Brown-in-Ireland Handbook 2017-18

Photo courtesy of Christopher Thompson 2015
Brown in Ireland Handbook 2016-17

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Introduction

Welcome to what will surely be your most exciting semester as a student!! Though it may involve both enjoyment and frustration, the great times in this adventure, we can assure you, will be far more numerous than the minor frustrations you are likely to encounter. The purpose of this handbook is to provide useful information to help you prepare for the experience and relieve anxiety about what to expect. It is best used in conjunction with orientation materials provided directly by Trinity College Dublin.

This handbook is intended for you and for your parents, as we feel that both those who go away and those who stay at home should share information about the foreign study experience. We urge both parents and students to take the time to read the handbook from cover to cover well before departure in order to be fully informed of its contents. It is the nature of a guide like this to advise in strong language about "do's and don'ts". Please pay serious attention to these remarks, which are intended for your benefit.

If you have any questions or concerns now or while you are away, please contact our office immediately at the numbers/e-mail below. We accept collect calls from students abroad so don't hesitate to call because of cost.

If it is an emergency and not during normal business hours at Brown you can call Police & Security at (401) 863-3322. They can reach one of us at all times - ask them to contact one of the staff of the Office of International Programs at home following their emergency procedure directions from our office.

Brown University
Office of International Programs
Box 1973
Providence, RI 02912
Ph. 401-863-3555
Fax: 401-863-3311
E-mail: OIP_Office@brown.edu
Pre-departure Information

Passports and Registration

Make sure your passport is up to date and valid for at least 6 months after the last date you expect to be outside the United States. For students who are not American citizens, make sure your necessary US visa documents are up to date with Brown’s Foreign Student and Scholars Office for your re-entry to the US.

Check the TCD Handbook for specific information about visa and immigration policies. Please note the documents required for passport control at the airport and registration at the Garda Immigration Bureau (which all non-EU students must do). This means that you will not need to apply for a visa before you leave, but rather obtain one once you are in the country. Many of these documents, including your TCD acceptance letter, proof of health insurance, and bank statement, should be brought from home. You should use the “Global Room” at Trinity to help you with this process.

Health Issues

Cultural Adjustment and Stress
Studying Abroad is an excellent opportunity for academic and personal growth. Living in a foreign environment can be exhilarating and stressful at the same time. Adjusting to a new place requires flexibility and a willingness to try and fail without fear. While studying abroad, mild physical or psychological disorders, which may be under control at home, can become more serious under the additional stresses of acclimating to a new culture.

If you have a physical or psychological condition that requires treatment or monitoring by a health care provider, you should consult with your physician or therapist before going to Ireland. For example, if you are on medication, discuss with your physician the type of care you may need while abroad and the best way to continue your regimen. Seriously evaluate the potential impact of stress from cultural adjustment and the availability and possible limitations of needed medical care in the new environment.

All students should have a complete physical check-up, have their eyes checked, and take care of any dental problems before they leave and are away from home for an entire year or semester.

Medication:
If you take prescription medicine bring enough with you for the entire time you are away. Medicines differ from country to country and cannot legally be mailed to you from the US. You should also take with you a doctor’s prescription that gives the generic names of the drugs in case you need to consult a local doctor. Talk to both your doctor and your health insurance before you go abroad, as insurance policies differ depending on the company, and it may be difficult to obtain the necessary amount of prescriptions. You might also need a certificate to carry the medicines into the country with you, as customs officials can confiscate unlabeled or uncertified drugs. If you wear contact lenses consider taking extra
solution and a special sterilizing unit, which can be used overseas, as well as a spare set of lenses or glasses. Contact lens solutions, even those with the same brand name, can differ from country to country. Contact solution, however, is available in Dublin.

**Insurance**

If you are carrying Brown student health insurance, medical/prescription claim forms are available at the Office of Insurance and Risk website at www.brown.edu.insurance.

If you have any questions regarding SHIP, you can call or write to:

Cheryl Moan  
Brown University  
Office of Insurance and Risk  
Box 1848  
Providence, RI 02912  
Ph# 401-863-9481  
Email: Cheryl_Moan@brown.edu

In addition we provide you with a Brown Travel Assistance Plan which covers evacuation and repatriation as well as some other services. This plan is provided by International SOS (http://www.internationalsos.com) and the contact numbers in case of emergency are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If calling from:</th>
<th>Call Alarm Center in:</th>
<th>At this number:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U.S. or Canada</td>
<td>Philadelphia, PA</td>
<td>1-800-523-6586 Call collect: 1-215-942-8226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>Philadelphia, PA</td>
<td>Call collect: 00-215-942-8226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South and Central America</td>
<td>Philadelphia, PA</td>
<td>Call collect: 00-215-942-8226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe, CIS, Africa or the Middle East</td>
<td>London</td>
<td>Call collect: 44-208-762-8008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia, Australia or the Pacific Rim</td>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>Call collect: 65-6338-7800</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When you contact them you must reference:  
Group membership #: 11BSGC000031

The services provided by International SOS range from telephone advice and referrals to full-scale evacuation by private air ambulance. The SOS network of multilingual specialists operates 24 hour a day, 365 days a year from SOS Alarm Centers around the world. However, International SOS is NOT health insurance.
Requests for reimbursement for medical care received while abroad should be submitted to your health insurance provider.

You will also be given a wallet size card with important information on how to access International SOS services. Please carry this with you at all times in case you need emergency assistance.

What to pack?

1. Appropriate clothing: While winter is not usually snowy and frigid, it is likely to be rainy and cold from October through March. The average temperature is in the low 40s in winter and upper 60s or higher in summer. Waterproof materials and clothes you can layer are essential.
2. An outfit for formal occasions (a jacket, tie and respectable pants for guys/a dress, trousers or skirt and nice top for girls). Also bring clothes for “going out” too.
3. Good walking shoes, sneakers are often best.
4. Towel (you can also buy one inexpensively on arrival)
5. Camera
6. An adapter and converter. Many travelers to Europe have had difficulties with their electronics, because European and American power systems are run differently. If you are bringing electronic items, it’s essential you have the correct adapter and converter. An adapter adapts your plug to fit into an Irish socket (US have two prong plugs, while Irish have three-pronged plugs). Please seek advice from your local electronic store. Note that UK adapters work in Ireland and vice versa. Also, if you are planning to travel to Europe, you will need a separate adapter and converter, as those plugs are different than Ireland and the UK.
7. A laptop would be convenient, although there are computer centers at TCD if you do not own a laptop
8. Extra passport-size photos of yourself
9. Some Euros for when you arrive, incase you wish to purchase refreshments or pay for transport – it’ll be one less thing to think about when you are tired and groggy. You can get Euros easily by going to a teller at your bank in the US before you leave.
10. Small luggage, carry-on size – good for travel around Europe

What not to pack

1. Too much stuff! If you don’t wear that outfit at home, it’s unlikely you’ll wear it in Ireland.
2. Hairdryers or hair straighteners. Even with the correct adapter/converter, it’s unlikely they will work as well as they do back home. You can buy them inexpensively in Ireland (eg. at “Boots”).
3. Pepper/mace spray – it’s considered a firearm in Ireland.
4. Bed linen - you can easily buy cheap linens in Ireland.
5. Pots, pans, or anything else you think you may need. Though you will be cooking for yourself while you are abroad, it makes much more sense to buy such things while you are there for cheap.
Budgeting for Brown-in-Ireland

In order to help you budget appropriately, we have created a cost information sheet which is available on the OIP website and can be found at http://www.brown.edu/academics/college/special-programs/international-study/pinpoint-your-program/location/brown-ireland/program-costs-dublin. **Airfare and living costs are based on our best information at the time of writing but these costs can change quickly with exchange rate fluctuations and price changes.** Some students may find their academic programs extending further into June. Adjust living costs as needed.

Also, it can’t be stressed enough that these costs are based on living in the same way as a local student. They do not include eating out in restaurants every night, or buying a lot of imported American foods or expensive products, or travel beyond that needed for daily life and commuting to university. If you wish to include more of these in your budget, please add personal funds accordingly. Legally, financial aid may only cover travel necessary to complete the academic program; therefore all outside travel will come from your personal funds.

Since you are in an unfamiliar environment and will be confronted with an almost endless array of entertainment possibilities, it’s easy to forget your budget.

The following suggestions may be helpful:

- Make both weekly and daily budgets and stick to them.
- Learn the value of the money wherever you are. Be careful not to fall into the habit of equating one unit of a foreign currency with $1.00
- Cook your own meals instead of restaurant meals and save even moderately priced restaurant outings for special occasions.
- Plan your entertainment and recreational activities around the availability of free, inexpensive and discounted events. Remember that the facilities and activities of the Student Union are designed to serve the needs of students who are operating on tightly constrained budgets.
- **Always be sure to inquire about student discounts** - Ireland is a student-friendly country and often provides significant discounts when you show a valid student ID or a society membership card
- Try to put off making major purchases as long as you can. You may find that you can do without the item or will, at the very least, give yourself an opportunity to shop and compare goods and prices. Remember you will
probably have limited room in your suitcase to pack everything—shipping goods home will only add to your expenses.

- The Student Union has travel information services, aimed at students on a budget.
- If you plan to travel via airplane, book your reservations well in advance—Ryanair and Easyjet are just two of the services that provide very cheap airfares, but if you wait until the last minute it will cost you much more.
- Good website for hostels: hostelworld.com
- Good website for flights: skyscanner.net (don’t use this website to book flights, just use it to compare providers and then book through the airline directly).
- Good website for travel guides: lonelyplanet.com or tripadvisers.com
- Take advantage of the value-added tax (VAT) on goods exemptions for visitors who are not from countries of the European Union. The trouble is only certain stores participate in the program. Ask the store for a certificate of exportation when you make your purchase (they will need to see your passport), and present the certificate and the goods to the customs officer for validation when you leave the country. You must take the goods out of the country within three months of their purchase. Lines at airports are long so leave plenty of time. You can claim a refund of the tax from the store by mail—if possible, obtain it in your own currency rather than in pounds.
- Budget how much you spend at pubs! It is easy to get carried away buying (expensive) pints.

Refund Policy

Withdrawal Prior to the Start of the Program
Any expenses that have been incurred by Brown on behalf of the student once he/she has made a commitment to the program (in writing and/or by submitting the program deposit), will be the responsibility of the student (i.e., host institution fees, pre-payment of orientation housing, etc.) and charged to the student account.

Withdrawal After the Start of the Program
If a student withdraws from a study abroad program during the first five weeks of the program, he or she is eligible for a refund of Brown tuition payments based on the schedule below. Brown is not responsible for indirect costs paid directly by the student, including, but not limited to, passport fees, vaccinations, and transportation costs.
For students who leave because of a medical or family emergency, the same refund policy applies. A student who is suspended, dismissed, or withdraws while under investigation for misconduct, will not have tuition payments refunded.

Students who choose to withdraw from a program abroad and, subsequently, enroll at Brown during the semester that corresponds to their semester abroad will be responsible for all costs incurred by Brown up to the time they withdrew from the program.

If a student withdraws from a program, the deposit paid to confirm his or her place on the program is not refundable. For housing or fees paid directly to the host institution abroad, the refund policy of that institution will be in effect.

**Dismissal from the Program**

The Office of International Programs in consultation with TCD reserves the right to dismiss a student and require that they leave immediately if in our judgment the student behaves in a manner that endangers him/herself, others on the program or the program’s continued operations. Illegal drug use is grounds for immediate dismissal.

**Money and Banking**

*Irish money is the Euro. It usually fluctuates in value from $1.08 - $1.30 depending on the exchange rate. It’s worth shopping around to compare exchange rates and/or fees charged for changing currency since these do vary and you may save money by making an informed choice.*

You should arrive with sufficient funds to take you through the first several weeks of the term.

**ATM and Electronic transfer of funds**

Check your bank fees as using an ATM may be expensive to use on a regular basis. Some U.S. banks charge $5 - $20 dollars per international withdrawal. You should check your bank statements online to monitor your account and fees.
being charged. It often makes sense to withdraw larger amounts of Euros (around $100-$200) in order to save as much money with the withdrawal fees.

Also check to see if your bankcard can be used in Europe and under what systems. ATMs running on the Plus or Cirrus systems are as ubiquitous as in the U.S. Bank of America also has affiliate banks that will not charge you a fee. Some stores or restaurants may only accept “chip-and-pin” debit or credit cards, something that is not yet ubiquitous for many American cards.

**Call your bank before you leave**, and let them know where you are studying abroad and if you will be traveling to other countries and withdrawing money there. You will also be able to find out about their withdrawal policies that way.

Money can also be wired directly from an account in the US to your account in Ireland. The sender would need to know the name as you gave it to create your bank account (i.e. if you use your full name including middle name or initial the person sending the money needs to put this on the form), the full name and street address of the receiving bank, your account number and your Irish bank’s international banking ID number (readily obtained by asking your bank). Wiring money also tends to have a fee, so it is not always easier than withdrawing cash once a week or so.

Another way to wire money fast – for instance if you have had your purse stolen and need funds instantly- is via Western Union. You can have money sent to you online, and you collect it from a Western Union Branch by showing ID (e.g. passport).

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**Irish Higher Education System and the Visiting Student**

By and large, Irish students entering a university at age 18 or 19 know what subject they will major in and will have a level of knowledge and experience roughly equivalent to that of an American student at the end of the freshman
year. They will take almost all their courses in their chosen departments and know which courses they will be taking. What we refer to as “concentrations” at Brown are referred to as “Courses” at TCD, as in “course of study.”

Due to academic specialization at the secondary school level, admission to Irish universities is done by the specific teaching department in which the student intends to take his or her degree. At TCD the process is quite competitive.

Students carry a course load consisting of regularly scheduled lectures, seminars, tutorials, and laboratory classes depending upon the subject. Note that what we call “classes” are often referred to as “modules” in Ireland. What constitutes a full course load varies among departments. Irish universities use the European Transfer and Accreditation System (ECTS). Each class earns a student 5 or 10 ECTS a semester. Brown students (as well as Trinity students) are required to earn 30 ECTS credits each semester. The Semester Start-Up Program in the fall is worth 5 ECTS credits. Note how many ECTS classes you are interested in taking are worth.

Assessment of an Irish student’s academic performance is different from the system to which we are accustomed in the US. Less weight, if any, is given to work done in class during the course of the semester. The only assessment that counts is the final examination or paper at the end of the semester or year of the degree course. Essay marks and grades on mid-course examinations that might be required at the end of the first or other years are useful primarily to reveal the student’s self-discipline and analytical powers in working his or her way independently through the suggested readings. This means that you will be expected to show the same self-discipline and self-motivation in pursuing your own course of reading and study. With that said, TCD professors are extremely accommodating and have praised international (especially Brown students!) for their enthusiasm and participation in class.

What level of courses to take?

Junior and senior freshman classes at TCD are roughly equivalent to American freshman and sophomore-level classes, respectively. Junior and senior sophister classes are roughly equivalent to junior and senior-level classes. It is recommended visiting students explore freshman courses, and, if you have a extensive background in the subject, sophister classes. Lower-level courses are usually advisable in non-concentration fields. In fact, it would be unusual to be admitted to an upper-level course without at least two, and preferably three, previous courses in the subject. However, every department has different rules and courses they allow visiting students to take, so be sure to check with the individual department.

Studying Habits and the System

The non-existence of a tradition of “loco parentis” in Ireland and the attitude toward scholarship leads to the assumption that a student's presence in the
university automatically means that he or she is self-motivated and prepared to work independently.

American students, unfamiliar with the Irish system, will find that course organization and the methods of teaching can vary from department to department. Because Irish students, given cultural values on understatement and modesty, will often give an appearance of doing less work than they actually are, the visiting student must be careful not to be lulled into a feeling of complacency. Remember that your fellow Irish student is trained to work independently and, by knowing how the system works, is able to develop a rhythm suited to the requirements of the specialized degree program carried out over the course of three or four years. He or she will seem to work harder at peak periods prior to the all-important examinations because these are the only assessments that really count for TCD students. Otherwise, the written work prepared for discussion in tutorials and based on extensive reading generally carries little weight in terms of final grading for the Irish student.

**Teaching Methods**

Courses are arranged by individual teaching departments to suit their own needs, standards and objectives. Courses consist of lectures, smaller group seminars and discussion classes, laboratory and practical classes, and tutorials or supervisions. End-of-year or end-of-term course examinations are becoming an increasingly common feature of monitoring progress and may count for 70 percent or more of the final grade for visiting students. Other than for these examinations, do not expect to find any form of periodic assessment such as mid-terms and quizzes. Even more, do not expect detailed reading assignments and highly structured lectures of the kind that predetermine the scope and depth of the knowledge required of you. Frequently the number of contact hours is small in relation to the amount of outside reading it is presumed a student is doing in order to gain the breadth and depth of knowledge expected for high performance. Remember that the Irish system generally will not "spoon-feed" students with simply the amount of information they need to know in order to pass the examinations.

**Lectures**

In the non-science disciplines, lectures and tutorials form the basic instructional program. As mentioned above, lectures are not intended to cover all the material you need to know in order to pass. Rather, lectures are usually topical in nature and serve to highlight specifically selected areas of relevant course material. This can present problems to the American student because, other than being presented in some degree of chronological order, these lectures often appear unrelated one to the other.

In science and engineering courses (and in some pre-professional disciplines such as architecture), lectures will tend to be more comprehensive, as you would expect in an American university, and will be supported by a heavy load of laboratory and practical classes or problem-solving tutorials.
Note that many visiting students are assessed using papers rather than tests. This is especially true for visiting students abroad in the Fall because TCD students take all their examinations and turn in all papers in May. Visiting students often turn in papers instead of examinations in December, rather than in May.

**Seminars and Tutorials**

Formal lectures generally do not give students an opportunity to question or debate a point; this is reserved for individual follow-up in seminars or discussion classes and in tutorials. **It is important to attend all the mandatory tutorials.** A seminar is somewhere between a lecture and a tutorial in that it consists of a teacher and from ten to fifteen students but it focuses on the discussion of a pre-assigned topic or of a seminar paper prepared by one of the students. Tutorials are TCD are roughly equivalent to “sections” at Brown. Students are expected to come to class with reading done and, possibly, a short discussion paper.

**Libraries and Books**

Libraries are an important study tool and visiting students should be aware of the library facilities that are available to them. In general, students should not purchase the books required for classes as done in the USA. You can expect to rely much more heavily on the libraries and on borrowed books.

This means planning ahead because the libraries at TCD usually require books to be read on the premises; in addition, most books need to be ordered up from the stacks (unlike most U.S. college libraries, there may be limited access to stacks except for the staff). Books can take several hours to arrive, so are best ordered the day before they are required. Some books required for classes are kept on "short-term loan" or are "reserved", where they are in a separate part of the library and you can only check them out for a few hours a day, which calls for even more organization and planning on the student’s part.

Also library hours are quite different to what you are used to at Brown. In general, it’s best to plan your day as if it is a 9 am-5 pm job and study in the libraries during the day rather than expecting to study late at night. The libraries are not open late during the weekdays, and are closed on Saturdays and partially open on Sundays.

**Grades**

The method of grading at TCD differs greatly from the American system. As mentioned above, for visiting students, a final paper will count for the majority of your grade (at least 60-70% and sometimes more).

Traditionally, TCD doesn’t give a lot of A’s, which are awarded only for truly outstanding performance and are achieved by only about 5-7% of a large class. To score above 70% on an examination or paper is very difficult, if not mythical.
To score in the 50-40% range would be a sign that a presumably able student is simply not studying seriously. See [https://www.tcd.ie/study/non-eu/study-abroad/to-trinity/erasmus/Apply/Grading.php](https://www.tcd.ie/study/non-eu/study-abroad/to-trinity/erasmus/Apply/Grading.php) for more information on grading. Shooting for above 60% is a solid goal.

**Student Life/Accommodations**

**The Student Union**

Social life at TCD is based around the activities organized by the Students’ Union. These groups are at times quite active in local and national politics on behalf of the interests of students. Recent hot issues have been tuition charges and shrinking student grants. Other long-term concerns focus on anti-racism, liberation campaigns, and AIDS awareness, to name but a few. The Union promotes the social, cultural, athletic, academic, and welfare interests of its members by financing and organizing a wide variety of clubs, societies, and welfare advisory/counseling services. The Union arranges parties, concerts and events for all students and helps to integrate people housed in the various on and off-campus residences, as well as independent students.

All students enrolled at TCD automatically have rights to participate in Student Union activities. **For many visiting students, this is a HUGE part of their study abroad.** Trinity has many societies (called socs) all of which welcome participation by visiting students. In the fall, visiting students should attend Freshers Week in order to meet club members and join societies. Membership in each society will cost from one to three euros, and in return you will get a membership card allows you participation in the club events and also discounts at local stores and restaurants. The Student Union hosts an activity fair in the spring where visiting students can join clubs.

**LGBTQ Travelers**

Although many residents of Ireland are accepting of LGBTQ people, some intolerance does exist, and is manifested in ways that range in degree from subtle to openly hostile. There are, however, LGBTQ organizations at TCD, and some of Dublin’s bars and nightclubs cater to LGBTQ clientele.

For more information on issues and resources pertaining to gay, lesbian, and bisexual travel and study abroad, consult the following:

- University College Dublin LGBTQ+ Resources: [http://www.ucd.ie/lgbt/resources-scene.html](http://www.ucd.ie/lgbt/resources-scene.html)
- Q Soc, TCD’s LGBT Society: [https://www.facebook.com/TrinityLGBT](https://www.facebook.com/TrinityLGBT)
Housing

Please see page 7 of the TCD handbook. Note that most Brown students at TCD for one semester are housed on campus in a suite-style apartment. Expect the apartment to be minimally furnished but missing bed linens, dishes, and silverware. I suggest you purchase these things in Ireland at inexpensive stores such Dunne’s, or Renney’s. Check the TCD handbook for more specific places.

Communications

E-mail

All students are assigned an e-mail account through TCD. Remember to check your Brown email address regularly too, because we will use this to communicate with you.

Phone

Some students buy a “pay as you go” phone while they are in Ireland. ‘Pay as you go’ means that you add credit to the phone and use it until it runs out. You can ‘top up’ your credit whenever you like. There is no monthly commitment and you only pay for the calls and texts that you use. You can buy credit in many shops. Some also purchase new Irish SIM cards for their smartphone, and pay a monthly charge of about 20 euros to get calls and unlimited texts.

This list is not exhaustive and does not constitute a recommendation, but it does highlight the main providers that offer competitive packages. If in doubt, on arrival find a store called “Carphone Warehouse” and they offer packages from all of the companies below.

- Vodafone
- Orange
- o2
- 3

It’s likely that when you call abroad it will eat up your credit. To avoid this, you may then want to get an international calling card, which allows you to make low-cost international calls.

Cheaper still, Skype, What’s App, Google Hang-outs and Facetime are all free online options.

EMERGENCY NUMBER

- For Ireland Emergencies, police, fire and rescue dial: 999 or 112
Getting Around

In Dublin

The three basic options for getting around are by foot, by taxi (expensive) or by bus. Dublin is a very walkable city, but the Dublin bus is a great resource to be familiar with. Its website, http://www.dublinbus.ie/, provides excellent resources for planning trips and catching buses.

You can pay – in change – for individual fares as soon as you step on the bus. Tell the driver where you are getting off and he will charge you accordingly. Note that if you need change for a bus fare, the driver will give you a receipt with the amount. This must be redeemed at the Dublin Bus Head Office at 59 Upper O’Connell Street.

Most students get a Leap Card from the Student Union at TCD. This provides a discounted student rate for the bus, as well as discounts at local stores and shops. The Leap Card is also convenient in that you put money onto it, which means you do not have to deal with exact change when you ride the bus.

You must flag down your bus as it approaches the stop. This means extending your arm as you see the correct bus approach. A driver may not stop if he or she sees no arm extended.

In Ireland

Both coach (bus) and rail travel is available for trips within Ireland. Coach travel has traditionally been the cheapest public transport in Ireland. Coach companies network the whole country and services are frequent, although traveling time is
considerably longer than rail. They offer bus tours of different beautiful locations across Ireland, and it’s a great day trip idea for a weekend.

Rail travel is probably the most efficient way of traveling in Ireland. There are two rail systems that you should be familiar with. You can use the leap card to purchase discounted tickets on both rail systems. For travel along the coast to the north and south of Dublin, use the DART. There is a DART station conveniently located next to Goldsmith Hall. The DART is an inexpensive commuter rail and extends no more than an hour outside of Dublin in either direction. Howth and Bray are excellent day trips that are reached using the DART. Irish Rail is the network of trains that cross Ireland. Check http://www.irishrail.ie/ for times, prices, and information on train travel. Note that coach is usually much cheaper than rail.

In Europe

When travelling around Europe, you can either fly from city to city, or get a train. When booking trips, always think, “less is more” and try not to cram multiple cities into one weekend or you’ll spend all your time on a train!

Ryanair is a fantastic resource with many cheap flights out of Dublin – please be very careful of hidden fees from Ryanair. Because the tickets are so cheap, they will charge you in any way they can.

Public Holidays

There are nine public holidays in Ireland which are often referred to as bank holidays since banks are closed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Holiday</th>
<th>Date Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christmas Day</td>
<td>December 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Stephen’s Day</td>
<td>December 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Year’s Day</td>
<td>January 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>St. Patrick’s Day</td>
<td>March 17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Easter Monday</td>
<td>Monday after Easter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May Day</td>
<td>May 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June Holiday</td>
<td>First Monday in June</td>
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<tr>
<td>August Holiday</td>
<td>First Monday in August</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October Holiday</td>
<td>First Monday in October</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>