.g. are you a more visual or a more aural learner? (we do basic exercises at the beginning of the year to establish this). Use this information to strengthen your own learning performance.

6.2. Getting organised
Get a good bilingual dictionary, i.e. it will cost about €25 and should contain the new spelling rules, plenty of examples of using the word in context and verb tables in both languages. When you have bought the dictionary, learn how to use it properly!
Get core course books required for a module at the beginning of the term!
Get an A4 folder just for your German course! Organise the folder for the different courses in German, ideally into separate sections, e.g. oral skills, grammar, linguistics, etc.
For learning new vocabulary, get a special notebook in which you write down the new word/phrase learned as well as examples of how to use it in context. It is important to learn new vocabulary on a regular basis, otherwise you will greatly slow down your learning progress. Remember we all learn by repetition and reinforcement – the average adult needs to have contact with a new word **16** times (visually, orally, aurally) to remember it!

6.3. Becoming a self-directed learner
The main difference from secondary school is that you will now be expected to work without constant supervision and organise your own learning schedule. This means your learning must be self-motivated and self-directed - with plenty of support from us! Remember learning a language is a gradual process, like getting fit, i.e. it requires regular practice rather than cramming at the end.

There are many ways of learning independently outside regular course work that allow you to combine work with pleasure, e.g. use the internet to engage with German-language content on news and social media platforms on topics that you are interest in, read up on a particular hobby in German, go to the *Stammtisch* regularly where you can practice speaking German while relaxing with other students, come along regularly to the *Filmabend* (the films screened always have English sub-titles, so even a total beginner can follow them and listen to authentic German at the same time), listen to German songs and sing along with them, and get to know the German-speaking Erasmus students in MIC (at the *Stammtisch* and other German events). If you would like to practise your German with an online Tandem-partner from a German-speaking country, we are happy to advise you on suitable platforms.

6.4. Some useful tips on improving your language skills in German

6.4.1. Writing

Don't start without having a good dictionary, your grammar book and vocabulary notebook beside you! Read the title of the assignment carefully, then jot down your own ideas on the topic. Next organise these ideas into an overall plan. Review all the new expressions you have learned in your other German courses and try to select appropriate one for the assignment. However, a word of caution here. Incorporating new vocabulary/phrases in the appropriate context is quite different from over-using learned-off phrases. Over reliance on learned-off expressions and using them in incorrect contexts represent a basic lack of language awareness and makes a text very hollow. It also indicates a serious lack of independent learning skills, key components in improving your learning performance. After you have structured your ideas, begin to write, expressing your own ideas on the topic and other relevant information. **Most importantly, re-read your assignment carefully several times, paying particular attention to verb-noun agreement, adjective endings, gender, spelling, punctuation, etc.**

Here are a some of the most common mistakes that can easily be avoided by re-reading:

Punctuation: Use commas to separate subordinate/main clauses, except when following 'und'. Always use a comma before subordinating conjunctions such as *dass, nachdem, weil* and *obwohl.*
Verbs: Plural subjects have plural verbs and singular subjects are followed by singular verbs – remember that collective nouns like *die Polizei, die Familie, die Gruppe* or *die Regierung* are singular in German and must be followed by a singular verb.
Word order: Remember that after subordinating conjunctions like *dass, während, weil* or *als* the verb moves to the end of the sub-clause.
Cases: The *Nominative* case is used for the subject of a sentence – *Der Soldat* ist nicht daran interessiert.
The *Accusative case* is normally used for the direct object of a verb – Ich habe *den Satz* nicht verstanden.
The *Dative* case is normally used for giving something to someone or taking something from a person – Ich gab *ihm* den Brief. Prepositions followed by the dative case should be memorised – e.g. Ich bin *im* Haus.
***Sie* and *sie*:** Remember that *Sie* means you (formal) and *sie* means they or she. The possessive pronouns are *Ihr* (your; formal) and *ihr* (her or their).

If you are not completely sure of gender/spelling, do not guess- you have a 66% chance of being incorrect. Check the dictionary! Use a German spell check on the computer, identifying why you made the particular mistake as you correct it. Get another student or friend to read your essay before submitting it. **Do not get native speakers to check your work!** This is considered a serious offence and is also blatantly obvious to the person correcting your assignment. You can, of course, discuss your work with our Praktikant/in from the University of Bamberg, who will be able to point you towards improvements needed.

6.4.2. Speaking

Go to your oral skills classes und use the opportunity to speak German! Attend every event at which German is spoken and listen attentively. Gradually you will build up the confidence to speak, using what you have heard to formulate your own ideas. Remember a conversation is a two-way stream of input (listening) and output (speaking)! Start talking out loud to yourself in German (preferably when no one else is around;)! For example, practice using the grammatical structures you are learning in the grammar class, e.g. on your way to college/while getting ready for bed at night, describe your daily routine in the present tense, what you did yesterday in the past tense, etc. Read out loud in German regularly as it helps you to practice articulating difficult sounds in German and also gets you used to hearing your own voice in German. Use digital learning platforms such as www.digilanguages.ie. Lecturers are happy to advise you on suitable electronic resources. The key to becoming a good German speaker is practice and we will do our best to provide you with plenty of opportunity in class, in the Franco German House, during extra-curricular activities. Make the most of it!

7. Tips on written and oral assignments

7.1.1. Oral presentations

Choose a topic that interests you and you enjoy talking/writing about as this will make the assignment less of a

chore. Check the length of the presentation and structure it accordingly, i.e. set a time limit for introduction, main points and conclusion. Do your research, requesting help at this stage from the lecturer if you need it. Make sure to include both relevant facts **and** your own ideas. If you are using power point presentation, make sure that you do not write down everything on the slide (your slide should contain the main idea only). Vary your slides, using a combination of image and text. Make sure you have adequate time to present each slide (time yourself to be sure). Check your German by re-reading it as outlined above 6.4.1. Read it aloud several times at home to familiarise yourself with the contents and import points.

If you are giving a group presentation, make sure to meet as a group as soon as you have chosen the specific topic. Divide up the theme, making sure everyone is actively involved at this planning stage. Draw up an overall plan of the group presentation, allocating a particular theme/task to each person. At this stage it is important to time each individual contribution and define the main point/s in each contribution. Once each person is familiar with his/her contribution, go through all the points for oral presentations outlined above. It is important to meet regularly as a group to make sure everyone is working according to the agreed plan and that everyone is working. If one member of the group is not participating, this should be addressed first by the group. If the problem is not resolved, the group should then approach the lecturer, outlining the exact problem and what steps have been taken by the group to solve it. It is important to practise the overall presentation together, correcting any problems (length, language, originality, critique, etc.), and ensuring that the final presentation is one coherent whole and not fragmented, **before** presenting it to the class.

7.1.2. Essay writing

A good essay begins in the library. Once you have chosen your topic, do your research. To get more detailed information as you read, ask yourself the following questions: Who? What? When? Where? Why? and How? As soon as you have some familiarity with the topic, decide on which particular angle you will emphasise in your essay. This is an extremely important decision that will greatly affect your entire essay. At this stage draw up an overall plan, including introduction, main part and conclusion. Now continue your research, being directed by the main theme of your essay. Once you start writing, remember that your essay must contain relevant information from your research **as well as your own critical analysis** of these facts. Illustrate and support the points you are making with references and quotations rather than making broad generalisations. Explain your opinion and support it by references. Your essay should have the following structure:

Introduction: State your thesis. A good beginning might also be a quotation from one of your sources. Summarise the main points of your essay, possibly in the order you are going to address them in. Identify problems and clarify issues if necessary.

Main Part: It contains the ideas and details to support your thesis. Don't stop after just describing your topic, e.g. giving the contents of the film or book you are writing about. Make sure that you compare, contrast, criticise and clarify. The whole essay and individual paragraphs should be well ‚signposted'. Each paragraph should be centred on one particular issue, i.e. one major and relevant idea per paragraph). Each paragraph should be long enough to develop an idea (more than 3 or 4 lines), but not longer than half a page; one sentence should lead to another. Each paragraph must be recognisable as a logical next step in a coherently developing argument that directly answers the set question and leads to your conclusion. All detail should be organised toward an end, i.e., the point you want to make in the particular paragraph.

Conclusion: End with a concluding paragraph in which you state your results and maybe further questions that you could not address in your essay and that provoke further thought.

Here are some further reading tips for essay writing:

Study Skills Handbook, *Facing New Challenges* (available online)

Davis, W. Winifred, 1997. *Essay-writing in German: A Student's Guide.* Manchester / New York: Manchester University Press. (library)

Hares, Rod, 1985. *Gute Literaturnoten! German Literature Essay-writing.* London: Hodder & Stoughton. (library)

When you have finished writing, double-check that you have spelt all German quotations and proper names correctly, as well as having copied the essay title correctly. Check the word count and adjust accordingly. Use a spell-check in English/German as appropriate. Make sure you essay has the appropriate cover sheet and adheres

to the guidelines in 4.1. above. Submit it on time!

For further information, contact the Head of the Department of German Studies at christiane.schonfeld@mic.ul.ie or phone at 061-20-4582 / -4996 or knock at my office door in Gerard House (N22).