



Life in Dublin

A Practical Guide for DCU International Academy Students

International Foundation Year (IFY)



DCU Glasnevin Campus, Dublin 9

2026 – 2027

Contents

This guide is written for students arriving in Dublin to study with DCU International Academy. You do not need to read it from beginning to end — use the list below to find the section you need.

It sits alongside your *IFY Student Handbook 2026–2027*, which covers your course and your assessments. Everything here was checked in August 2026, but fares, fees and opening hours change during the year — please confirm current details before you rely on them.

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1. Welcome to Dublin

Welcome to Dublin and to DCU International Academy. You have arrived in a small capital city that is easy to learn. Dublin is walkable, people here are used to students from all over the world, and most of what confuses you in your first week will feel normal by the fourth.

This guide covers the ordinary things that nobody usually explains: how to pay for a bus, where to buy groceries cheaply, what to do when you feel unwell, and who to talk to when something goes wrong.

Feeling unsettled for the first few weeks is normal. It happens to nearly every international student, including the ones who look completely relaxed. The most useful habit you can build is asking early. The IFY team would far rather hear about a problem in week two than in week ten.

Where you will be studying

DCU International Academy is based on the DCU Glasnevin Campus in Dublin 9.

- **Email:** ify.academic@dcu.ie
- **Telephone:** 01 700 6413
- **Distance to the city centre:** about 5 km south of the campus
- **Distance to Dublin Airport:** about 10 km north of the campus



Dublin landmarks you will soon recognise: Georgian doors, the Ha'penny Bridge, the Custom House, the Spire, the GPO, the Samuel Beckett Bridge and the Convention Centre.

Four things that surprise new students

Small differences catch people out in the first few days. These are the ones students mention most often.

- **Card and contactless payments are widely used.** Most shops, cafés and restaurants accept card and contactless phone payments. It is still useful to carry a small amount of cash, as some businesses or services may prefer or require it.
- **The weather can change quickly.** Rain showers are common in Dublin and the weather can change several times during the day. A waterproof jacket is often more practical than an umbrella, especially when it is windy.
- **Small talk is normal.** Strangers may start a conversation with you in a shop queue or at a bus stop. This is ordinary friendliness, not a sales pitch or a scam.
- **Daylight changes enormously.** It is dark by about 16:30 in December, and still bright after 22:00 in June. It is worth planning your week around this.

How to use this guide

Sections 2 to 4 are worth reading before you fly. Sections 5 to 9 cover the practical things you will deal with in your first week. Sections 10 to 12 explain the support available at DCU. Section 17 is a checklist you can print and tick off.

Source: DCU International Academy, IFY Student Handbook 2026–2027.

2. Arriving in Dublin

Dublin Airport is small enough to cross in ten minutes and busy enough to be confusing when you are tired. A little preparation removes almost all of the stress.

Documents to keep in your hand luggage

Never put these in a checked bag. If your suitcase is delayed, you still need to get through the border and into your accommodation.

- **Your passport.** Check now that it is valid well beyond the end of your programme.
- **Your visa or pre-clearance documents.** If you needed an Irish study visa, bring the approval letter as well as the visa itself.
- **Your original health insurance policy.** It must be in your own name and cover your whole stay. Immigration will ask to see it again when you register.
- **Your DCU or DCUIA offer letter.** Bring your offer or course confirmation, plus proof that your fees have been paid.
- **Your accommodation address.** Written on paper as well as saved on your phone, with the check-in contact number.
- **Proof of funds and a working payment card.** Tell your bank at home that you are travelling, so your card is not blocked on your first purchase.

Before you fly, photograph every document and email the photos to yourself. Take a screenshot of your accommodation address as well, so that it opens even without mobile data.

What happens when you land

1. **Border control.** Non-EU and non-EEA passengers join the queue for “All other passports”. An officer will ask why you are coming to Ireland. Say that you are a student starting the International Foundation Year at DCU, and show your offer letter if you are asked for it. You will be given a landing stamp in your passport.
2. **Baggage reclaim and customs.** Follow the screens to your flight’s belt, then walk through the green channel unless you are carrying goods you need to declare.
3. **Arrivals hall.** Terminal 1 and Terminal 2 have separate arrivals halls a few minutes apart. Check which terminal your airline uses before anyone comes to meet you.
4. **Getting connected.** Free airport Wi-Fi is available. If you have arranged an eSIM before travelling, switch it on here rather than hunting for a shop.

Getting from the airport to your accommodation

There is no train or tram to Dublin Airport. Everyone leaves by road, and all of the options below run late into the night.

- **City bus.** Ordinary Dublin Bus routes serve the airport and cost the same as any other city journey, so this is by far the cheapest option and it accepts a Leap Card. Route 16 runs from the airport through Santry and the Swords Road to Drumcondra and O’Connell Street, and is one of the routes shown at DCU Glasnevin’s Collins Avenue stops. It is slower than a coach and it stops often.
- **Airport coach.** Express coaches such as Airlink Express, Aircoach and Dublin Express leave from marked zones outside both terminals and run to city centre stops, Heuston Station and the Docklands. You can buy online or at the stop. Luggage goes in the hold, so this is the easy choice if you have two large suitcases.
- **Taxi.** Official taxi ranks are directly outside both terminals and operate 24 hours. Irish taxis are metered — the fare is set by the meter, not negotiated — and a trip to the city centre is commonly quoted at roughly €25 to €40 depending on traffic and time of day. Ride-hailing apps such as FREE NOW and Uber operate in Dublin, but in Ireland they dispatch licensed taxis rather than private drivers. Never accept a lift from someone who approaches you inside the terminal.



If you are arriving late at night

Confirm your check-in arrangements before you fly. Many student residences have a staffed reception only during the day, and a late arrival may need a key code, a night porter or a next-morning check-in. **Ask three questions: what time does reception close, what do I do if I arrive after that, and which phone number do I call?**

It also helps to carry about €20 in coins and small notes for a vending machine or a bus, to charge your phone fully before landing, and to know which side of DCU your accommodation is on — Collins Avenue or Ballymun Road — so that you can tell a driver.

If something goes wrong

If your flight is delayed, your bag is lost, or nobody is where you expected them to be, do not leave the airport to solve it. Stay in arrivals, where there is Wi-Fi, staff and light. Contact DCU International Academy on 01 700 6413 or at ify.academic@dcu.ie during office hours, or your accommodation provider directly outside them.

Source: DCU International Academy (english.dcu.ie); Dublin Airport (dublinairport.com); Airlink Express (airlinkexpress.ie); Dublin Bus route 16 timetable (dublinbus.ie). Checked August 2026.

3. Registering with immigration

If you are not a citizen of the EU, the EEA, the UK or Switzerland, the landing stamp in your passport is temporary. You must register your permission to stay and obtain an Irish Residence Permit (IRP) card. This cannot be done before you arrive in Ireland.

How to register

1. **Create an account on the ISD Customer Service Portal and book an appointment.** Do this in your first week. Appointments are normally available within a few weeks, but demand varies through the year.
2. **Ask DCUIA for your Course Confirmation Letter.** Provided your fees are paid in full, the IFY team will issue this letter for your appointment. Request it as soon as you have a booking.
3. **Attend in person at Burgh Quay.** First-time registrations for people living in Dublin take place at the Registration Office, 13/14 Burgh Quay, Dublin 2, D02 XK70. You cannot attend without an appointment.
4. **Pay the fee by card.** The registration fee is €300, and cash is not accepted. Applicants under 18 are exempt from the fee, along with some other categories.
5. **Wait for your IRP card.** It is posted to the address you registered. Keep it safe and carry it when you travel.

You are expected to register within 90 days of arriving in Ireland. Book early rather than counting days, and if no appointment is available inside that window, keep the evidence that you tried.

What to bring to your appointment

Bring originals, not copies, unless a copy is specifically asked for.

- Your passport
- A photocopy of your passport
- Your Course Confirmation Letter from DCUIA
- Your original health insurance policy document, in your name, covering the full length of your stay
- Proof of your address in Ireland
- A recent bank statement

- Your printed appointment confirmation email and the document attached to it
- A payment card for the €300 fee

Requirements do change. Check the official “required documents” page on [irishimmigration.ie](https://www.irishimmigration.ie) a few days before you go, and bring more evidence than you think you need.

Common mistakes worth avoiding

- **Leaving it until month three.** Appointment availability changes through the year. Booking in week one costs you nothing and removes a deadline from your term.
- **Bringing an insurance summary instead of the policy.** A confirmation email or a one-page summary is often refused. Bring the full original policy document.
- **Emailing or phoning ISD with questions.** Queries about appointments, immigration status and IRP renewals must be raised through your own account on the ISD Customer Service Portal.

Who to ask

DCUIA cannot book the appointment for you, but the IFY team deals with this every year and can tell you what to expect.

Email ify.academic@dcu.ie or call 01 700 6413.

4. Money and paying for things

Ireland uses the euro (€). Notes come in €5, €10, €20, €50, €100, €200 and €500, and coins run from 1 cent to €2.

Most new arrivals bring far too much cash. Ireland is close to a card-first country: contactless cards, Apple Pay and Google Pay work in supermarkets, cafés, taxis, pharmacies and most small shops. Paying €2 for a coffee by card is completely normal.

Keep €30 to €50 in cash for your first few days and use your card for everything else. ATMs are easy to find at banks, supermarkets and shopping centres.



The euro is used throughout Ireland, and contactless payment is accepted almost everywhere.

Everyday payment habits

- **Tap, do not insert.** Contactless is the default. Larger amounts will ask for your PIN, or for your phone's face or fingerprint check.
- **Bring your own shopping bag.** Shops charge for plastic bags by law. A folded bag in your backpack saves money and hassle.
- **Tipping is optional.** Around 10% in a sit-down restaurant if you enjoyed the meal. No tip is expected in cafés, fast food, pubs or taxis, although people often round up.
- **Always choose euro at a card machine.** If a machine offers to charge you in your home currency instead, choose euro. The alternative usually has a worse exchange rate built into it.
- **Use a bank's own ATM where you can.** Standalone machines in convenience shops sometimes add a fee; bank ATMs generally do not.
- **Keep your receipts for the first month.** They make it much easier to build a realistic weekly budget once you know what you actually spend.

A rough sense of what things cost

These are typical Dublin prices in 2026. They vary a lot between shops and areas, so treat them as a starting point rather than a promise.

- A coffee and a scone in a café — about €4
- A chicken fillet roll and a drink — about €5 to €7
- A week of groceries, cooking for yourself — about €35 to €55
- A 90-minute bus, tram or DART journey with a Student or Young Adult Leap Card — €1.00
- A GP appointment at the DCU Student Health Service — €25

Keeping your money safe

Cover the keypad at an ATM and put your cash away before you step back into the street. If a message, a call or an email asks you to move money urgently — even if it appears to come from your bank, your landlord or the university — stop and check using a number you already have. Scams that target newly arrived international students exist everywhere, including in Dublin.

Source: Transport for Ireland (leapcard.ie) for the fare; DCU Student Health Service (dcu.ie/health) for the GP charge. Other figures are typical Dublin prices observed in 2026 and are indicative only.

5. Getting around Dublin

Your first job is to get a TFI Leap Card. It is a plastic travel card that you top up with credit and touch against a reader when you board. One card works on Dublin Bus, Go-Ahead Ireland, the Luas trams, the DART and commuter trains.

Paying with a Leap Card is cheaper than paying cash for the same journey — Transport for Ireland describes Leap fares as up to 30% below cash single fares — and if you qualify for a Student or Young

Adult card, you pay half the adult fare. For a student who travels most days, that difference adds up over a year.

Which Leap Card applies to you

This surprises people, so it is worth reading carefully. The discounted cards are divided by age, not simply by whether you are a student.

- **Aged 16 to 18 — Student Leap Card.** You are in full-time education for more than 15 hours a week on a course lasting at least six months, so you qualify. International students can apply using an acceptance letter from an Irish institution.
- **Aged 19 to 25 — Young Adult Leap Card.** Open to everyone in this age band, student or not. You apply online with a passport or driving licence and a live selfie, and the card is posted to you.
- **Aged 26 or over — Student Leap Card.** Students aged 26 and over apply for the Student card rather than the Young Adult one, using a letter from your institution on headed paper confirming full-time status and course length.

Both cards give 50% off adult single fares.

What a journey costs

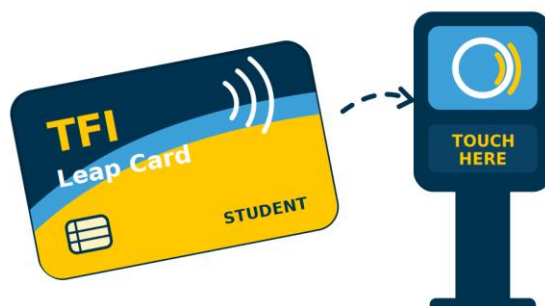
The TFI 90 Minute Fare is the fare you will use most. It lets you change between bus, Luas and DART within 90 minutes of your first touch-on for a single price.

- TFI 90 Minute Fare — €2.00 adult, €1.00 student or young adult, €0.65 for under-19s
- Short fare — €1.50 adult, €0.75 student or young adult, €0.65 for under-19s
- Xpresso and Nitelink services — €2.40 adult, €1.20 student or young adult, €1.00 for under-19s

Zonal daily, weekly and monthly passes are also available. Confirm current fares at leapcard.ie before you rely on them.

Getting your card and topping it up

- Apply online at leapcard.ie. There is a €5 refundable deposit plus a minimum €5 of travel credit.
- Allow around five working days.
- Young Adult cards are posted to you. Student cards are usually collected from a Student Leap agent.
- Top up in the TFI Leap Top-Up app, at a machine, or in a newsagent showing the Leap sign.



A TFI Leap Card being touched against a validator. On the Luas and the DART you must touch on and touch off; on the bus you touch on once as you board.

The one rule people forget: on the Luas and the DART you must touch on and touch off. Forgetting to touch off charges you the maximum fare for that line.

The four ways people actually travel

- **Buses do most of the work.** The bus network is the backbone of the city and the main way most DCU students travel. Buses show their route number and destination on the front, and you should put your hand out as the bus approaches or it may not stop. DCU Glasnevin has stops on both Collins Avenue and Ballymun Road. DCU lists routes 1, 11, 13, 16, 33, 41, 41B, 41C and 44 as serving its St Patrick's campus.
- **The Luas is the tram.** There are two lines. The Red Line runs east to west through the Docklands and Heuston Station. The Green Line runs north to south from Broombridge through St Stephen's Green out to Sandyford and Brides Glen.
- **The DART follows the coast.** The DART is the electric train that runs along Dublin Bay, and it is the nicest way to reach the sea — north to Howth and Malahide, south to Dún Laoghaire, Dalkey and Greystones. Commuter rail from Connolly, Pearse and Heuston stations reaches the rest of the country.
- **Bikes and walking.** dublinbikes is the city-centre shared bike scheme. You buy a short-term ticket or a longer-term card, and the first 30 minutes of each journey are included, so most trips cost nothing extra. The stations are concentrated in the city centre rather than out at DCU. Central Dublin is also genuinely small — most of the city centre is walkable in half an hour.



The four services you will use most: Dublin Bus, the Luas, the DART and dublinbikes. One Leap Card works on all of the public transport services.

Planning a journey

Use the TFI Journey Planner at transportforireland.ie, or the TFI Live app. Type in where you are and where you are going, and it will combine bus, tram and train and show real-time departures. DCU points students to the Journey Planner rather than publishing fixed timetables, because routes change. Check before you leave, not at the stop.

Three things nobody tells you. Buses can be full at peak times and will drive past, so leave a margin on days that matter. Some routes finish surprisingly early, so check the last departure before a night out. Late-night Nitelink buses run on Friday and Saturday nights.

Learn one route properly in your first week

Travel from your accommodation to DCU Glasnevin once, in daylight, before your first class. Note the stop name, the route number and how long the journey really takes. Everything else gets easier once you have one journey you can do without thinking.

Source: Transport for Ireland (leapcard.ie, transportforireland.ie); DCU Student Support (dcu.ie/students/transport-dcu); [dublinbikes \(dublinbikes.ie\)](http://dublinbikes.ie). Checked August 2026.

6. Food shopping and daily costs

Cooking for yourself is the biggest saving available to a student in Dublin. There is no single best supermarket. Most students do a big weekly shop at a discounter and top up at whatever is nearest to them.

Where people shop

- **Lidl and Aldi — the cheapest weekly shop.** Discounters with a smaller range but noticeably lower prices and good own-brand basics. Both run weekly non-food offers that students find useful, such as bedding, kitchen equipment and winter clothing.
- **Tesco and Dunnes Stores — the widest range.** Bigger stores with a full range, international food aisles and online delivery. Dunnes is Irish-owned and often combines food with clothing and homeware. Both run loyalty schemes that are worth joining if you shop there regularly.
- **SuperValu, Centra, Spar and Londis — nearest and quickest.** Neighbourhood shops and convenience stores, open long hours and good for fresh bread and deli food, but more expensive for a full shop. There is a Londis on the DCU Glasnevin campus for essentials between classes.



A weekly shop costs most students somewhere between €35 and €55.

Shopping like someone who lives here

- **Check the reduced shelf late in the day.** Fresh food near its date is marked down, often heavily. Evening shopping is cheaper shopping.
- **Compare the price per kilo, not the price of the pack.** Irish shelf labels show the unit price in small print. It is the fastest way to spot which pack is actually better value.

- **Own-brand is usually the same thing.** Own-brand rice, pasta, tinned tomatoes and frozen vegetables cost a fraction of the branded versions.
- **Cook once, eat three times.** A big pot of something on Sunday beats buying lunch every day, and most student kitchens have a freezer.
- **Find the world food shops.** Dublin has Asian, African, Middle Eastern, Polish and Brazilian grocers, many of them clustered around Parnell Street, Moore Street and Camden Street. Familiar ingredients, better prices.
- **Delivery exists, but it costs.** Tesco, Dunnes and SuperValu all deliver. This is useful for heavy items and for your first big shop, but it is rarely worth it every week on a student budget.

Eating on campus

DCU Glasnevin has restaurants, cafés, a pharmacy and a shop on site. Bringing lunch from home most days and buying it occasionally is what most students settle into.

Setting a weekly number

Pick a realistic weekly grocery budget in your first month and check your actual spending against it. Knowing the number is what stops money becoming stressful later in the year.

Source: DCU International Academy, IFY Student Handbook 2026–2027. Supermarket names and locations are publicly available information; prices are indicative Dublin figures observed in 2026.

7. Banking and payments

You may not need an Irish bank account at all, but you will need some euro account that you can pay from and receive money into. Which one suits you depends on how long you are here and what you need it for.

What an account is actually for

- Rent and deposits — landlords and student residences usually want a euro bank transfer rather than cash.
- Bills and subscriptions — phone plans, utilities and gym memberships often need a direct debit.
- Money from home — a euro account avoids paying a conversion fee every single time.
- Proof of address and funds — a bank statement is one of the documents immigration asks for when you register.

Traditional Irish banks

AIB, Bank of Ireland and PTSB are full high-street banks with branches, ATMs and Irish IBANs. Each offers student or young-person current accounts, and the terms differ, so compare them directly on their own websites.

- There are branch staff you can talk to in person.
- They are widely recognised for rent, employers and official forms.

- They have large ATM networks.
- Opening an account takes longer and needs proof of address and proof of student status.

Digital banking apps

Revolut and similar app-based providers offer accounts that you open from your phone. They are popular with students in Ireland for splitting bills and sending money instantly between friends.

- They are fast to open, often before you arrive in Ireland.
- They are good for currency exchange and international transfers.
- Transfers between users are instant, which is useful for shared costs.
- There is no branch to visit, and some landlords or official forms still prefer a traditional bank.

What you will usually be asked for

- Your passport, and your IRP card once you have one
- A letter from DCU or DCUIA confirming that you are a registered student
- Proof of your Irish address
- Your PPS number, for some products

How to choose

- Check monthly fees, card fees and ATM withdrawal limits — this is where costs hide.
- Ask whether the account gives you an Irish IBAN, which some landlords require.
- Many students keep both: a bank account for rent and an app for day-to-day spending.

DCU International Academy does not recommend any particular bank. Compare current terms on the providers' own websites before you decide, and be aware that student account terms change from year to year.

Source: Providers' own published information (aib.ie, bankofireland.com, ptsb.ie, revolut.com). Checked August 2026. This guide does not endorse any provider.

8. Phone, SIM and internet

Getting an Irish number in your first few days makes everything else easier. Banks, landlords, delivery drivers and DCU services all send text messages. It is quick to arrange and does not need a bank account.

Prepay or bill pay?

Almost every new student should start with prepaid. You buy a SIM, add credit or a monthly bundle, and stop whenever you like. There is no contract, no credit check and no need for an Irish bank account.

- You can cancel or switch at any time with no penalty.

- You can test how good the coverage is at your own address before committing to anything.
- Monthly bundles with large data allowances are widely available.

Bill pay is a monthly contract, often bundled with a new phone paid off over 24 months. It requires a credit check and usually an Irish bank account, leaving early normally means an exit fee, and it is rarely the right choice for a one-year programme.

How the Irish market works

- **Three networks, many brands.** Ireland has three companies that actually own mobile networks: Three, Vodafone and eir. Other providers rent capacity from them and sell under their own names.
- **Coverage follows the network, not the brand.** A cheaper brand gets whatever coverage its underlying network has. Check the coverage map for your accommodation's address, not just for the city.
- **You must register your SIM.** Irish law requires SIM cards to be registered with your name, address and date of birth. This takes a few minutes online after you buy.

Physical SIM or eSIM?

If your phone supports eSIM, you can often set up an Irish number before you land, without going to a shop. Dual SIM also lets you keep your home number active for messages from family and banks while you use an Irish number day to day. Check first that your phone is unlocked — a phone that is locked to a provider at home will not accept an Irish SIM.

Roaming across Europe

Under the EU “Roam Like at Home” rules, an Irish plan generally works across the EU and EEA at no extra cost, within fair-use limits. That makes an Irish SIM useful when you travel. Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK are outside the EU for roaming purposes, so check your provider's UK charges before a trip to Belfast or the Giant's Causeway.

Before you buy

- Compare current prepay bundles across a few providers. Offers change often and there is no single best deal.
- Work out how much data you really need. Video calls home and streaming use it quickly.
- Check whether calls to your home country are included or charged extra.
- Buy your SIM from an official shop or the provider's own website rather than a street stall.
- Remember that campus Wi-Fi at DCU will cover most of your study time.

Source: EU Roaming Regulation 2022/612 (europa.eu); Irish SIM registration requirements and provider information from providers' own websites (three.ie, vodafone.ie, eir.ie). Checked August 2026.

9. Staying safe

Dublin is an ordinary European capital: mostly uneventful, and it asks for the same everyday precautions you would take in any city. The advice below is about habits, not fear.

Emergency numbers

In an emergency in Ireland, dial 112 or 999. Both numbers work, and both are free from any phone, including a phone with no credit. Ask for the Gardaí (the police), an ambulance, the fire service or the coast guard. Say clearly where you are — the street name, the building, or the nearest landmark. Save both numbers in your phone now.

Everyday habits

- **Keep your phone out of your back pocket.** Opportunistic phone theft is the most common crime students experience, and it happens fastest when you are distracted.
- **Be aware on crowded transport and busy streets.** Keep bags closed and your wallet inside, not in an outer pocket.
- **Look up your route before you set off.** Standing on a corner studying a map makes you easy to identify as a visitor.
- **Walk on well-lit main streets at night** rather than taking short cuts through parks, laneways or empty industrial areas.
- **Trust the feeling.** If a street or a situation feels wrong, cross the road, go into a shop, or get a taxi. You never have to justify it to anyone.
- **Keep copies of your documents.** Store copies of your passport, IRP and insurance somewhere online that you can reach without your phone.
- **Tell someone your plans.** If you are going somewhere new, or out at night, share your location with a friend.

The SafeZone app

DCU advises students to download SafeZone, the DCU campus safety app. It connects you directly to DCU's own security team while you are on campus, and offers help in an emergency or high-risk situation, or if first aid is needed. The app has three buttons:

- **Emergency** — urgent help, quickly
- **First Aid** — a medical response on campus
- **Help** — non-urgent assistance

Download it from safezoneapp.com or your app store and register with your DCU details in your first week, rather than on the day you need it.

Scams to be aware of

The most common ones targeting new students are fake accommodation listings that ask for a deposit before you view the property, messages claiming to be from immigration or the Gardaí

demanding an urgent payment, and job offers that ask you to pay a fee first. No genuine Irish authority will phone you demanding money or gift cards. When in doubt, tell the IFY team before you pay anything.

If you lose something

- **Your phone or wallet.** Cancel your cards through your banking app, then report the loss to a Garda station — insurers and replacement documents usually need the report.
- **Your passport.** Report it to the Gardaí, then contact your embassy or consulate in Dublin, and tell the IFY team so that they can advise you on your immigration permission.
- **Something on campus.** Use SafeZone or contact DCU security. For anything involving your studies, wellbeing or safety, tell the IFY team as well — they can help you work out what comes next.

Source: DCU International Academy, IFY Student Handbook 2026–2027. SafeZone (safezoneapp.com); An Garda Síochána and the national emergency numbers (gov.ie). Checked August 2026.

10. Health and wellbeing

Ireland's health system is not free for most international students, so it is worth knowing before you need it: where to go, what it costs, and which service is cheapest for what.

Start with the DCU Student Health Service

DCU runs its own health service for registered students. It is nurse-led with GPs on site, and it is almost always the cheapest and easiest first stop for anything that is not an emergency. There are two health centres, one on each of the main campuses.

- **Glasnevin campus** — healthservices@dcu.ie, 01 700 5143 or 087 408 7936, Henry Grattan building, ground floor, room CG13
- **St Patrick's campus** — spd.healthcentre@dcu.ie, 01 700 9215, A block, ground floor, room A104
- **Phone lines** — Monday to Friday, 09:30 to 12:30 and 14:00 to 16:30
- **Appointments and reception** — 09:00 to 12:30 and 14:00 to 16:30

Always quote your student number in emails, and contact only one health centre so that you do not end up with two bookings. Instructions for making a first appointment are at dcu.ie/health/how-make-appointment.

What it costs

- Nurse appointment — free
- GP appointment — €25, which includes one review appointment if it is needed
- A review within a week for the same problem — free
- Blood test — €15

- Sick note from a nurse — €10
- A GP at a local practice off campus — around €65

Payment is taken before the appointment through a link sent to your phone. The service does not accept medical cards or private health insurance directly, so you pay, keep the receipt, and then claim from your insurer.

Which service do I need?

- **A pharmacy, for something minor.** Coughs, colds, hay fever and small injuries. Irish pharmacists give free advice over the counter, and there is a pharmacy on the Glasnevin campus.
- **DCU Student Health, for anything routine.** Illness that is not going away, prescriptions, vaccinations, sexual health, sick notes and referrals.
- **A local GP, for out-of-hours care.** Find a doctor near your address using the HSE's "Find a GP" tool at hse.ie. Ring first to check whether they are accepting new patients.
- **112 or 999, in an emergency.** Chest pain, difficulty breathing, serious injury, severe bleeding, or any situation where someone's life may be at risk.

Two things to sort out in week one

- Check what your health insurance actually covers and how to claim, and save the policy number in your phone.
- If you take regular medication, bring enough to cover your first weeks plus a letter from your doctor at home naming the medicine. Brand names differ between countries, and you will need an Irish prescription to continue.

When you need someone to talk to

Moving country is hard, and it often gets harder around week six rather than week one, once the novelty fades. Homesickness, tiredness and feeling behind are all common, and none of them mean that something is wrong with you.

The DCUIA IFY team — your first point of contact

The IFY team is your main contact for both academic and pastoral issues. If you are having difficulties, or you want feedback on how you are getting on, contact them and they will arrange a one-to-one meeting with you. They are available by email, by telephone, or in person at IFY Reception.

- ify.academic@dcu.ie
- 01 700 6413

DCU Counselling and Personal Development

Free and confidential for all registered DCU students. You start by emailing from your DCU student email address; the service then sends you a link to register, and contacts you when an appointment becomes available.

- **Glasnevin** — counselling@dcu.ie, 01 700 5165, Henry Grattan building, ground floor. Monday to Friday, 08:00 to 13:00 and 14:00 to 16:00.
- **St Patrick's** — spd.counselling@dcu.ie, 01 700 9215, Block A Health Centre. Monday to Friday, 09:00 to 13:00 and 14:00 to 17:00.

DCU Student Advice and Support Centre

Practical, confidential advice on the situations that do not fit neatly into any one office: accommodation problems, money worries, settling in, bereavement, and academic matters such as extenuating circumstances. DCU also has a dedicated International Student Support Officer you can book a one-to-one appointment with, in person at either campus or online.

- student.support@dcu.ie
- International Student Support Officer — hazel.moloney@dcu.ie
- Appointments can be booked online through dcu.ie/studentsupport

Small things that genuinely help

- **Get daylight early.** Irish winters are dark, and getting outside in the morning, even briefly, makes a real difference to how you feel.
- **Keep one fixed thing each week.** A club, a swim, or a call home at the same time. Routine steadies everything else.
- **Eat and sleep properly first.** A lot of “I can’t cope” turns out to be three weeks of bad sleep and skipped meals.
- **Say it out loud to somebody.** A classmate, the IFY team, a counsellor, or a friend at home. Carrying it alone is what makes it heavy.

If you are in crisis

If you feel unsafe, or you are thinking about harming yourself, please tell someone tonight rather than waiting. You will not be judged and you will not be in trouble.

- Emergency services — 112 or 999
- Samaritans — 116 123, free, 24 hours a day
- Pieta — 1800 247 247, free, 24 hours a day
- DCU Counselling — counselling@dcu.ie

Source: DCU Student Health Service and charges (dcu.ie/health); DCU Counselling and Personal Development (dcu.ie/counselling); DCU Student Advice and Support Centre (dcu.ie/studentsupport); HSE Find a GP (hse.ie).

11. Where to go for study help

You have two layers of support: the IFY team who teach you, and the university-wide services that your DCUIA student card gives you access to. Both are free. Use them early, not the week before a deadline.

O'Reilly Library

The John and Aileen O'Reilly Library on the Glasnevin campus is the closest library to the Invent Building. With your DCUIA student card you have access to all three DCU libraries. You can:

- Print and photocopy, on the ground floor of O'Reilly Library
- Borrow up to 14 items at a time, on one-week and three-week loans
- Access all print collections across the three library sites
- Manage renewals and your library account online

More information is at dcu.ie/library.

Maths Learning Centre

The Maths Learning Centre provides free, informal support in a welcoming environment. It is on the ground floor of O'Reilly Library. You can drop in with a maths question — no appointment is needed — and take away support materials and guidance for your studies. More information is at dcu.ie/maths/about-maths-learning-centre.

Writing Centre

The Writing Centre supports all DCU students with academic writing, and is also on the ground floor of O'Reilly Library. It is especially useful if this is your first time writing academic English. You can access online writing resources, attend live workshops, and book individual appointments for guidance on structure, referencing and making an argument clearly. More information is at dcu.ie/studentsupport/build-your-learning-confidence.

IT support — the DTS Desk

DCU's Digital Technology Solutions desk handles IT problems and questions about DCU systems and devices. Go here first when DCUIA Learn (Canvas) or your login stops working. DTS can help with network issues, hardware and lost files, and with printing, photocopying and scanning. More information is at dcu.ie/dts.

Academic support from the IFY team

Alongside the university services, your programme has its own academic support built into the year.

- **Orientation workshops.** Sessions on how to succeed in IFY and on general academic skills are held during the three weeks of orientation. The slides are shared with you digitally each week. If you do not receive them, contact ify.academic@dcu.ie.
- **Teaching staff input hours.** Your timetable shows three kinds of contact time: Class, where attendance is required, and Clinic and Supervised Study, where attendance is strongly encouraged. Clinics are where you bring the thing you did not understand.
- **Progress meetings.** The School Coordinator schedules regular one-to-one check-in meetings. You will discuss your progress in each module and get advice on time management, study skills and exam strategy. Come with questions — it is your meeting.

- **Stream representatives.** Each stream — Humanities, Science, Engineering or Business — elects representatives in the first weeks of Semester 1. They collect feedback from their peer group and raise it with IFY administration.
- **Monthly feedback.** You will be asked to complete a short anonymous form each month about your academic and personal experience. Links are provided in class time.



DCU Glasnevin campus.

If you are struggling, say so in week two

Every service on this page is busiest in the last fortnight of term, which is when it can help least. The students who do best are not the ones who never get stuck. They are the ones who ask a question the week they get stuck. Email ify.academic@dcu.ie and ask for a meeting.

Source: DCU International Academy, IFY Student Handbook 2026–2027. DCU Library (dcu.ie/library); DCU Maths Learning Centre (dcu.ie/maths); DCU student learning support (dcu.ie/studentsupport); DCU Digital Technology Solutions (dcu.ie/dts). Campus diagram drawn for this guide from the official DCU campus map (dcu.ie/map).

12. Meeting people

Almost every international student says the same thing at the end of the year: the friends made it. The catch is that friendships tend to form in the first six weeks, and they form around activities rather than around conversations.

You do not need to be good at something in order to join. Clubs and societies at DCU are mostly made up of beginners, and turning up twice is usually enough to know people by name.



DCU International Academy student life.

Clubs and societies

DCU has over 140 clubs and societies across all campuses, covering every interest, hobby and passion — sport, music, debating, gaming, film, food, faith, and country and culture societies. There is a small fee to join each one.

There are two ways for DCUIA students to join:

- **In person, at DCU Clubs and Socs Days.** These are held in Semester 1 and Semester 2. Every club and society has a stand with information about its programme of activities for the year.
- **Online, by email.** DCUIA students cannot sign up directly on the clubs and socs website. Instead, find the society's contact on dcuclubsandsocs.ie and email them asking to be signed up manually.

Global Connect Café and events

Global Connect is a dedicated social space on the DCU Glasnevin campus for international students, with a programme of events through the year. This is the easiest place to meet people who arrived at the same time as you and are feeling the same things.

Information about these events is sent by email and is available through the DCU: My Events Hub platform at myeventshub.dcu.ie. Select the activity you are interested in to see the time, location and cost, then click “Book Now” to secure your place.

Sport, at any level

The DCU Sports Centre on the Glasnevin campus has a gym with over 100 pieces of equipment, a five-lane 25-metre swimming pool, fitness and spin studios, a sauna, a steam room and a tepidarium, a squash court and five-a-side pitches. Weekday hours run from roughly 06:30 to 22:00.

To use the centre you sign up with your student ID card, and fees apply. For more information or to sign up, email sports.complex@dcu.ie or call 01 700 5797. There are also dozens of student-run sports clubs, listed at dcu.ie/dcusport/sports-clubs, if you would rather play than train alone.

Your own class

Your IFY stream — Humanities, Science, Engineering or Business — is a small cohort that you will see every week all year. Study groups formed in October tend to become friendships by December. Each stream also elects representatives in the first weeks of Semester 1; standing for it, or simply talking to whoever does, is a fast way to get to know your year group.

Two things worth knowing

First, one rule that works: say yes to the first three invitations you get, even when you are tired and would rather not. Almost nobody regrets going, and plenty of people regret the term they spent in their room.

Second, speaking English all day is tiring, and that is normal. It gets easier, and it gets easier fastest through low-pressure conversation — a club, a café, a five-a-side game — rather than through more classes. Mixing with students from outside your own language group is the single most effective thing you can do for your English.

Source: DCU Clubs and Societies (dcuclubsandsocs.ie); DCU Sport (dcu.ie/dcusport); DCU My Events Hub (myeventshub.dcu.ie).

13. Places to explore

Dublin is cheap to explore. Ireland's national museums and galleries have free admission to their permanent collections, and some of the best days out cost only a Leap Card fare.

Start in Glasnevin

The National Botanic Gardens are a short walk from DCU: Victorian glasshouses and around 19 hectares of planting, free to enter. Next door, Glasnevin Cemetery holds much of modern Irish history in one place. It is the easiest good afternoon in Dublin for a DCU student, and almost nobody finds it in their first term.



Free to walk into

- **National Museum of Ireland.** Three Dublin branches: Archaeology on Kildare Street, Natural History beside it, and Decorative Arts and History at Collins Barracks. Free entry.
- **National Gallery of Ireland.** Irish and European painting on Merrion Square. Free entry to the permanent collection; some special exhibitions are ticketed.
- **Chester Beatty.** In the gardens of Dublin Castle. Manuscripts, prints and sacred texts from across Asia, the Middle East and Europe. Free.
- **Phoenix Park.** One of the largest enclosed city parks in Europe, with wild fallow deer, long walking routes and the President's residence.
- **St Stephen's Green and Grafton Street.** A Victorian park at the top of Dublin's busiest shopping street, with buskers most afternoons.
- **Trinity College and Dublin Castle grounds.** Both campuses and courtyards are free to wander. The Book of Kells and the Castle State Apartments are ticketed separately.

Worth the fare

- **Howth.** A fishing village at the end of the northern DART line, about 30 minutes from the city. Cliff walks, a working harbour and seals.
- **Dún Laoghaire and Dalkey.** South along the coast. Walk the East Pier, eat an ice cream, and climb Killiney Hill for the view back across the bay.
- **The Docklands.** Modern Dublin along the Liffey: the harp-shaped Samuel Beckett Bridge, the Convention Centre, and EPIC, the Irish emigration museum, which is ticketed.

Before you travel

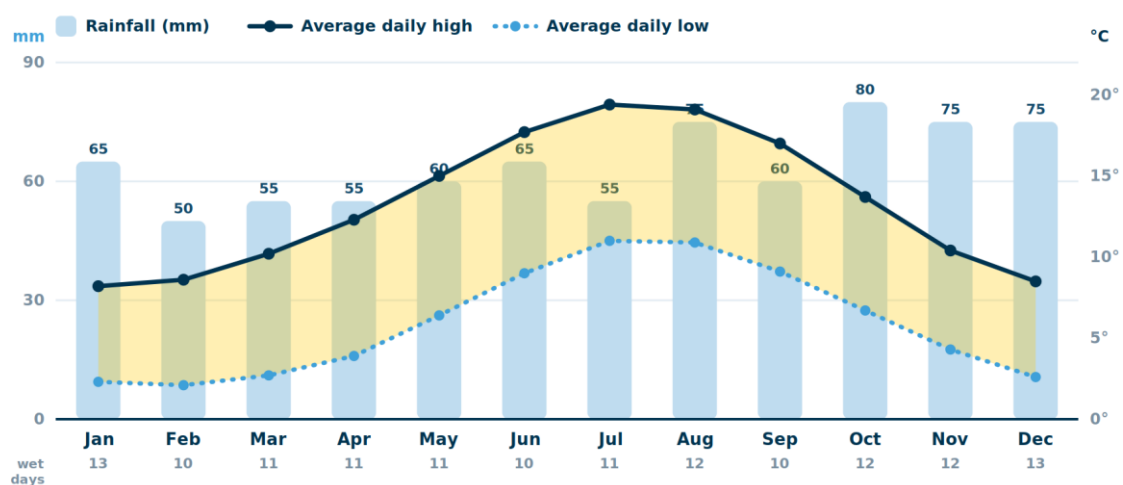
A student Leap Card fare gets you to the sea and back for the price of a coffee. Check whether a museum runs free guided tours — many do, and they are the fastest way to actually understand what you are looking at. Opening hours change, some places close one day a week, and a few need

free timed tickets booked online, so a two-minute check on the venue’s own website saves a wasted journey.

Source: National Museum of Ireland (museum.ie); National Gallery of Ireland (nationalgallery.ie); Chester Beatty (chesterbeatty.ie); Office of Public Works (heritageireland.ie) for Phoenix Park, St Stephen’s Green and the National Botanic Gardens. Checked August 2026.

14. The weather

Ireland’s weather is mild and unreliable rather than extreme. It rarely gets very cold or very hot; it simply changes its mind several times a day.



Dublin monthly averages. Temperatures and rainfall are long-term averages for the city, and the bottom row shows the typical number of wet days in each month.

What the numbers mean in practice

- Average daily temperatures run from about 8°C in winter to about 19°C in summer. Snow is rare.
- There are roughly 130 wet days a year, but most of the rain is light and brief.
- In December there are about seven hours of daylight and it is dark by about 16:30.
- In June there are about seventeen hours of daylight and it is still bright after 22:00.

Ireland’s official climate figures are published by Met Éireann, the national meteorological service, at met.ie.

Dress in layers, not in one big coat

Because the weather can shift within an hour, a single thick coat rarely works. Three thin layers that you can add to or take off will keep you comfortable in almost any Irish weather.

- **A base layer.** A t-shirt or a long-sleeve top. Nothing special.
- **A warm mid-layer.** A hoodie, fleece or jumper that you can take off indoors.

- **A waterproof shell with a hood.** This is the one thing worth spending money on. On a windy Irish day, a hood beats an umbrella.

In your bag every day: shoes that survive puddles, a small folding umbrella, and a refillable water bottle.

Practical tips

- Check the forecast, not the window. The Met Éireann app gives hourly forecasts, rainfall radar and weather warnings for Ireland. It is free, and it is the one Irish people actually use.
- Buy your coat here rather than at home. A heavy winter coat from a colder country is usually the wrong tool for Irish weather.
- Allow time for drying. Damp air means laundry can take a day or two indoors, so two pairs of shoes worn on alternate days is the practical fix.
- Have an indoor backup plan. Keep a short list of museums, cafés and indoor venues for days when the rain does not stop.

Source: Met Éireann (met.ie) for Ireland's official climate data. Monthly averages in the chart are long-term Dublin climate averages compiled from published climate statistics for the city.

15. Irish food to try

Traditional Irish cooking is plain, filling and built around potatoes, bread, dairy and slow-cooked meat — food designed for a cold, wet island. Modern Dublin sits on top of that, with restaurants from everywhere.



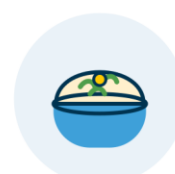
Soda bread



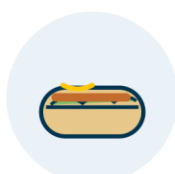
Brown bread



Irish stew



Colcannon



Chicken fillet roll



Fish and chips



Coddle



The full Irish

Eight Irish dishes worth trying while you are here.

Eight things worth trying

- **Soda bread.** Bread raised with bicarbonate of soda and buttermilk instead of yeast, and cut with a cross before baking. Ready in under an hour.

- **Brown bread.** The wholemeal cousin: denser and nuttier, served with soup, butter or smoked salmon. It is on almost every café menu.
- **Irish stew.** Lamb or beef simmered slowly with potatoes, carrots and onions. The classic winter dinner, and easy to make in one pot.
- **Colcannon.** Mashed potato folded through buttered cabbage or kale. The name comes from the Irish *cál ceannann*, meaning “white-headed cabbage”.
- **Chicken fillet roll.** A deli baguette with breaded chicken and whatever else you point at. Ireland’s unofficial national lunch, sold in nearly every corner shop.
- **Fish and chips.** From a “chipper”. Cod or haddock in batter with thick chips, usually eaten out of the wrapper on the way home.
- **Coddle.** A Dublin dish of sausages, bacon, onion and potato cooked slowly in one pot. Cheap, filling, and originally a way to use up leftovers.
- **The full Irish breakfast.** Sausage, rasher, egg, black and white pudding, beans, tomato and toast. Many cafés sell a cheaper “mini breakfast”.

Cooking on a budget

Stew, coddle and soup all use cheap cuts of meat and reheat well, so one pot on a Sunday covers three dinners. Slow cooking is also what makes the cheaper cuts tender, so you are not losing anything by buying them.

Food from around the world

You will find halal and kosher shops, Asian supermarkets, and Indian, Brazilian, Nigerian, Polish and Middle Eastern restaurants across Dublin, along with vegetarian and vegan options on most menus. Ask if you are unsure about ingredients — staff are used to the question.

Source: Dish descriptions are general cultural information. Recipe method is a standard traditional soda bread method; see Bord Bia (bordbia.ie) for further Irish recipes.

16. Music, festivals and culture

Traditional Irish music is not a museum piece. It is played live most nights in ordinary Dublin pubs, usually by people sitting in a circle rather than on a stage.

The instruments you will hear

- **Fiddle.** The same instrument as a violin, played differently — faster and more rhythmic, ornamented rather than long and smooth.
- **Tin whistle.** Cheap, small and everywhere. Most Irish children learn one at school, which is why so many adults can still play.
- **Bodhrán.** A shallow frame drum played with a short double-headed stick. It carries the rhythm of the whole session.

- **Uilleann pipes.** Ireland’s own bagpipes, pumped with the elbow rather than blown. Quieter and sweeter than the Scottish kind.

You will also hear the concertina, the flute, the banjo and the guitar.



Fiddle



Tin whistle



Bodhrán



Uilleann pipes

Four instruments at the centre of Irish traditional music.

What a “session” actually is

Musicians gather in a corner of a pub and play together for their own enjoyment. There is no set list and often no microphone. Anyone can listen, entry is usually free, and you do not need to drink alcohol to be there. If you play an instrument yourself, ask before joining in — and expect to be welcomed if you do. The Cobblestone in Smithfield and O’Donoghue’s on Merrion Row are two of the best known session pubs in the city.

The year in festivals

- **January — TradFest.** Ireland’s biggest traditional music festival, centred on Temple Bar and spreading into St Patrick’s Cathedral, Dublin Castle and venues across the city. The 2027 dates are 20 to 24 January, and many events are free.
- **17 March — St Patrick’s Day.** A national holiday and a multi-day festival in Dublin, with a parade through the city centre, concerts, street performance and fireworks. The city fills up, so go early, expect crowds, and plan your route home before you set out.
- **16 June — Bloomsday.** A celebration of James Joyce’s novel *Ulysses*, which is set in Dublin on this date in 1904. Readings, walking tours, and a lot of Edwardian costume in ordinary streets.
- **September — Culture Night and Dublin Fringe.** On Culture Night, hundreds of venues across Ireland open free of charge for one evening. The Fringe fills September with theatre and performance.
- **31 October — Halloween.** Halloween has Irish roots in the ancient festival of Samhain, and Dublin marks it with parades and events.

Finding out what is on

Check dublin.ie and visitdublin.com for what is on this week, and watch your DCU email for Global Connect events and DCUIA trips. Festival dates move from year to year, so confirm them on the festival’s own website before you make plans.

Source: TradFest (tradfest.com) for the 2027 dates; St Patrick’s Festival (stpatricksfestival.ie); Bloomsday Festival (bloomsdayfestival.ie); Culture Night (culturenight.ie); Visit Dublin (visitdublin.com). Checked August 2026.

17. Your first weeks in Dublin

Print this page, or open it on your phone, and tick things off as you go. Nothing here is difficult on its own. It is only overwhelming if you try to do all of it in one afternoon.

Your first week

- **Confirm your accommodation** and check in properly — keys, Wi-Fi password, laundry, bin day, and who to call if something breaks.
- **Travel your route to DCU Glasnevin** once in daylight. Note the stop, the route number and how long it really takes.
- **Get an Irish SIM or activate an eSIM**, and register it as the law requires.
- **Apply for your Leap Card** — Student if you are 16 to 18 or 26 and over, Young Adult if you are 19 to 25.
- **Book your immigration appointment** on the ISD portal, and ask DCUIA for your Course Confirmation Letter.
- **Sort out your banking**, or at least confirm that your existing card works here and will not be blocked.
- **Find your nearest supermarket** and do one proper shop, so that you are not buying every meal.
- **Download SafeZone** and register with your DCU details.
- **Save the emergency numbers** — 112 and 999, the IFY team, DCU Student Health, and your accommodation.
- **Go to every orientation session**. They cover things that are much harder to find out later.
- **Say hello to three people** in your stream. That is the whole task.

Your first month

- **Attend your immigration appointment** and register your permission. Keep the receipt and watch for your IRP card in the post.
- **Join one club or society** — at Clubs and Socs Days, or by emailing the society directly.
- **Go to a Global Connect event** or a DCUIA activity. Check My Events Hub.
- **Visit O'Reilly Library** and borrow something, so that the building stops being unfamiliar.
- **Try one study support service** before you need it — the Writing Centre or the Maths Learning Centre.
- **Work out your weekly budget** from four weeks of real spending, not from a guess.
- **Register with DCU Student Health** or find a local GP, so that you are not searching while you are ill.
- **Explore one place outside the city centre** — the Botanic Gardens, Howth or Phoenix Park.
- **Buy a proper waterproof jacket** if you did not bring one. You will use it constantly.
- **Book a progress meeting** with the School Coordinator and turn up with questions.

- **Ask for help if anything is wrong.** Money, health, homesickness, coursework, your accommodation — earlier is always easier.

If you only do two things

Book the immigration appointment in week one, and join one club in week two. Those two decisions remove the biggest administrative worry of your year, and solve most of the loneliness of a first term.

18. Useful contacts and links

In an emergency in Ireland, dial 112 or 999 for the Gardaí, an ambulance, the fire service or the coast guard. Both numbers are free from any phone, anywhere in Ireland, with or without credit.

DCU International Academy — International Foundation Year

- **General enquiries** — ify.academic@dcu.ie, 01 700 6413
- **IFY Teaching Team Coordinator** — Julija Orzechovskaja, julia.orzechovskaja@dcu.ie, 01 700 8871
- **IFY Operations Coordinator** — Caron Linehan, caron.linehan@dcu.ie, 01 700 6737
- **School Coordinator, IFY Academic Support** — Stephanie McGrath, ify.academic@dcu.ie, 01 700 6413

Health and wellbeing

- **DCU Student Health, Glasnevin** — healthservices@dcu.ie, 01 700 5143 or 087 408 7936, Henry Grattan building, room CG13
- **DCU Student Health, St Patrick's** — spd.healthcentre@dcu.ie, 01 700 9215, A block, ground floor, room A104
- **DCU Counselling, Glasnevin** — counselling@dcu.ie, 01 700 5165
- **DCU Counselling, St Patrick's** — spd.counselling@dcu.ie, 01 700 9215
- **DCU Student Advice and Support** — student.support@dcu.ie, dcu.ie/studentsupport
- **DCU Pharmacy (Pharmhealth) online doctor service** — pharmhealth.com
- **Find a GP near you** — hse.ie/services/find-a-gp
- **Samaritans** — 116 123, free, 24 hours
- **Pieta** — 1800 247 247, free, 24 hours

Study and campus services

- **DCU Library** — dcu.ie/library
- **Maths Learning Centre** — dcu.ie/math/about-maths-learning-centre
- **Learning support and the Writing Centre** — dcu.ie/studentsupport/build-your-learning-confidence

- **DTS, IT support** — dcu.ie/dts
- **DCU Sport** — sports.complex@dcu.ie, 01 700 5797, dcu.ie/dcusport
- **Clubs and societies** — dcuclubsandsocs.ie
- **Events and activities** — myeventshub.dcu.ie
- **SafeZone campus safety app** — safezoneapp.com
- **DCU campus maps** — dcu.ie/map
- **Textbooks** — blackwells.co.uk/bookshop/home

Living in Ireland

- **Immigration Service Delivery** — irishimmigration.ie, and the customer portal at portal.irishimmigration.ie
- **Registration Office** — 13/14 Burgh Quay, Dublin 2, D02 XK70, by appointment only
- **Public transport journey planner** — transportforireland.ie, and the TFI Live app
- **Leap Card** — leapcard.ie, and the TFI Leap Top-Up app
- **Weather** — met.ie, Met Éireann, the national forecaster
- **Dublin Airport** — dublinairport.com
- **What is on in Dublin** — dublin.ie and visitdublin.com
- **Citizens Information** — citizensinformation.ie, plain-English guides to Irish public services

Fill these in yourself

My accommodation address:

My nearest bus stop and route:

My emergency contact at home:

My student number:

Source: DCU International Academy, IFY Student Handbook 2026–2027. All DCU contact details confirmed against dcu.ie in August 2026.

About this guide

Every year a group of students arrives at DCU International Academy from all over the world, and every year most of them find the first few weeks harder than they expected. It settles. Ask early, say yes often, and give yourself a term before you judge how it is going.



Where the International Foundation Year leads.

Sources and accuracy

The information in this guide was compiled in August 2026. DCU-specific information is taken from the DCU International Academy IFY Student Handbook 2026–2027 and from Dublin City University’s own web pages at [dcu.ie](https://www.dcu.ie). General information about living in Dublin was checked against official sources, which are listed at the end of each section. These include Transport for Ireland, Met Éireann, Immigration Service Delivery, the Health Service Executive, the Office of Public Works, Citizens Information and Dublin Airport.

Fares, fees, opening hours and services change during the year. Please confirm current details on the official websites before you rely on them. If you find something in this guide that is out of date, please tell the IFY team so that it can be corrected in the next edition.

Images

Photographs of the DCU campus and of DCU International Academy students are supplied by Dublin City University. The illustrations, diagrams, charts and the simplified campus plan were created for this publication. Where a photograph has not yet been supplied, a marked placeholder shows the image required and a suggested official source.

Contact

- DCU Glasnevin Campus, Collins Avenue, Dublin 9.
ify.academic@dcu.ie | 01 700 6413
- DCU International Academy
ug.international@dcu.ie