

Curriculum

Heritage Interpretation Postgraduate Program 120 ECTS

Program title(s) and code(s)

MA/MSc in Heritage Interpretation

PGDip in Heritage Interpretation

Mode and type of study

Part-time (4 year) or Full-time (2 year)

Distance learning

Entry requirements

Bachelor's degree

Purpose

The objective of this postgraduate program is centered on the goal of comprehending the heritage interpreter as a unique and specialized professional. This encompasses an understanding of the ethics and responsibility of the profession for the care for heritage places and their transmission to the audience, leading to, amongst others, a more conscious awareness of the heritage values, and sustainable tourism. Its overarching objectives are as follows:

- To train and prepare individuals to be effective communicators and curators of our rich and diverse heritage, bridging the gap between past, the present and the future, by fostering a sense of connection and responsibility for our shared cultural and natural resources.
- To equip individuals with the necessary skills, knowledge, and techniques to become capable heritage interpreters who can engage and educate diverse audiences and make heritage experiences more accessible, engaging, and enjoyable for visitors of all backgrounds and ages.
- To enable interpreters to work with local communities to promote a sense of pride, ownership, and involvement in the care, management, and promotion of heritage assets. This will help individuals to connect with their heritage, fostering a sense of identity and belonging.
- To promote heritage care and management, teach principles of responsible stewardship and sustainable practices in interpretation.
- To train professionals who can create engaging and meaningful experiences for visitors to heritage sites, museums, and institutions, enhancing their understanding and enjoyment. It prepares individuals for careers in sustainable heritage tourism, educational settings, as well as community development contributing to the professionalization of these sectors.

- To facilitate cross-cultural understanding and exchange by training interpreters who can effectively communicate the stories and significance of different places, cultures and traditions. Especially by stimulating and activating all visitors' and stakeholders senses and creating meanings that will resonate with the individual experiences of visitors and/or stakeholders and their specific cultural backgrounds.
- To encourage future interpreters of heritage to carry out assessments and evaluations of different approaches, methods and interpretation techniques with the aim of constantly improving the quality of their own interpretation skills.
- To inspire research and innovation in heritage interpretation methods and techniques, keeping the field dynamic and relevant.
- To contribute to the management and sustainability of heritage, ensuring that it remains accessible and meaningful for future generations.

Learning activities

The courses use a broad spectrum of learning activities such as lectures, seminars, excursions, group assignments, internship and research project work.

- Modules cover topics ranging from in-depth exploration to technical aspects of heritage interpretation.
- Course materials encourage students to place their learning within both local and European contexts, fostering a broader perspective.
- Emphasis is placed on addressing complex matters empathetically, sensitively, and ethically, especially in cross-cultural or socially diverse settings.
- Encouragement for independent learning to develop self-reliance and problem-solving skills.
- Opportunities for individual or group case study work to apply theoretical knowledge to practical situations.
- Enhancing written and online communication skills for effective dissemination of heritage information.
- Organized visits to heritage sites or resources to enrich practical knowledge.
- Practical internship experiences to apply knowledge and skills in a real-world heritage interpretation setting.
- The opportunity to conduct independent research and produce a dissertation on a heritage-related topic.

Program aims

After completing the program, students should have acquired the following knowledge, skills and critical thinking abilities:

Knowledge and understanding

- Present knowledge and understanding of central Heritage Interpretation terminology, concepts, principles and approaches.
- Comprehend the history and development of Heritage Interpretation, along with an understanding of its current policy framework.
- Highlight the value of cooperation in Heritage Interpretation processes.

Competence and skills

- Show proficiency in crafting and delivering compelling narratives through various mediums, including written, oral and audiovisual communication.
- Demonstrate ability to connect with and collaborate effectively with visitors and stakeholders of diverse backgrounds and age groups, fostering positive interactions and engagement.
- Display competence in applying Heritage Interpretation knowledge to address real-world challenges in the field, independently plan and execute research projects, and develop interpretive planning processes.

Judgement and approach

- Demonstrate the ability to make assessments in Heritage Interpretation informed by relevant disciplinary, social and ethical issues and also to exhibit awareness of ethical aspects of Heritage Interpretation research and practice.
- Showcase insight into the possibilities and limitations of Heritage Interpretation research and practice, its role in society and the responsibility of the individual for how it is used.

Courses

The Master's program consists of two years of full-time study, where the first academic year consists of courses comprising a total of 60 ECTS, and the second academic year consists of internship 30 ECTS, and a thesis of 30 ECTS.

The first academic year consists of the following mandatory (generic) course: *Heritage and Interpretation: sustainable futures* (30 ECTS) with the following modules:

- Unlocking the Past: Introduction to Heritage Interpretation (5ECTS)
- Navigating the Legal and Policy Landscape of Heritage Interpretation (5ECTS)
- Rethinking Heritage Narratives I: Understanding a Critical Approach (5 ECTS)
- Rethinking Heritage Narratives II: Applying a Critical Approach (5 ECTS)
- Interpreting Heritage for a Sustainable Future I Understanding (5 ECTS)
- Interpreting Heritage for a Sustainable Future II Application (5 ECTS)

and two of the following specific/optional courses:

- The Interpretative Communication (15 ECTS)
- Personal & Non-personal Interpretive Means (15 ECTS)
- Digital Resources and Heritage Interpretation (15 ECTS)

The second academic year consist of the following specific/optional courses:

- Internship (30 ECTS)
- Thesis (30 ECTS)

Reference points used to inform the programme specification

- United Nations Education for Sustainable Development Goals
- UNESCO Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)
- Relevant conventions and charters of heritage
- National Strategies and legal frameworks for heritage management
- Strategy document for the participating organization/institute

Indicators of program quality

- The postgraduate course will be followed up and evaluated in accordance with the applicable policy for each participating organization.
- The course will regularly be examined by external examiners.
- Written course evaluation.
- The evaluation reports will be used continuously to develop the course content.

Criteria for award and classification

Candidates will graduate with the degree of Master of Heritage Interpretation.