

International Student Guide



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1. Welcome to ACD!

Welcome to American College Dublin! We are thrilled that you have chosen to pursue your academic journey with us. Located at 1 Merrion Square, one of Dublin's most historic and picturesque areas, ACD offers a uniquely international, student-centered educational experience.

We combine the American liberal arts tradition; emphasising critical thinking, intellectual curiosity, and a broad interdisciplinary education with the rich traditions of Irish higher education. This distinctive approach encourages creativity, global awareness, and academic excellence, preparing students not only for successful careers but also for informed citizenship and lifelong learning. The College emphasizes multiculturalism and inclusion, welcoming students from a diverse array of backgrounds.

This guidebook will walk you through everything you need to know before, during, and after your arrival—covering academics, immigration, housing, safety, and daily life in Ireland.

2. About American College Dublin

ACD was established with the goal of delivering high-quality American-style education in an Irish and international context. As a moderately sized liberal arts institution with small class sizes (typically capped at 25 students), we emphasize personalized learning and strong faculty student interaction.

What Makes ACD Distinct:

- Strong tradition in the American liberal arts model
 - Diverse student and faculty community
 - Programs in liberal arts, business, fine arts (performing arts, musical theatre, creative writing), hospitality, and more
 - Prime central Dublin location
 - Vibrant co-curricular and extracurricular life
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3. Preparing for Your Move to Ireland

3.1 Securing Your Place: Enrollment Deposit

To reserve your seat in your program, you must pay the:

€500 non-refundable enrollment deposit

This deposit holds your place in the incoming class and must be completed before enrollment steps can proceed.

It is possible to defer your offer to the next intake, once you pay the non-refundable deposit of €500 to secure your place on the program.

3.2 Meeting Conditions of Offer

Your Offer Letter may include academic or administrative conditions—examples:

- Final transcripts
- Proof of diploma or degree certificates
- English language test results (if required)

These must be fulfilled before your enrollment is complete.

3.3 Tuition Deadlines

Fall Intake

- 1 July – Non-EU/EEA students
- 1 September – EU/EEA students*

Spring Intake

- 1 November – Non-EU/EEA students
- 1 December – EU/EEA students*

*If needed, extensions or payment plans may be requested on a case-by-case basis.

FAFSA Students (US Citizens)

- Notify Admissions early
- Use School Code G40214

- FAFSA disbursement occurs at the start of each semester
 - FAFSA payments are exempt from July 1 deadline
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4. Immigration & Legal Requirements

4.1 Do You Need an Entry Visa?

- If you are a citizen of an EU/EEA country, you are not required to have an entry visa or Irish Residence Permit to study in Ireland. You can enter the country and work/study without any regulations.
-

Ireland requires entry visas for citizens of many Non-EU/EEA countries, except those listed by Immigration as visa-exempt (e.g., US, Canada, Australia, Japan). To find out whether or not you need an entry visa, please see this [website](#).

- If you are a citizen of a country that *is listed* on the website, then you are not required to have an entry visa to travel to Ireland. However, visa-exempt students must still meet all immigration requirements upon arrival.
 - If you are a citizen of a country that *is not listed* on the website above, this means that you must apply for your entry and study visas before leaving your country.
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See the required documents for a long-term study visa application:

<https://www.irishimmigration.ie/coming-to-study-in-ireland/what-are-my-study-visa-options/how-to-apply-for-long-term-study-visa/>

4.2 Financial Requirements for Immigration

Students exempt from having an entry visa must have:

- €10,000 accessible in a personal bank account upon arrival (Proof must be shown at the IRP appointment)

Student required to have an entry visa to travel to Ireland:

- You will need to pay your full tuition fee before the enrolment deadline. To apply for your visa, you must show financial documentation that you have access to €10,000 for living expenses plus the tuition fees for each year of your program.

4.3 Documents to Carry When Traveling

At airport immigration, you must present:

- Passport
- ACD Offer Letter
- Proof of medical insurance (see point 6 below)
- Evidence of finances if requested
- Accommodation information (recommended)

Airport immigration officers may ask questions and may refuse entry even if a visa is held.

4.4 Registering for Your Irish Residence Permit (IRP – Stamp 2)

All Non-EU/EEA students must register for their IRP after arrival. ACD assists in booking the appointment after classes begin.

Registration Fee: €300 (paid to Irish Immigration)

Type of Permission: Stamp 2 — full time student status

Required IRP Documents: See the [Irish Immigration website](#), following “Stamp 2, Degree Student”.

This normally includes:

- Passport
- Enrollment verification from ACD (we provide you with this)
- Proof of paid tuition fees (we provide you with this)
- Proof of medical insurance
- Proof of Dublin address
- Bank statements showing €10,000 accessible funds

4.5 Irish Immigration Appointment Tips

- Appointments release at 10:00 AM & 2:30 PM daily
- If slots are unavailable, email Irish Immigration Service Delivery (ISD) directly, including:
 - Your full name
 - Nationality
 - Date of birth
 - Difficulty finding an appointment
 - Keep all email correspondence as proof of your attempts.

Helpful link:

[Registering immigration permissions for first time](#)

5. Housing & Living in Dublin

Dublin's housing market is competitive, and starting your search for accommodation early is essential. we recommend exploring:

- Student residences
- Host family stays
- Private or shared apartments
- Renting via reputable landlords or agencies

See ACD's recommended options: <https://acd.iamu.edu/student-life/accommodation-housing/>

ACD Support

- You may send us any potential housing address and relevant details for feedback.
- We encourage you to notify us once you have secured housing.
- If you struggle to find housing, we will provide support and additional suggestions.

5.1 Understanding Dublin Neighborhoods

While we cannot officially endorse individual residential areas, here is a general overview:

Highly Convenient Areas:

- Dublin 2 (includes ACD's Merrion Square)
- Dublin 4 (Ballsbridge, Sandymount)
- Dublin 1 (central but busy)
- Dublin 6 (Rathmines, Ranelagh)

Student popular residential zones:

- Drumcondra
- Phibsborough
- Harold's Cross
- Portobello
- Smithfield

- Liberties

More affordable outer areas:

- Dundrum
- Tallaght
- Bray (Co. Wicklow) — direct train (suburban rail network, known as the DART)
- Blackrock/Dún Laoghaire

We can help you with advice to determine whether a location is safe, convenient, and accessible via public transport.

5.2 Transportation and Traveling Around Dublin

Dublin has a safe and reliable public transport system: Dublin Bus, the Luas tram, and the DART train.

These cover most of the city and surrounding areas, it's a great way for exploring Dublin and beyond.

- **Leap Card**

We highly recommend getting a Leap card—it works on all buses, Luas, and DART.

Fares are much cheaper with a Leap card than paying cash each time, and it's easy to top up at shops or online. You can go online to find nearby stores where you can purchase or refill Leap cards.

For further discounted rates, you can purchase a student Leap card. During your first week of class, you will receive a Student ID, after which you can go online to obtain a student leap card.

- **Late-Night Travel**

For nights out, taxis or Ubers are widely available.

Always use official apps like FreeNow or Bolt to make sure you're in a registered taxi. Avoid unmarked cars.

- **Road Safety**

Remember: in Ireland, cars drive on the left-hand side of the road.

Always look carefully both ways before crossing—especially if you're used to driving/walking in right-side traffic countries.

6. Medical Insurance Requirements & Health Information

Medical Insurance:

All students are required to maintain valid medical insurance.

- **EU/EEA citizens with an EHIC card** can generally access public healthcare. Coverage varies by country—see the [EHIC website](#) for details.
- **EU/EEA citizens who have never lived in an EU/EEA country** must purchase private insurance. EHIC requirements are based on **residency**, not citizenship.
- **Non-EU/EEA citizens who require an entry visa** must secure medical insurance before submission of their visa application.
- **Non-EU/EEA citizens who do not require an entry visa** must secure medical insurance before travelling to Ireland.

Insurance requirements according to Irish Immigration:

- First Year Students

Travel insurance is acceptable only for Year 1 if it:

- Covers entire stay (or one full year)
- Provides minimum €25,000 coverage for each:
 - Accidents
 - Disease
 - Hospitalization

- Students Staying Beyond One Year

For Year 2 and onward: You must purchase Irish private medical insurance specifically approved for students, with the coverage listed above.

Recommended Providers:

- [Study & Protect](#) (ACD recommendation)
- [Stamp2Study](#)

ACD does not arrange medical insurance for students. Visit [Irish Immigration](#) for full guidelines and requirements.

GP (Doctor):

It's important to register with a local doctor (known as a GP in Ireland). This will be your first point of contact for general health issues, prescriptions, or referrals. If you need help finding one, Student Services can assist.

Emergency Departments:

For serious emergencies, you can go to the nearest hospital emergency department. The main hospitals in Dublin include St. Vincent's, St. James's, and the Mater Hospital. Only use the ER for true emergencies, as wait times can be long.

Pharmacies:

Pharmacies are widely available across the city. Many are open late, and some even 24/7. There is one on Westland Row nearby the college.

Pharmacists in Ireland are highly knowledgeable and can give advice on minor health issues or over-the-counter medication.

7. Academic Life at ACD

ACD's academic structure mirrors American liberal arts institutions, enriched by European academic tradition.

7.1 Teaching Style

- Small class sizes (max 25)
- Discussion based learning
- Individualized feedback from instructors
- Use of Moodle for coursework, materials, and submissions

7.2 Workload & Assessment

Students typically take five classes per semester.

Assessment components may include:

- Essays
- Short reflection papers
- In class participation
- Midterm exams
- Final exams
- Presentations

- Creative or performance assessments (for arts programs)

7.3 Attendance Expectation

Attendance is taken every class session:

- Lateness counts as unexcused absence
 - Excessive absence leads to penalties
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8. Student Life, Support & Well Being

ACD fosters a vibrant and supportive student culture.

8.1 Extracurricular Activities

Typical ACD events include:

- Workshops
- Quiz nights
- Pub Nights
- Museum and cultural excursions
- Day trips (Blarney Castle, Cork, Emerald Park, etc.)

Students are encouraged to create new societies and clubs.

8.2 Student Support

- Student Support and Services Office (primary student services hub)
- Accommodation support
- Pastoral care
- Academic advising
- Disability and accessibility support
- Counseling referrals

If you have any questions related to student services and support, email studentservices@iamu.edu.

9. Financial Planning & Cost of Living

Dublin is a major capital city; planning ahead is crucial.

Typical **Monthly Costs** (estimate):

| Expense Category | Estimated Cost per month |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Housing | €650–€1,200 |
| Immigration Registration | €300 (one-time cost per year) |
| Utilities | €60–€120 |
| Food | €250–€400 |
| Health Insurance | €160–€300 (one-time cost per year) |
| Public Transport | €40–€120 |
| Phone Plan | €15–€20 |
| Social Activities | €100–€300 |
| Books, Materials and Printing | €25–€50 |
| Hygiene and Miscellaneous Expenses | €100–€200 |

There are no additional software costs, but you will be required to have a device suitable to accessing the internet and writing academic papers.

PartTime Work (IRP Stamp 2 Students)

Students may work:

- Up to 20 hours/week during term
- Up to 40 hours/week during holidays

(General Irish student permissions; ISD enforced)

10. Technology, Banking & Practical Setup

10.1 Banking in Ireland

To open a bank account, you typically need:

- Passport
- Proof of local address
- ACD enrollment letter

Banks often require in person appointments.

10.2 Technology Setup

Students will use:

- ACD Moodle
- Office 365 (college issued)
- ACD Student Portal

10.3 Phone Plans

Major Irish providers:

- Vodafone
- Three
- Eir
- LycaMobile (budget friendly)

11. Safety, Health & Emergency Information

Ireland is considered a safe country with friendly communities and low violent crime rates.

Emergency Numbers:

- 999 – emergency line
 - 112 – EU emergency number
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12. Cultural Adjustment & Life in Ireland

12.1 Irish Culture Traits

- Friendly & conversational
- Punctuality less strict than some cultures
- Strong emphasis on politeness
- Rich literary, musical, and artistic heritage

12.2 Weather Expectations

- Mild climate year round
 - Frequent rain; waterproof clothing recommended
 - Winters are cool but not severe
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13. Orientation & Your First Weeks

Orientation prepares you academically and socially for your studies.

Orientation and Registration takes place the Thursday and Friday before classes begin. You will receive the start date for your program on the offer letter.

Activities will cover:

- Academic guidelines
- Academic integrity
- Registration
- Campus tour
- Student ID cards
- Course schedule distribution
- Social welcome events

- Assimilation to Dublin and college life
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14. Policies, Responsibilities & Expectations

- Maintain valid medical insurance
 - Renew Irish Resident Permit (IRP) yearly (if applicable)
 - Attend classes regularly
 - Follow all academic integrity standards
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15. Frequently Asked Questions

Will I get a class schedule before arrival?

No—your schedule is distributed at Orientation.

Can I arrive early?

Yes, but book temporary accommodation as leases may not align.

Can I work in Ireland as a student?

IRP Stamp 2 students can work part time (20 hours/week).

Can I stay in Ireland after I graduate?

Students who graduate from one of our QQI-accredited programs can apply for the [Third Level Graduate Program](#) through the Irish Immigration, which is a post-study work visa upon graduation.

16. Contact Information

Email addresses:

- Admissions Team - degree@iamu.edu
- Student Support and Services - studentservices@iamu.edu

Address:

American College Dublin
1 Merrion Square
Dublin D02 NH98
Ireland

Website:

- www.acd.iamu.edu

Social Media:

You may also follow ACD on Instagram and Facebook for updates

- www.facebook.com/ACDublin
- www.instagram.com/americancollegedublin