

## Erfahrungsbericht

### University College Dublin, Ireland

#### Background

I went to University College Dublin (UCD) during the 5<sup>th</sup> semester of my molecular biotechnology degree. Due to the fact that the subject 'molecular biotechnology' is quite unique in Heidelberg, a lot of research was necessary to find a university which had equivalent courses. This research was mainly done by visiting the internet page of different universities in Great Britain and Ireland. In addition, I received information from the study coordinator, the Erasmus adviser and particularly from a student who had attended courses in UCD in 2007.

However, the prior exchanges were different because they took place under the former diploma system which has now changed into the bachelor/master system. Therefore, nowadays, all grades have to be converted to gain credits for the courses.

#### Accommodation

I went to Dublin by plane what cost me around 80 euros (return). Moreover, I could apply for student accommodation. Nevertheless, the number of rooms available was limited and Erasmus students had to take part in a lottery in August to maybe get a room. The cheapest student accommodation was about 500 Euros per month. Private accommodations were a little bit more expensive. I had the chance to be offered a room in the Belgrove student accommodation. This was the cheapest room available and I shared the kitchen and the bath room with two other students. I was sharing the flat with a Danish student and a Chinese student. Although the living room and the kitchen were 30 m<sup>2</sup>, the sleeping rooms were not bigger than 11 m<sup>2</sup>.

#### University

The Bologna system is used at the university, which means that almost all undergraduate courses are worth 5 credit points. Hence, six courses have to be attended during one semester. What is particularly important for exchange students is that a module system is used. Thus a lot of variety is possible for students. There are almost no restrictions for an exchange student. Only time schedule clashes have to be avoided.

For instance, I attended 6 third year modules. Four out of six were offered by the Chemistry Department (Quantum Mechanics, Instrumental Analysis, Heterocycles + Spectroscopy and Medicinal Chemistry). In addition, I took one module in Pharmacology (Drugs use in CNS diseases) and one in the School of Informatics (Program Construction).

Some of the modules included practical works whereas others did not. However, the details of each module are mentioned on the webpage where you can choose your modules. The online registration is straight forward. Unfortunately, the online timetable is only available for Irish students, which means that you have to check manually if your choices match with your schedule.

The exams take place during two weeks at the end of the semester. During the week just before the exam period, students are free and no lectures are given which enables them to prepare for their exams.

### **Dublin**

The university is about 6 kilometers away from Dublin city center. Hence, you have to take the bus (1,70 € per ride) or the taxi (14 euros one way) to go out. The bars around Temple Bar offer plenty of parties every evening. However, there are a lot of additional clubs and bars with a lot of live acts and concerts in the whole city. In addition, I can highly recommend the theatre plays in the Abbey Theatre.