

STAP Experience Report

Business

Fall 2024/25 (02.09.24 – 21.12.24)

STAP Bachelor

Dublin City University

Republic of Ireland



Completed modules:

- Development Economics (5 ECTS)
- International Finance (5 ECTS)
- Psychology in Organisations (5 ECTS)
- English for Academic Purposes 1 (5 ECTS)

**At UoCologne: B.Sc. in Economics -
Specialisation Track in Business Administration**

Preparation

The preparation for the exchange semester in Ireland was minimal, since this country is in the EU, so I didn't have to worry about visas, insurance, and the like, which was a huge relief. I would recommend booking the flight early in advance, as it saves a lot of money. Ryanair usually offers the cheapest flights for less than 70 €. I also recommend only booking a one-way flight and figure out when you'll book your return flight during the semester. My application process for my semester abroad started at the beginning of December. For most universities, if not all, you needed a certificate of your English skills at a level of at least B2. I did the FILTERtest, which was offered from the university. After receiving the result, I chose 5 possible destinations and finally got the offer from DCU. The contact persons did a good job and informed me with information meetings about the most important deadlines and necessary tasks to fill in the relevant documents and submit them. For completing my ERASMUS-documents I needed to choose my potentially modules in advance (learning agreement), which are obviously available on the website of the university. But everything was explained step by step and in detail.

Accommodation

Once I knew that I am going to study in Dublin, I was looking for an accommodation straight away as I have heard that the living situation in Dublin is even worse than in some German cities. As an ERASMUS student, it is almost impossible to get on-campus accommodation, which is why you have to cast your search very wide. I asked my friends, put it on my Instagram story, joined Facebook groups, visited the websites provided on the DCU website (attention for scammers), and so on. I got very lucky with my chosen host family (friend of my cousin). They were very easy-going and welcoming. I paid 600€ per month, which seems a lot for a room in a hostfamily, but you need to consider, that the normal prices for accommodations are between 800-1100€.

Studying at DCU and courses

In general, I enjoyed my studies at the university. The DCU has three campuses. Glasnevin, St. Patrick's and All Hallows. Glasnevin is the biggest of three and as a business student all of your classes will take place there. There you have a gym, a library, also a little supermarket, an ATM, a restaurant, and a nice student bar. The education is quite different from Cologne, some subjects don't have exams, instead group work, essays and more.

Before the start of the semester, we were given a list of modules that we can and should choose, upon arrival in Dublin during some time we could change our choice.

However, our orientation week was a bit disappointing, since we had many academic talks and organisational meetings. Don't expect too much from the orientation week, it is definitely not the same as in Germany, where you are doing fun games and pub crawls. But everyone is searching for friends, so don't be afraid to make the first step.

The DCU offers a wide spectrum of clubs and societies that go from, surfing over rugby and boxing to climbing and Snowsports in terms of clubs and from the start-up society to the theatre and Japanese society there was a lot. It is practically to not find a club or society you like. Those are a great way to make friends and have some interesting extracurricular activities. At only 4 Euro to get into a club or society it is also a great way to experience new things. I personally joined the DJ society and really enjoyed it. Would really recommend!

My modules:

International Finance

Unfortunately, the lecture was not that exciting due to the professor's monotonous delivery. Nevertheless, the content was quite interesting and I learned the basics about foreign exchange, international financing, trading, etc. We had a group assignment which counted for 25% of the grade and a final exam at the end of the semester (75%).

Development Economics

If you attend lectures regularly, the subject will seem quite exciting. It is made up of 3 parts: an individual assignment (30% of the grade), a group assignment (30%) and a final assignment (40%), all of which are essays that you had to submit. Furthermore, we had a very friendly lecturer.

Psychology in Organisations

Another very interesting module for me. It consisted of an online multiple-choice quiz (30% of the grade) and one essay about one of the topics we discussed during the lectures (70%).

English for Academic Purposes 1

I particularly liked the module because we had a very dedicated professor who really wanted us to improve our English and not fail. It was mainly about academic writing and improving our writing skills. We had a reading assessment (50% of the grade) and a final writing assessment (50% of the grade), both of which were written in class.

Living in Dublin

Dublin is a small, but still beautiful city. There are some nice city districts where you like to stroll around but especially the countryside has a lot to offer. Around Dublin, we visited some nice spots on Howth Island, at Grey-Greystones, and in Glendalough. It is also very cheap and not too far to do trips to Belfast, Galway or Cork by bus. I visited Galway and Cliffs of Moher, Killarney, Belfast and London. With two other friends, we did a weekend-trip to Cork which was one of my best experiences in the semester. We took the bus to Cork and rented a GoCar (sharing service) for a day to explore the County Kerry and the beautiful coastline. I would highly recommend that!

Most of the friends I made in Dublin weren't Irish, since there is a strong connection within the Erasmus community. With those friends I had a lot of fun and travelled through Ireland, but also in Dublin itself. Transport in Dublin is not the best as the buses are not very reliable and there are only two trams (green and red line). A bus from DCU to the city centre takes about 30 minutes depending on the traffic. With a leap card, which you will get at the beginning of the semester, you must pay 1€ for every bus drive, but never more than 15€ a week.

Concerning grocery shopping, it is quite like German food prizes- sometimes even more cheap, if you go to the right supermarkets, such as Aldi, Lidl, SuperValu or Tesco. But dining out, alcohol or having coffee in a café is more expensive than back in Germany.

The Irish may be the nicest people I ever met, and the pub culture is just awesome. Every pub is different and most of them have live music, which was so nice. Everybody has to figure out their own favourite pub, but if I would have to recommend one, I would recommend the Ryan's Pub (Camden Street) on a Wednesday night because you will find lots of Irish students and will have huge fun.

Conclusion

Dublin or rather Ireland was not my first choice, nevertheless I can say that these 4 months were an unbelievable time. You live in a foreign country in a new culture and collect extremely many experiences and beautiful memories. I saw a lot of beautiful places and had the chance to improve my English skills.

All in all, I had a great time in Dublin and met incredible people. I would recommend everyone to do a semester abroad.