

Report for future Erasmus Students

Erasmus 2014/15 UCD Dublin

Dear Colleagues,

this Report is intended to help those of you who are thinking about attempting an ERASMUS semester or academic year abroad to make your decision and to show why Dublin might be a nice option.

College

The college UCD is a large university containing a variety of facilities for studying as well as for living.

First of all, James Joyce Library, the main library of the college provides an excellent environment for studying. It is equipped with generous desks, most of which contain plugs for laptops. Further, there is a great printing service, which operates through the student ID-card (U-card) and can be used all over campus, which was very practical for me.

Regarding college literature, the loan service was practical to me as there are different types of loans (4 hour, two day, week loan and long loan). It has to be said though, that it is sometimes necessary to be fast if you need a specific book, the best way is probably planning ahead your tasks well.

The most comfortable part about studying was the broad range of possibilities to access online databases such as westlaw on- as well as off-campus, just logging into your UCD student account. That way one was always up to date with latest articles on the matters dealt with.

Going to UCD will also mean having to do quite a few written papers, which is quite challenging in the beginning, but was good practice in legal writing in the end. There are courses which just require a written exam (mostly 2 hours), however many of them require a paper as well, the size of which ranges between around 1500 and 7000 words.

Even though some courses might be hard to follow – like most challenges in life – they are manageable if you put in the effort, which is necessary to succeed. For my part I discovered that some courses apart from the mandatory ones in European and International Law were very interesting as well, as they allowed an even better insight into how law is taught in another country. I can personally recommend Banking Law, Revenue Law and ADR, in case you are looking for interesting courses for your learning agreement. As for EU Law and International Law the courses are well divided up into semester one and two, so going for one year would probably be the best way to go. The lectures vary in quality, most of them were very helpful to me though. In any case, independent research is valued very high at UCD and will be necessary especially for written tasks.

Finally, the building of UCD Sutherland School of Law is one of the most modern ones on campus, which you will note especially in the lecture theatres.

Living

Even though there is a certain amount of student rooms at UCD for international students, it seems very hard to get on-campus-accommodation, since places are booked out very fast. Therefore it seems very likely one has to consider looking for off campus accommodation.

There are webpages though where a variety of different places is available for rent. The biggest page is probably www.daft.ie.

Your living costs will depend largely on how one prefers to live. There are shared rooms available, which can be very cheap and single flats on the other hand which tend to be quite expensive.

There are also families willing to take in students for an academic year, who are willing to rent a room to an international student. From my experience in such a situation arrangements like breakfast included should be possible as well and you will learn a lot more about the country than living with international students. Irish people love long conversations.

Sports Centre

UCD also offers a variety of sports clubs and societies, which I can highly recommend to join. It is such a nice opportunity to get to know your fellow students apart from studying and keep also physically fit during your time abroad.

Not only did I love the brand new gym and pool, I also enjoyed training with sports clubs at a very high level in athletics and kickboxing.

Sports clubs also organize amazing trips during the year, which offer a good price and great fun. I for example went to skiing to Alpe d'Heuz during winter break with UCD Snowsports and running to Monto Gordo with UCD Athletics during Mid-Term-Break.

Events for international students

Another highlight were the events organized by student societies, especially for international students. During those you can discover cultural highlights within Dublin City as well as throughout the country.

I can especially recommend the daytrip to visit Guinness Storehouse and the GAA (Gaelic Sport like football and hurling) museum, which was right at the start of the semester.

During the semester you will have the opportunity on weekends to visit smaller cities like Galway, Cork or Belfast. Galway in the west of Ireland was probably the place I enjoyed most as it is such a calm city right at the Atlantic Ocean.

Ireland has great landscapes, which you can best discover at the Cliffs of Moher, Lakes of Connemara, or during a Kayaking-Tour in Donegal.

I am very thankful for the opportunity I got and glad that I took the chance and made an experience of a lifetime!

Thomas Sischka