

# **EXPERIENCE REPORT FOR THE EXCHANGE SEMESTER/ ERFAHRUNGSBERICHT ZUM AUSLANDSSTUDIUM**

**Please send the complete report per e-mail to [erasmus.outgoing@hu-berlin.de](mailto:erasmus.outgoing@hu-berlin.de)**

## **1. When, where and for how long have you been an Erasmus student?**

I used to study at University College Dublin from January 23 until April 30 2017.

## **2. LAND UND LANDESTYPISCHES/The country and its characteristics**

I used to study in Dublin, county Leinster. Dublin is the biggest city in Ireland with appr. 553,000 citizens. Yet, the city is quite small in comparison to other European cities such as London or Berlin. While the atmosphere in downtown Dublin is naturally quite urban, it only takes you a 30 minute bus ride to get to more suburban, if not rural areas. People in Ireland tend to be very polite; people usually apologise very quickly, for example if they should step in your way accidentally, and will say „good-bye“ and „thank you“ to the bus driver. Customer-service is much friendlier than in Germany (which admittedly is a low bar). Though many people, at least in urban areas, are not religious any more and religious freedom is constitutionally provided for in Ireland, the Catholic church still has a strong lobby and a lot of influence in politics. Abortions are only permitted if the life of the mother is in danger, and most schools are run by the church. Irish people are in general very aware of the century-long former British rule. I had the impression most people highly appreciate their country's independence and are decisively pro-EU.

## **3. FACHLICHE BETREUUNG/ Academic advising**

The help one can expect from various facilities at UCD is to my experience extraordinary, may it be at the computer hub, the gym or the bike shop. My ERASMUS coordinator was very helpful. He tried to get me listed for all the courses I wanted. That some of those courses were already full was not within his power. I had to compromise and take my second choices, which was okay. Also people at the International Students' Desk were very friendly and helpful. There were German language meetings for people who want to improve their German language skills or people who would like to tutor somebody (I didn't attend those meetings though).

## **4. SPRACHKOMPETENZ/Language Proficiency**

Though I was already used to study at least partially in English at Humboldt-Universität Berlin, I definitely improved my academic and every-day-English. I did not take any language courses at UCD.

## **5. WEITEREMPFEHLUNG/Recommendation**

I would definitely recommend a semester abroad at UCD. The workload is pretty high – I had to write about 60 pages within three months. What makes it a lot easier is that most assignments will give you a set of questions from which you may pick one, so you don't have to come up with a topic on your own. In hindsight, I consider the high workload a blessing in disguise, because I earned 30 credit points in only three months.

## **6. VERPFLEGUNG AN DER HOCHSCHULE/Food at the University**

Food at on-campus restaurants and cafés is normally priced for Irish standards. You will find the cheapest lunch-deals at the UCD Students' Union Shop. There are many options for vegetarians and vegans. Like basically any grocery store, restaurant or café in Ireland, UCD cafeterias and shops offer a broad variety of gluten- and dairy-free products.

## **7. ÖFFENTLICHE VERKEHRSMITTEL/ Public transport**

It is definitely recommendable to buy a bike while in Dublin, because the city's public transport system could be better (everybody complains about it). Warning: You are lucky if you can find a bike for under 100 Euro. Expect something around 150 Euro. On a weekday, bus service does not start before 6am and will end at around 11-11:30pm. With your UCD student card, you can get a student leap card (basically a prepaid card for bus service). Bus schedules are not reliable at all. Your next bus might come in 2 or in 50 minutes. You will need the free Dublin Bus app to know when the next bus is coming. Type in the number of your bus stop and it will tell you when the next bus will come (reliability: 85%).

## **8. WOHNEN/Living**

I found my room via spotahome.com. As I did not want to live with many flatmates, I was looking for a house which I only had to share with the landlord or -lady. I paid 600 Euro for a 9 squaremetre room, all bills included. One can find cheaper accomodation, if you are willing to share your house with more than one person.

## **9.KULTUR UND FREIZEIT/ Culture and Leisure time**

Dublin has a lot of museums and memorial sites – perfect for history buffs. There is a lot to learn about national traumas such as the Great Famine of the late 1800s and the struggle against British rule. Ireland has a thriving pub culture. Most clubs are pubs with a dance floor. Public drinking is prohibited. Bars and restaurant are quite pricy.

## **10. AUSLANDSFINANZIERUNG/Financial situation**

Aside from my monthly rent (600 Euro), I spend about 300 Euro on food, transportation and leisure.

## **UNTERSCHRIFT/Signature**

- **X I agree**
- **I Disagree with the publication of my report on Humboldt's Online platform and the Moodle group for the European History Master (which is accessible for the European History students and the coordinators)**

Berlin, 20-06-17



Location/Date/Name