



STUDENT HANDBOOK

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WELCOME

We are very pleased to welcome you to Berlitz Dublin!

Berlitz is proud to be able to welcome students from countries all over the world.

This handbook contains information on all aspects of your stay in Ireland, including detailed information on our location; what to expect; school facilities; frequently asked questions, and details on our academic system.

We hope it answers all your questions. If you still have questions after reading this handbook, please come and speak to us.

Best wishes, and enjoy your studies with us at Berlitz.



Mark Harrington

Managing Director



CONTACT DETAILS

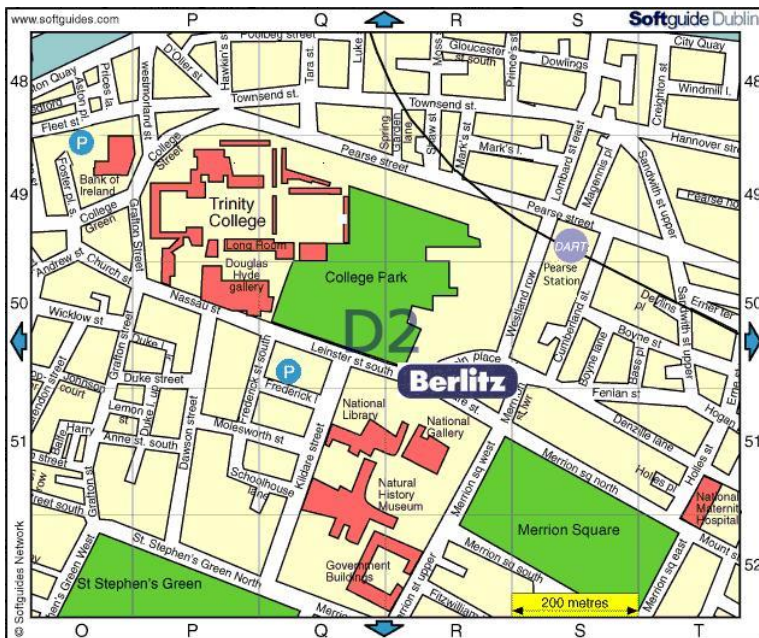
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ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Berlitz Dublin was originally founded in 1901. We offer courses in English as a Foreign Language as well as other languages.

Our programmes are designed to provide you with the most effective learning experience. All teachers are qualified to CELTA or DELTA equivalent levels and classes are carefully monitored to ensure the highest quality at all times.

We offer General English Courses based on the Common European Framework of references for languages. We also offer personalised one-to-one courses which can be tailored to your needs. We offer one-to-one courses based on the Berlitz method upon request.

Class sizes vary from one-on-one to 15 students, allowing more **individual attention** and a **friendly learning environment**. Smaller groups allow for more focus and greater opportunity for student and teacher interaction.

Our centre is located at 5 Merrion Street Lower in the Georgian Quarter of Dublin city centre in an exclusive, four storey-building and has seven classrooms. As well as offering **free WIFI** throughout the building. There is also a **break area** which offers free coffee/tea and biscuits.

Dublin is Ireland's capital and offers the advantages of a **vibrant** city set-up within close proximity to some of the most beautiful scenery in Ireland. It combines the sophistication and energy of a thriving metropolis with easy access to the stunning scenery of Wicklow, the "Garden of Ireland". With **leading universities** at your doorstep, you will find a **large international student population** in Dublin, and a city whose bars and restaurants reflect its **cultural diversity**. Whether your interests lie in embracing Dublin's vibrant rugby and Gaelic sports scene, in attending the concert of your favourite band, or simply in enjoying superb shopping, **you won't be disappointed!**

OUR TEAM

The teachers and staff at Berlitz are here to help you with anything you may need to make your stay in Dublin enjoyable and productive. We are an experienced, enthusiastic and, above all, friendly team.

OUR COURSES AND TEACHING

Berlitz School Dublin is accredited by ACELS (the Accreditation and Coordination of English Language Services) a service of QQI (Quality and Qualifications Ireland).

All of our teachers are qualified to CELTA or DELTA equivalent through accredited English language teaching schemes.

As a Berlitz franchisee, we offer lessons using the Berlitz method when requested and considered appropriate. In our group courses, we favour an eclectic approach to English language teaching, with our teachers exploiting a variety of methodologies in order to assist learning in an effective manner, which seeks to constantly take into consideration the individual learning styles and particular needs of all our students.

Students from all over the world are welcome here and have lots of opportunities to make new international friends!

LESSONS

- Group classes have a maximum of 15 students.
Classes (Academic Year Students): 15 hours/ week (AM or PM)
- Each programme is based on a 12-week syllabus.
- You will be provided with the required programme resources.
- Each course has weekly tests to assess your progress.
- To progress to the next proficiency level, you must earn 75% on your level test
- Morning classes begin at 09:15 and finish at 12:30.
- Afternoon classes begin at 1:45 and finish at 17:00.

LEVELS

We offer the following levels at Berlitz Dublin:

Level at Berlitz Dublin	CEF Level	UCLES Level	IELTS level
Pre-Intermediate	A2.2 - A2.3		3.0 - 3.5
Intermediate	B1	PET / BEC 1	4.5 - 5.0
Upper-Intermediate	B2	FCE/BEC2	5.5 - 6.5
Advanced/Proficiency	C1-C2	CAE/CPE/BEC3	7.0 - 9.0

EXAMINATIONS

All Academic Year Students must take an Exit Exam when their course finishes. You can speak to the Director of Studies about which exam is right for you.

TIE is our most popular exam, you can find out more information about this exam at IELT.ie

You can also find out a lot of useful information about Cambridge and IELTS exams on the following websites:

- www.ielts.org
- www.cambridgeesol.org

Exams take place outside of the school in official examination centres, such as the Dublin City University.

In some cases we may be able to facilitate TIE exams at the Berlitz Dublin centre

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Staff and students have worked together to produce a list of rules in order to make the most of your learning.

They are:

- Switch off your mobile phone when in class.
- Try to only speak in English when in class.
- No eating in classrooms.
- **Students who are more than 15 minutes late to class are not be permitted to enter. They will be marked absent in the attendance register. If a student is late during the first part of the lesson, they may join the class after the break for the second part of the lesson.**
- We expect all students to have a commitment to their studies and everyone at Berlitz will do their best to support this.

ATTENDANCE

The school is obliged to take attendance each week, especially in the case of students with visas. The GNIB requires that all students have attendance percentage of 85% or above.

Students who have an overall attendance percentage below 85% will receive a first warning letter, if their attendance does not show significant improvement within a two-week period, a second warning letter will be sent. If attendance does not improve within in a second two-week period, expulsion will be considered. Similarly, if initial improvement is shown after the first warning letter, but drops at a later point in the course, a second warning letter will be sent.

The board of management will consider an expulsion if attendance remains below 85% after the issuance of two warning letters, the student has made no meaningful attempt to improve attendance and/or has no documented excuse for the absence. Students who are expelled will be issued with formal expulsion letter from Berlitz College Dublin, and the GNIB will be informed.

The GNIB will also be informed if a student is unable to reach an overall 85% attendance average, or if a student misses more than 25% of classes within the first 6 weeks of his or her programme.

All warning letters are sent via email. **It is the responsibility of the student to provide the school with an updated email address.**

STUDENT MISCONDUCT

It's in everyone's interests that the school remains a pleasant place to work and study.

Behaviour that would be regarded as **serious misconduct** & might lead to warning being issued/ you being asked to leave the school includes:

- Stealing and/or consuming drugs.
- Deliberate & serious damage to the school building or its fittings, property or equipment.
- Improper use of school facilities (e.g. accessing pornography on the Internet).
- Breaching health & safety rules (e.g. tampering with fire extinguishers).
- The use of threatening or abusive language.
- Physical violence and bullying.

- Harassment or discrimination against staff or other students on the grounds of sex, marital status, race, disability, religion, age, sexual orientation or any other factor.

If complaints are made about the following actions or other actions deemed inappropriate the following procedure will be undertaken:

Stage 1

Verbal warning.

Stage 2

Written warning, which is kept in the hard-copy student file

Stage 3

Expulsion will be considered

This of misconduct is not exhaustive. If you have any questions about this please contact the student welfare officer.

Student Complaints Procedure

If a student needs to make formal complaint about any aspect of the school, there are two stages to the complaints process

The first stage is the informal stage and encourages informal resolution. If students are dissatisfied with the class and/or teacher, they are encouraged to approach their teacher to convey and resolve any issues.

Dissatisfaction with administrative or student support services should be brought to the attention of the individuals involved.

In the event that the proposed resolution does not meet the satisfaction of the parties concerned, students should proceed to the second stage whereby they complete the **Student Complaint Form** which can be

found at reception and submit it the relevant department manager. In the case of academic dissatisfaction, the Director of Studies will respond to the complaint within 10 working days, either via email or meeting the student concerned to discuss the complaint. If complaints are about student misconduct, the verbal warning stage may be initiated.

FACILITIES

Learning Resource & Technology Centre

On the first level of the school (along with Reception & Administration) there is soon to be a **resource room with computers** and a small library for student and teacher use. Each computer will have broadband access. There is also **WIFI access** if you have your own laptop as well as throughout the school. In the library collection, there will be **graded reading books, Berlitz published resources**, and other books are available to browse or borrow. Please ask your teacher or at Reception about how to document borrowing a book.

Break Area

We have a break area at the top level of the school where we provide **complimentary coffee & tea, a microwave, and a small refrigerator**. There is also seating where you can relax during breaks and meet other students.

You can **find information about school, local sights, and activities**, as well!

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

The school regularly organizes outings in Dublin and to nearby locations.

Some examples of outings include visiting **The History and Archaeology and The Natural History Museums**, walking tours of the city, trips to **The Wicklow Mountains**, pub and musical events, and **more!**

These outings are part of the programmed course for Academic Year students; of course, we encourage all students to participate- to meet other students as well as to practice your social English!

TOURIST INFORMATION

For information about events in and close to Dublin, please look at the information displayed at Reception or visit the **Tourist Information Centre** which is on **Suffolk Street** near Grafton Street. Your *Welcome Pack* is also a good resource for information and includes a useful **map of the city centre**.

You can also find details on activities and events on the following websites:

<http://www.visitdublin.com/>

<http://www.discoverireland.ie/>

<http://www.ireland.com/>

Cinemas

There are several cinemas in the greater Dublin area. The largest in the city centre are **Cineworld** on Parnell Street and **The Savoy** on O'Connell Street. **The Irish Film Institute (The IFI)** in Temple Bar on Eustace Street offers foreign and independent films. There are also modern cinemas at **The Point** on The Red LUAS line, as well as at **Dundrum Shopping Centre** (Europe's largest!) on The Green LUAS line.

Most cinemas do offer **student discounts** and some offer student days; so read up on the cinema's website before you go
!

SPORTS

There is a choice of fitness centres in and around Dublin. In the city centre, the **Markievicz Leisure Centre** is the largest and is near the Language Centre. They have a pool, gym and variety of exercise classes, and are quite good value.

Fitness centres and gyms often require memberships but may have pay-as-you-go offers. So check their website or call-up in advance.

Find gyms here: <http://www.gyms.ie/dublin/>.

Ireland is home of **The Gaelic Athletics Association (GAA)** representing Ireland's National Sports: **Gaelic football and hurling**. While you are here in Ireland it is a great opportunity to go to a match! Matches in Dublin are held at **Croke Park** stadium and tours are also offered (at a fee) on non-match days.

Soccer and **rugby** also have a huge following in Ireland! The venue for these matches (and concerts!) is **Aviva Stadium** at Lansdowne Road on The DART line.

Art, Theatre and Concerts

Dublin has an **incredible music scene**, with a vast array of venues and several acclaimed international musicians taking to the stage almost every night.

Some top venues in the city include:

<http://www.olympia.ie/>

<http://www.theacademydublin.com/>

<http://www.whelanslive.com/>

<http://www.bodytonicmusic.com/thetwistedpepper/>

<http://www.vicarstreet.ie/>

Dublin's art and theatre are also worth checking out and include:

<http://www.nationalgallery.ie/>

<http://www.imma.ie/>

<http://www.templebargallery.com/>

<http://www.abbeytheatre.ie/>

<http://www.gaietytheatre.ie/>

ACCOMMODATION

Home Stays

We offer home stay accommodation for students who would like to experience living with an Irish family. This is on a **half-board** basis (breakfast and evening meal) with all meals at the weekend. For more information please contact reception

Private Accommodation

If you decide to rent a room, flat or house, you will have to get in touch with a **letting agency or landlord**. **You will be responsible for paying your own bills**. If you need any further help or advice, please ask at Reception.

Bed & Breakfast/Hotels

We have a list of available hotels. B&B prices are typically between €45-60 per night. Hotel rates start at €60 per night and can go up to €300 depending on the quality of the hotel.

HEALTH & SAFETY

In School

- Know the location of the **fire escapes** and fire extinguishers.
- If you hear the fire alarm, please evacuate calmly and immediately.
- Our **meeting point is in front of the O'Callaghan Mont Clare Hotel**, to the right of Berlitz as you leave through the front door.

- Read the health and safety policy on the wall of each classroom.
- To call the **emergency services** from a school phone, first **press 'line 1'** (for an outside line) then **112**.

Outside School

- The **emergency number is 112**.
- The school emergency number is **086 811 6365** (Berlitz Manager).
- Take good care of your valuables.
- **Avoid walking alone after dark. Always have your mobile phone.**

MEDICAL

- If you feel ill, you can phone our **local Medical Centre on 01 631 4500**. *After hours*, you can call the **General Practitioner (GP) Out of Hours Service: DUB DOC** at 01 454 5607 or **DDOC** at 1850 22 44 77.
- You can also make an appointment with your GP or go to **Accident & Emergency (A&E)** for immediate attention.
- For more details look under *www.hse.ie*

The Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS) states:

"All non-EEA students are required to have private medical insurance when coming to and residing in Ireland for the purpose of study. The private medical insurance should provide **cover for accident and/or disease** and should cover the student for **any period of hospitalisation.**" *Proof of insurance is required at the time of registration with immigration authorities.*

What are my options if I am going to obtain private health insurance?

There are three main Private Health Insurance schemes operating in Ireland:

- *Laya Healthcare*, Little Island, County Cork
Tel: +353 21 202 2000 (or 1890 700 890 within the Republic of Ireland)
Website: www.layahealthcare.ie
- *VHI Healthcare*, Dublin Road, County Kilkenny
Tel: +353 56 7753200 (or 1850 44 44 44 within the Republic of Ireland)
Website: www.vhi.ie
- *Aviva Health*, Hatch Street, Dublin 2
Tel: 1850 717 717 (available within Republic of Ireland only)
Web: www.avivahealth.ie

It is important to confirm options with the health insurance company directly as some companies require a waiting period to make claims.

You may obtain private medical insurance in your home country but you must be certain that it is valid in Ireland.

OPTICIANS

There is a standard charge for eye examinations but the charge for spectacles varies from optician to optician.

Some students may be entitled to a free examination and details can be obtained from any optician premises. For more information:

<http://www.specsavers.ie/>

<http://www.visionexpress.ie/>

COST OF LIVING

Life in Dublin *is comparable* to many European capitals but **more expensive** than many cities in the world!

The most significant costs for students will be **accommodation and transport**. If you are in a home stay, most of your food will be included in your cost.

The following categories will give you an idea of **how to budget your money**:

Bills

Unless you are living in a host family or a student residence, you will have to pay for your **electricity, gas, water and phone bills**.

If you are living alone in a one-bedroom flat the average that you will pay per week is approximately as follows:

Gas (for heating and/or cooking) - €15

Electricity - €15

Water - €5

Mobile Phones

It is recommended that you get a **Pay As You Go (PAYG)** phone, as you can control the amount of money that you spend, and don't have to sign a contract.

Tesco supermarkets often have good deals on PAYG phones.

Food & Drink

Sandwich - €3+
Loaf of bread - €1.50
6 eggs - €2.00
Half litre of milk - €1

Whole chicken - €5
Jar of coffee - €4
Bottle of wine - €8+

TRAVEL

It is recommended you **buy a Student LEAP Card** for easy, discounted travel.

The card is €5 to buy and then you can **Top-Up** your LEAP Card **as you go**.

LEAP Cards are available at most **Spar and Centra shops**.

The LEAP card also features both daily & weekly caps, so you will **never** have to pay *more than €7.50 in a single day* for multi-service travel on:

Dublin Bus/ DART (Dublin area train)/ LUAS (Light Rail)

ENTERTAINMENT

Lunch in pub - €8 - €15

Dinner in restaurant - €14+

Cinema ticket - €11+

Club entrance - €10+

Glass of wine in a pub - €5+

Pint of beer in a pub - €5+

Museum & gallery entrance – will vary. *National museums are free!*

BANKING

What to do:

- 1) Get your Berlitz Confirmation Letter and other Proof of Address (gas bill, telephone bill, revenue letter)
- 2) Get your Proof of Identity (valid Passport, Driver's License, or National Identity Card).
- 3) Please note that it can take 10 days for an account to be processed and opened
- 4) A Student Account Officer will help you. They will copy your documents and take your Application Form to process.

How long will it take to open an account?

It will take 10 days to receive your account statement letter in the post. Then, you can use this letter to make a deposit and other transactions inside the bank. After 3-5 more business days, you will receive your bank card PIN in the post. Lastly, you will receive your bank card in the post.

LEGAL MATTERS

It is your responsibility to comply with Irish law.

- As in most European countries, the possession of drugs is illegal.
- You are not allowed to buy tobacco or alcohol if under 18.
- If you want to drive in Ireland make sure you fulfill the legal requirements and familiarize yourself with the Irish Rules of the Road.
- If you are in trouble, please do not hesitate to ring the school Emergency phone on **086 811 6365**.
- If you require legal help, the **Citizens Information Board** can provide information and advice. Their website is: www.citizensinformation.ie
- **Be careful when crossing the road or driving in Ireland.**
- **The Irish drive on the left-hand side of the road.**
- **If you have any questions regarding any matter, please do not hesitate to speak with your teacher, Reception and/or Management.**

Work

Depending on the type of visa you have, *you may or may not be entitled to work* in Ireland. Those from EU countries are entitled to work in any case. Those entitled to work must obtain an *Irish PPS (Personal Public Service) number* in order to do so. Please ask at Reception for advice on this matter. For information on working in Ireland for Non-Eu students, please speak to the student welfare office.

Visa

Please note that you can re-apply for a visa up to two times and, under new regulation, for a maximum of two years.

The Garda National Immigration Bureau (GNIB)

The Garda National Immigration Bureau (GNIB) carries out deportations, border control and investigations relating to illegal immigration and human trafficking.

Registration

All non-nationals who are not citizens of a member State of the European Union, the European Economic Area or Switzerland, must register with An Garda Síochána and at all times have a valid registration certificate in the form of a GNIB Card. From the 19th November 2012 a fee for this card is **€300** and must be paid **by credit card, laser card or bank giro**. This fee cannot be paid by cash. If you are residing in the Dublin Metropolitan Region you must register at the GNIB offices at 13/14 Burgh Quay, Dublin 2.

The Registration Office at the Garda National Immigration Bureau is open to the public from:

Monday to Thursday: 8:00 AM to 9:00 PM

Friday: 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM

Are you residing outside the Dublin area?

Renew your card at your local Garda Síochána District Headquarters Station. To find out where your District Headquarters Station is, contact your [local Garda Station](#).

POLITE BEHAVIOUR

Manners are important in every country so please take the time to read the following advice:

- **Do stand in line** - In Ireland, we like to stand in queues, for example when waiting for a bus. It's rude to jump the queue.
- **Do say 'Excuse me'** - If you require to move past someone, say 'excuse me' or if you want to ask someone a question. Remember, you can never use it too much.
- **Do say 'Please' and 'Thank you'** – It makes for easier communication.
- **Do cover your mouth** - Always cover your mouth with your hand when yawning, coughing or sneezing.
- **Do shake hands** - When you are first introduced to someone shake their right hand with your right hand.
- **Do say 'sorry'** - If you accidentally bump into someone, say sorry. They will say it as well, even if it's your fault.
- **Do smile!!** A smiling face is a happy face.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do I know my level of English?

When you arrive at the school, you will take a written and oral placement test so we can decide which level you are and place you in the right class. If you have a question about the level you have been placed in speak to the Director of Studies.

How fast will I progress?

Each student is different when it comes to learning English. All of our teachers are ready to give you all the advice, encouragement and assistance you need to develop your English skills as fast as possible. It is expected that you will be able to complete two CEFR levels during a 25 week program.

Can I visit my host family before I decide to stay with them?

This is not possible and certainly not necessary. Our application form asks you to provide specific details of any accommodation requirements you have and we find a host that matches these requirements. If you are not happy with your host family when you arrive inform us straight away.

Can I change my level?

Students are expected to change level after completing 12 weeks, students who wish to change before can arrange to take a level test with the Director of Studies. Students must have the recommendation of their teacher if they wish to take a level test before they have completed the 12 week course cycle

How do I get a letter for GNIB registration and/or bank?

Please ask at reception.

Can I leave the school before my contract finishes?

Non-Eu students must complete their course in order to be compliant with their GNIB permissions. We cannot offer any refunds on uncompleted courses.

Can I take holiday time?

If you have a visa, you can only take a certain amount of holiday time at certain times of the year, all holiday time must be booked at the beginning of an Academic Year course and before your registration at GNIB has taken place. Please enquire at Reception regarding this matter.

Can I look at my test results?

Placement, Summative and Exit Exam results are kept in hard-copy student files. You can request to review these. If you wish to review your test results please contact reception.

USEFUL NUMBERS

In case of *emergency* call **112**

It is for use when an *immediate* response is required and should only be used in cases where a crime is happening now or if anyone is in *immediate* danger.

Other Useful Telephone Numbers:

Ambulance Service

112

Doctor (Outside working hours)

0 1850 224 477

Immigration (Police enquiries)

01 666 9130

AIB Bank

01 771 2424

Dublin Airport

01 814 1111

Dublin Bus (Head Office, O'Connell Street)

01 873 4222

Train Enquiries

0 1850 366 222