



2015
Educational Trip
to Ireland



Hong Kong Direct Subsidy Scheme Schools Council



Contents

Purpose	2
Ireland	3
School visit	
University College of Dublin	4
Trinity College Dublin	5
Dublin City University	6
National University of Ireland Maynooth	7
University of Limerick	8
University College of Cork	9
National University of Ireland Galway	10
Irish International Hotel & Catering School	11
Dundak Grammar School	12
Knocknocavra National School	13
St. Patrick's Day	14
The Mayor of Galway	16
Photo Album	17
The 8th Executive Committee List	21

Purpose

- To visit Ireland schools (primary school, secondary school & universities)
- To learn from the teaching and learning as well as the school management of Ireland schools;
- To look for possibility of further collaboration between our schools and Ireland schools; and
- To extent the mutual understanding with them so as to facilitate our students seeking further studies in Ireland schools, colleges and universities.

Participants

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Ireland



Ireland has a small population of only 4.5 million. Ireland is predominantly Catholic and has a very young population with 30% people under 30 years old. It is dubbed “the Land of saints and scholars”.

It is rated by Lonely Planet as the “World's Friendliest Country” and the “6th safest country in the world to live in”.

Historically it is linked to England as it was a part of Britain before. Their education system developed along side with that of Britain. The official language is English and only very small pockets of people maintained the Irish tongue. Some schools teach Irish as a second language. The culture and style of the schools are very similar to that found in British schools.

Today, Ireland is a part of the European Union and uses Euro as its currency. It is the only English Speaking country in the Euro Zone. Because of this, many international companies choose to set up its Headquarters for Europe in Ireland. Its digital development is very globalised with 8 out of 10 technological companies setting up its regional office for Europe in Ireland and 7 out of 10 pharmaceutical companies, and 15 out of 20 medical companies doing the same.

Immigration & Labour Laws:

Overseas students may work up to 20 hours a week and up to 40 hours a week in long holidays. Upon graduation from universities in Ireland, they may remain in Ireland for up to one year to look for employment. Once sponsored by an employer, they are allowed to remain in Ireland and after working in Ireland for 5 years, they may apply for citizenship.

University College of Dublin

This University was founded in 1854 and owns 350 acres of land in the heart of the city of Dublin; it is 10 minutes by bus from the City Centre. It is among the top 1 % of the universities in the world and is a popular university for local and overseas students especially for doing research and the study of Ph. D.

It has 7 colleges and offers:

- Agriculture, Food & Nutritional Science
- Architecture
- Arts
- Business Studies
- Engineering
- Law
- Medicine

These are both accredited by the United Kingdom and the United States.

Tuition is from Euro 6,000 to 20,000 depending on the faculty.

Overseas students may apply for scholarships, but they must apply early, starting application in October, and submitted latest by March. This is initially based on expected grades.

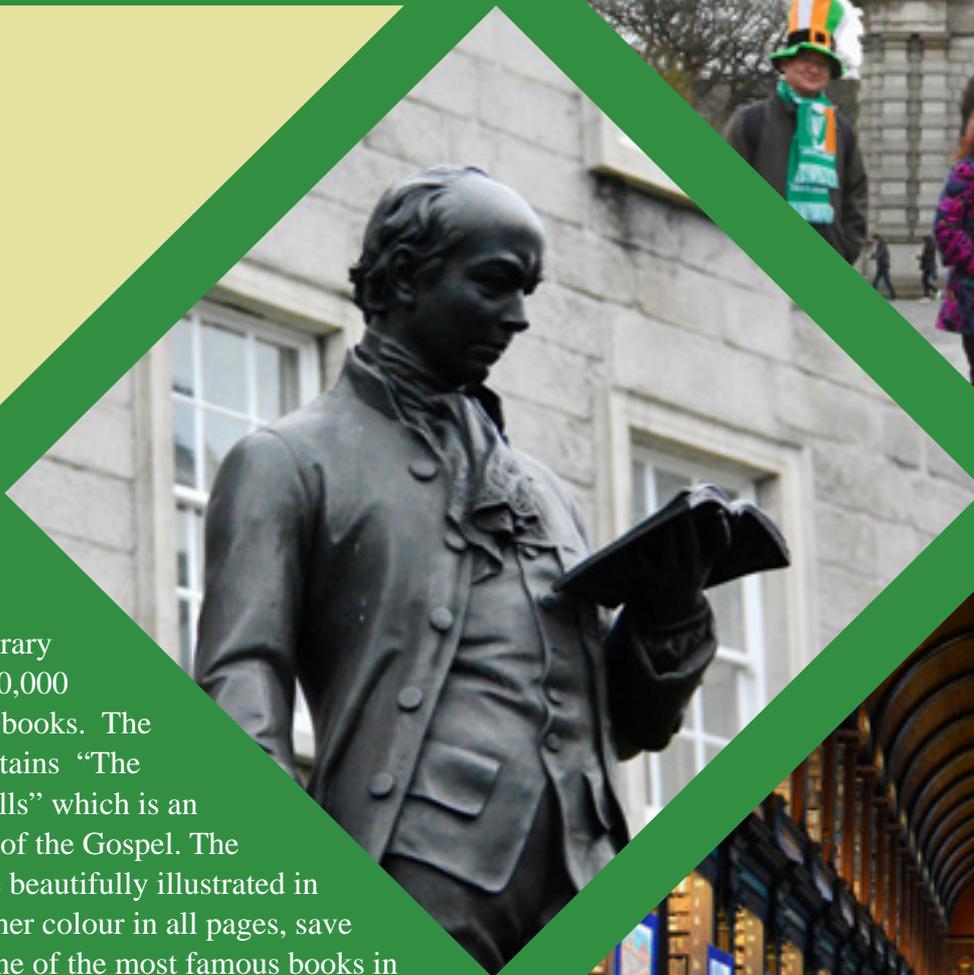
Residence: students are charged between Euro \$3,500 to 60,000 a year, for room only excluding food.

Generally the drop out rate is very low. Most students with difficulties request transfer to another faculty. For overseas students studying Medicine, they should note that internship is not guaranteed for them.



Trinity College Dublin

This is the first university in Ireland, founded by Queen Elizabeth I in 1592. Originally it was the “seat of Protestant learning”. The University is conveniently located, right in the city centre. The buildings are charming; the oldest building dates back to the 1700s with the Red Brick Rubrics being the most famous.



The old Library contains 200,000 antiquarian books. The Library contains “The Book of Kells” which is an old version of the Gospel. The writings are beautifully illustrated in gold and other colour in all pages, save two. It is one of the most famous books in the world.

Academically the university is best known for the College of Law, while other Library arts studies are also popular.

All degrees are 4-5 years.
Tuition is from Euro 16,000 – 22,000 depending on the Faculty.



Dublin City University

Founded in 1980, it is rated as among the top 4% of universities worldwide for universities under the age of 50 years of history.

Students Profile:

The university has a total of 10,500 students including 2,000 on line students. Of this number 18% of the students come from overseas.

It is situated north of Dublin. The campus can accommodate 1100 students. Typically students stay from September to May. It has a modern Library and good sports facilities for athletes.

The University aims at academic excellence and has good links internationally. It also stresses personality attributes building; nurturing creativity and encouraging continual learning. It has links with 109 learning institutions in other countries.

It is a research university with most of the research funded by the industry. There are 4 Faculties:

- Business, Humanities & Social Sciences
- Science, Health & Nursing
- Engineering & computing
- Education

It is the Centre for Talented Youth in Ireland. This University accepts students from Hong Kong with HKDSE qualifications: 4 Core plus 2 Electives. They also require IELTS at 6.5 with an average of 6 in all components.

Tuition:

Euro 12,000 – 14,000 for under graduates

Living allowance is about Euro 8,000 a year.



National University of Ireland Maynooth

It started as a learning centre in the 12 Century. It was a seminary to train Catholic Priests. In 1795 it became a University offering Degrees in Theology among other programs. It was called St. Patrick's College. Then as late as 1997 it became a public university offering diverse programmes.

It is located in a small town. It is only half an hour by train from Dublin. The town became a university town where most people are involved in the life of the university. The university has a focus on students; students can request to see any academic at any time. Though small it is a research university.

New Curriculum:

Learning for Life: this is to train students the ability to think, analyze, solve problems, acquire soft skills and manage oneself.

On entry students fill out their aims; do review on these and check them every year. Graduates are to acquire attributes and produce portfolio with the aim to take responsibility to manage one's own progress.

The curriculum is broad and provides a flexible structure: Students start with 2 or 3 areas of study, then they can select one or two to develop deeper analytical and communication skills. This way they provide opportunities for student to sample the thinking in other disciplines. There is also opportunity for experimental learning: they can study abroad, do work experiences, research project or service learning.

The university provides accommodation for 1000 students, providing them with social and cultural activities, frequently involving the community.

Students:

There are 10,000 students with 8,500 studying undergraduate programs. There are 700 overseas students, mostly from North America, China, Taiwan and only one from Hong Kong.

The University is mostly funded by the Government with students paying only a small tuition.

Tuition:

For non-technical studies: Euro 12,000 per annum

For technical students: Euro 13,500 per annum

It also offers a Pre-degree year for students to study English (similar to a Foundation Year). It recognizes our HKDSE while still requiring IELTS.

Programmes offered:

- Computer Science
- Electronic Engineering
- Biological Studies
- Social Science
- Business Studies
- Education
- Geography
- Law
- Sociology
- Music
- Media
- Ancient and Modern Languages
- Theology



University of Limerick

It was only founded in 1972, but is one of the fastest growing universities in Ireland. It boasts an undergraduate student population of 13,000 and 600 students in post graduate programs. They offer 5,000 residential college places. It has 2,500 international students coming from 100 countries across the world.

In 2015, it was named the University of the Year in the Sunday Times University Guide. Reasons given included its strong research programmes and connections with the commercial sector in science and engineering as well as its rising academic performance. It has strong links with the industries in US and Europe.

Courses offered:

- Business
- Arts, Humanities & Social Science
- Education
- Health Science
- Engineering
- Science

A survey conducted in 2013 showed that 95% of its graduates were employed or were pursuing further studies. This is far higher than the national unemployment rate of 11%.



University College of Cork

It was established in 1845, with 115 students, all men. Now there are more women than men in its 20,000 students population.. This includes 3,000 overseas students from some 150 countries. There are 8 students from Hong Kong and 350 from China.

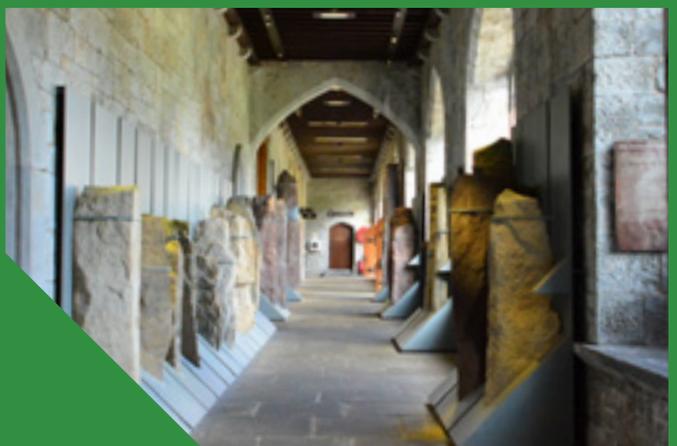
The university is situated right in the city centre of Cork, the green city. Going to Cork University is cheaper for students as everything is within walk distance. There is no need to pay for expensive transport. It is a safe and friendly city with only 120,000 people.

Tuition is Euro 12,400 per annum

It has a staff of 2,700 and is a comprehensive researched based university, offering many diverse areas of studies. It ranks among the top 2% of the universities world wide. There are many exchange programs with universities in United States and China. The international students give local students an international experience and help develop strong links with other countries.

There are 4 Colleges:

- Arts & Languages
- Business & Law
- Science, Engineering, and Food Science
- Medicine, Health, Dentistry & Nursing



Students Support:

There are places for 1,300 campus accommodation for students. For international students it is guaranteed. Other accommodations near the university include plans where 4-6 students share an apartment. The university offers swimming pool and sports facilities at no extra charge.

On the day of the our visit, the university celebrated the anniversary of one of its most famous former Professors, George Poole, the author of the Law of Thoughts. A student gave us a private recital of “the Life of George Poole”. To me it was one of the high lights of the trip.

National University of Ireland Galway

This University was founded in 1845 on the same day as the University of Cork. It is the second oldest in Ireland. Trinity University started first but it gave a priority to Protestants. So a university initially called the Queen's College, Galway was founded for everyone regardless of their religion. It offers secular curriculum and started with only 63 students. Today it has 18,000 students, with 12,500 undergraduates, 2,600 post graduates including 2,850 part-time students. It boasts the highest number of international full time students in Ireland. 18% of them are international students coming from 113 countries. The largest number comes from Brazil and other South American Countries. There are some from Nigeria, Ethiopia, India, United States, China and Hong Kong.

It is situated 15 minutes to the city centre of Galway and rank among the top 2 % of universities globally.

The university has formed partnership and joint programs with Hong Kong University of Science & Technology, and with several universities in China, as well as some universities in the United States.

It accepts students from Hong Kong based on their HKDSE & IELTS results. They require 6.5 IELTS for Arts Faculty entry and 6 only for Science Faculty. Tuition Fee is around Euro 14,000 with Living costs at 1,000 a month.

Faculties include:

- College of Arts & Social Sciences
- College of Business, Public Policies & Law
- College of Engineering & Information Technology
- College of Medicine, nursing & Health Science
- College of Science



Irish International Hotel & Catering School

This was established in 2003 for students interested in this specific area. It has small class teaching and welcome students who require additional English tuition prior to university studies. They offer a Foundation Program.

The School offers curriculum on English, Hospitality, Catering, Tourism, Management and Commerce.

When the school started all students were from China and Hong Kong. Gradually more locals came to study here and currently the student population is almost 50% local and 50% international. While most students graduating from this specialised school go to Year I in local universities, some are admitted to Year 2.

All students board at the school have to abide by strict rules on attendance. Tuition is Euro 280,000 including tuition, board and food from September to June each year.



Dundak Grammar School

The school was established in 1739 and in 1817 it moved to its present site. The Headmaster Mr. Cyril Drury greeted us wearing an academic gown on top a gentleman's suit. He informed us that this is how he attires himself on most school days. The teachers wore ties and suits only. The school has around 600 students with 80 in boarding school. The school offers education to students from the age of 4 to 18, ie. from Nursery to Form 6. There are 80 staff members including 50 teaching staff.

Small class teaching is practised here with 24 in Junior High class and only 12 in Senior High classes. There are 9 lessons a day, with 4 lessons a week on life skills. Students are allowed to choose 2 Skill-based subjects. We were taken into the special rooms where teachers were teaching woodwork (all boys) cookery (mixed) and art. In one classroom students played the harpsichord and the flute etc.

The first year in Senior High (Form 4) is called the Transitional Year. In Ireland schools design their own curriculum for this year; it is entirely school based. Students do projects or exchange to other schools, they learn life skills as well such as cooking, design, attend trade fairs, or do woodwork. Some students in this school designed a race car and went in for national competitions. If they win, they can go to Singapore for the world competition. They also have a machine that can make things in 3 dimension in plastic.



Knocknacavra National School

This is a primary school for students from Grade 1 to 6. It offers a bilingual education. English is the main medium of instruction, while the Irish language is also taught. The students are friendly and happy, the approach to the curriculum is very update and lively.

Each visitor was led by a student to go into a class and watched or participated in the lesson. The students appeared very open and friendly. As it was Friday on the day of our visit, the whole school went into the Hall for their weekly Assembly. Here the students all sat on the floor (as with other primary school students across UK, and Australia; whereas it is unheard of in Hong Kong.) They did some musical performances and acted for us. They all sang a cute song called “Peel the Banana” for us.



St. Patrick's Day

We were in Dublin on St. Patrick's Day, the National Day of Ireland. This was celebrated by a big cheerful Parade in the main street with colourful floats and dancers. But what was most spectacular about this national day as against national days in other countries, is the way the Irish people cherish this celebration with all their hearts. Everyone greeted the day with a happy heart. The whole population and the visitors alike went around wearing something sharp green, green hats, green scarves and green coats etc. One could feel the sensation of liberation and cheerful celebration that went throughout the day. We went to see the Grand Parade along the main streets in Dublin. Afterwards we were taken to the Stadium to watch the Final of an Irish game called Hurling. it is native to Ireland and is not seen elsewhere. The game is similar to Hockey, played with a stick, only it has a broader end. Players can hit the ball in the air and also throw the ball with their hands. It is a very quick and exciting game.

If only people around the world celebrate their National Day in a similar fashion to the Irish, with fun parades, and games instead of showing their military might with a parade of tanks and marching soldiers, the world may be a more peaceful place. We were fortunate to witness such happiness.







THE MAYOR OF GALWAY

He kindly received
us. He looked like
a Mayor from a
History book. We
were all impressed.

Photo Album









The 8th Executive Committee

Chairman Dr. Chiu Cheung Ki (Pui Kiu Middle School)

Vice-Chairman Dr. Lam Kin Wah (Fukien Secondary School)

Vice-Chairman Sister Margaret Wong (St. Paul's Convent School)

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(HKBUAS Wong Kam Fai Secondary and Primary School)

Internal Affairs Secretary Dr. Wong Chung Leung (Heung To Middle School)

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(St. Margaret's Co-Educational English Secondary and Primary School)

Activities Member Ms. Clara Chor (Delia Group of Schools)

Academic Affairs Member Mr. Dion Chen (YMCA of Hong Kong Christian College)

General Affairs Member Dr. Cheng Kin Tak (United Christian College (Kowloon East))

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