



# Student Handbook

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# Welcome

Welcome to the Babel Academy of English school community!

Our team are here to provide you with help and support throughout your stay. Our aim is that your only concern is improving your language skills, and of course, having fun.

This handbook has useful and important information for you during your stay with us. We include a description of our school services, how we work, your responsibilities as a student, and advice on staying in Ireland and making the most of your experience.

We hope this handbook answers a lot of the questions you might have about your time here. If you are not sure about anything or have more questions, please talk to us. We are here to help.

## Our Team

**David Ferguson** Managing Director, david@babelacademy.ie

**Austin Finnerty** Marketing & Development, austin@babelacademy.ie

**Maria Gattari** Cultural Programme & Marketing Manager, maria@babelacademy.ie

**Barbara Finnerty** Accommodation Officer, accommodationsbabel@gmail.com

**Roisin Keane** Academic Manager, roisin@babelacademy.ie

### General Inquiries

You can **talk to us** at reception, **call** +353 1 5477 665 or **email** info@babelacademy.ie

We are proud of our experienced and dedicated teachers. The Babel Academy team has an eclectic mix of people with interests in music and drama, history and culture and a lot of experience travelling the world. Many of us have learned languages abroad so we know how important it is to try to make your life as easy as possible when you are here!

# Babel Academy of English

We are a progressive English language School located in the heart of Dublin City Centre. We run full and part time courses all year round in our city centre campus.

Our promise is to give Babel Academy students the best possible experience in Ireland. Our classes are engaging and focussed, specifically designed for students to improve English quickly and sustainably. Our courses are supplemented with a fun and exciting social programme.

If you need anything from us we are there to help.

## Courses

Intensive – 32 lessons per week

Essential (Mornings or Afternoons) – 20 lessons per week

Essential Plus – 26 lessons per week

Part-time – 6 lessons per week

We offer General English courses as well as Exam Preparation for Cambridge First and Cambridge Advanced, Exam Preparation for IELTS, Business English and specialised courses.

Our teaching approach is based on providing language learning in real-life contexts. Our core curriculum is supplemented with a variety of authentic materials such as newspapers, web pages, magazines, extracts from literature and a range of other teaching materials.

Additionally, you can join a free afternoon Elective each week. Popular Elective classes include: CV preparation, interview techniques, job applications and sessions on aspects of Irish Culture. Ask at reception to register for an elective.

## Class Timetable

Classes are Monday to Friday

Full-time morning classes - 09:00 to 12:25

Full-time afternoon classes - 13:30 to 16:55

*These classes include a break for 25 minutes*

Part-time classes – 13:30 to 16:00

To get the most out of your learning experience, and to be respectful of your teachers and other students, please arrive on time!

Students who arrive more than 15 minutes late will be marked absent for that class segment and may not be allowed to enter.

## Your First Day

When you arrive, Roisin, our Academic Manager, will give you a placement test to check your level. This involves a written test and a short speaking test. You can do the written test online, in advance, if you prefer.

We give you a welcome pack and an orientation session telling you all about our school and a little bit about Dublin city. You can ask questions about exams you are interested in or classes with a specific focus.

Maria, our Cultural Programme Manager, will tell you all about our programme and where you are going to visit that week.

After orientation, you go straight to your class so you can meet your teacher and your classmates and start progressing straight away.

## Assessment and Progression

### **Before you start your course**

We use the results of your initial placement test to put you in a class according to the CEFR level relevant to your capabilities. See section with description of *Levels (CEFR)*.

### **During your course**

There is an assessment each week to check your learning. Based on this, teachers provide feedback to you on your progress for that week.

Every six weeks there is a progress test which focuses on your language ability more generally. Teachers will give you advice on areas in need of improvement.

You have access to online study support which includes self-study materials. It gives you the opportunity to ask questions outside of class time and request additional materials to support your learning.

### **At the end of your course**

You will get an individual evaluation from your teacher and a certificate stating your language level at the end of your course.

## Levels (CEFR)

Below are 'Can Do' statements for the four skills (listening, reading, speaking and writing) at each level. Students who can demonstrate the relevant knowledge and competencies for a specific level are ready to progress to the next level.

Sometimes students may be strong at a specific skill, for example, listening, but might need to work on another skill, such as writing, or to improve their grammatical knowledge, before they can move up a level.

Your teacher will advise you on ways to improve areas in need of development. You can also request self-study materials which will give you an opportunity to improve your language skills outside of class.

		A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2
U N D E R S T  A N D I N G	Listening	I can recognise familiar words and very basic phrases concerning myself, my family and immediate concrete surroundings when people speak slowly and clearly.	I can understand phrases and the highest frequency vocabulary related to areas of most immediate personal relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local area, employment). I can catch the main point in short, clear, simple messages and announcements.	I can understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. I can understand the main point of many radio or TV programmes on current affairs or topics of personal or professional interest when the delivery is relatively slow and clear.	I can understand extended speech and lectures and follow even complex lines of argument provided the topic is reasonably familiar. I can understand most TV news and current affairs programmes. I can understand the majority of films in standard dialect.	I can understand extended speech even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and not signalled explicitly. I can understand television programmes and films without too much effort.	I have no difficulty in understanding any kind of spoken language, whether live or broadcast, even when delivered at fast native speed, provided I have some time to get familiar with the accent.
	Reading	I can understand familiar names, words and very simple sentences, for example on notices and posters or in catalogues.	I can read very short, simple texts. I can find specific, predictable information in simple everyday material such as advertisements, prospectuses, menus and timetables and I can understand short simple personal letters.	I can understand texts that consist mainly of high frequency everyday or job-related language. I can understand the description of events, feelings and wishes in personal letters.	I can read articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular attitudes or viewpoints. I can understand contemporary literary prose.	I can understand long and complex factual and literary texts, appreciating distinctions of style. I can understand specialised articles and longer technical instructions, even when they do not relate to my field.	I can read with ease virtually all forms of the written language, including abstract, structurally or linguistically complex texts such as manuals, specialised articles and literary works.
S P E A K I N G	Spoken Interaction	I can interact in a simple way provided the other person is prepared to repeat or rephrase things at a slower rate of speech and help me formulate what I'm trying to say. I can ask and answer simple questions in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics.	I can communicate in simple and direct exchange of information on familiar topics and activities. I can handle very short social exchanges, even though I can't usually understand enough to keep the conversation going myself.	I can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. I can enter unprepared into conversation on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or pertinent to everyday life (e.g. family, hobbies, work, travel and current events).	I can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible. I can take an active part in discussion in familiar contexts, accounting for and sustaining my views.	I can express myself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. I can use language flexibly and effectively for social and professional purposes. I can formulate ideas and opinions with precision and relate my contribution skilfully to those of other speakers.	I can take part effortlessly in any conversation or discussion and have a good familiarity with idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms. I can express myself fluently and convey finer shades of meaning precisely. If I do have a problem I can backtrack and restructure around the difficulty so smoothly that other people are hardly aware of it.
	Spoken Production	I can use simple phrases and sentences to describe where I live and people I know.	I can use a series of phrases and sentences to describe in simple terms my family and other people, living conditions, my educational background and my present or most recent job.	I can connect phrases in a simple way in order to describe experiences and events, my dreams, hopes and ambitions. I can briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans. I can narrate a story or relate the plot of a book or film and describe my reactions.	I can present clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects related to my field of interest. I can explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.	I can present clear, detailed descriptions of complex subjects integrating sub-themes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion.	I can present a clear, smoothly-flowing description or argument in a style appropriate to the context and with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points.
W R I T  I N G	Writing	I can write a short, simple postcard, for example sending holiday greetings. I can fill in forms with personal details, for example entering my name, nationality and address on a hotel registration form.	I can write short, simple notes and messages relating to matters in areas of immediate needs. I can write a very simple personal letter, for example thanking someone for something.	I can write simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. I can write personal letters describing experiences and impressions.	I can write clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects related to my interests. I can write an essay or report, passing on information or giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view. I can write letters highlighting the personal significance of events and experiences.	I can express myself in clear, well-structured text, expressing points of view at some length. I can write about complex subjects in a letter, an essay or a report, underlining what I consider to be the salient issues. I can select style appropriate to the reader in mind.	I can write clear, smoothly-flowing text in an appropriate style. I can write complex letters, reports or articles which present a case with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points. I can write summaries and reviews of professional or literary works.
G							

CEFR Self-Assessment Grid is available at:  
<https://www.coe.int/en/web/portfolio/self-assessment-grid>

## Exams

We offer courses for students who want to focus on exam preparation, such as Cambridge First, Cambridge Advanced and IELTS, as well as General English classes. We also offer an exam booking service.

## Short-term Students

Please talk to academic staff about registering for an exam. Depending on the academic programme and school package you have booked, you may need to pay an additional fee for the exam:

Cambridge First €175  
Cambridge Advanced €185  
IELTS €197  
TIE €105

Students who have registered for an exam with Babel Academy of English can attend an exam information session in advance of their exam. Please ask at reception to register for an upcoming session.

## Long-term Students: End-of-Course Exam Entry Policy

Students enrolled on an Academic Year Programme must take an external examination at the end of their course.

- All Academic Year Programme fees include an exam registration fee. You will be sent an invoice for your programme fees (including tuition and exam registration) when you apply for a course. These fees must be paid in full in advance of your course.
- In accordance with INIS (Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service - [www.inis.gov.ie](http://www.inis.gov.ie)) these exams are run by an approved external examiner. Grades are authenticated by the approved external examiner. See below for the list of courses and corresponding entry levels, minimum exit levels and the required external exit examination.
- On the first day of your course your language level will be assessed and you will be advised on the external examination option which best suits your level. You can discuss the exam with academic staff who will answer any questions you may have.
- You will be asked to sign an external exam agreement with Babel Academy of English.
- Babel Academy of English academic manager, Roisin Keane ([roisin@babelacademy.ie](mailto:roisin@babelacademy.ie)) will enter you for the end of programme exam, and pay the exam fee on your behalf.
- Examination requirements are displayed on the student noticeboards in the school.
- Before the exam date, your teacher will discuss your level and which exit examination level you should sit. For example, if you have progressed very quickly from your Entry Level and you are capable of doing an examination at a higher exit level, you will be advised accordingly.
- We encourage students to attend our additional exam information session outside of class time. Please ask at reception for information about upcoming exam preparation sessions.

- The result of the exit exam will be recorded digitally by academic staff on the school computer data system and may be shared with Babel Academy of English staff.
- Babel Academy of English are required to provide, on request, a record of your grade to INIS.

### List of Academic Year (25 Week) Programmes and Corresponding Exit Exams

Programme Title	End of Programme Exam	Recognition Authority	Tuition hours per week	Entry Level	Exit Level
General English Morning (A1/A2)	TIE A2	ACELS	15	A1	A2
General English Morning (B1/B2)	TIE B2	ACELS	15	B1	B2
General English Afternoon (B1/B2)	TIE B2	ACELS	15	B1	B2
General English Afternoon (B2/C1)	TIE C1	ACELS	15	B2	C1

## Enrolled Learner Protection

Babel Academy of English has approval to offer students learner protection insurance. All Academic Year Courses will be insured with learner protection insurance. Babel Academy of English will take out this insurance on the student's behalf.

## Social Programme

Every student can join at least one afternoon activity each week. We post information about social programme activities each week on the student notice board.

We have a wide range of activities to choose from. Mid-week activities include walking tours, trips to museums, visits to cultural sights, and socialising events.

At the weekend, we offer full day Saturday trips so that you can experience a different side of Irish life away from the hustle and bustle of Dublin city. Popular destinations for Saturday trips include Glendalough Monastic Site and mountain trail, Galway City, UNESCO World Heritage Site the Giant's Causeway and the Cliffs of Moher.

Talk to Maria, our Cultural Programme Manager, if you have any questions, suggestions or feedback. You can contact Maria at [maria@babelacademy.ie](mailto:maria@babelacademy.ie)

- Visit our facebook page to see photos and updates on our latest events: [facebook.com/babeldublin/](https://www.facebook.com/babeldublin/)
- Visit our blog for information and tips about travelling to other parts of Ireland: <http://babelacademy.ie/blog/>

## Dublin City

Dublin, the capital city of Ireland, is located on the east coast. The population is about 1.2 million. The city began as a Viking settlement in the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Centuries along the River Liffey. It is now a large cosmopolitan area divided between north and south by the river.

The city architecture is a mix of modern structures and historical landmarks. The imposing St. Patrick's Cathedral was founded in 1191. The grounds of Trinity College house the Book of Kells, a beautifully illuminated manuscript from the 9<sup>th</sup> Century. There are many parks located in the heart of the urban area, among them Stephen's Green, Merrion Square and The Phoenix Park.

Temple Bar is a major nightlife hub and has live music playing in many pubs every night of the week. The main shopping streets, Henry Street and Grafton Street, are pedestrianised and frequently have buskers (street performance artists) playing music and entertaining the passing crowds. There are plenty of cafés and restaurants for all budgets and tastes. The wide variety of cultural influences on the city contribute to a lively and interesting arts and cultural scene.

### Useful Websites:

<http://www.visitdublin.com/>  
<https://dublin.ie/whats-on/>

# Accommodation

## Host Family

Host family accommodation is a suitable option for students who want to experience Irish family life, practice English with native speakers and immerse yourself in the language. Generally host family accommodation will include breakfast, a light lunch to take with you and dinner in the evening.

### Price and Types of Rooms:

Shared Room = €180 per week

Single Room = €220 per week

Additional night = €35

Location: Our host families are located in Dublin suburbs. They are all serviced by regular public transport links to the city centre.

Talk to our accommodation team if you have questions or issues with your host family accommodation.

Email: [accommodationsbabel@gmail.com](mailto:accommodationsbabel@gmail.com) or Call: +353 85 202 9277

## Hostels

Hostels are the cheapest accommodation option by far. Because of their friendly environment, hostels are an ideal option for short stay students who enjoy spending time in the common areas.

Price: The average price is between €20 and €60 per night, depending on the location and time of the year.

Type of rooms: Rooms vary from private rooms to rooms for more than 10 people. Hostels offer female or male dormitories as well as mixed rooms.

Location: Most hostels can be found in the City Centre.

## List of City Centre Hostels

### **Dublin 1**

*Abbey Court*  
29 Bachelors Walk, Dublin 1  
+353 1 878 0700  
info@abbey-court.com  
www.abbey-court.com

*Abrahams A Star Backpackers*  
82/83 Lower Gardiner Street, Dublin 1  
+353 1 855 0600  
stay@abrahamshostel.com  
www.abrahamshostel.com

*Isaac's Hostel*  
2/5 Frenchman's Lane, Dublin 1  
+353 1 855 6215  
hostelreception@isaacs.ie  
www.isaacs.ie

*Jacob's Inn*  
21-28 Talbot Place, Dublin 1  
+353 1 855 5660  
info@jacobsinn.com  
www.jacobsinn.com

*Sky Backpackers*  
2-4 Litton Lane, Dublin 1  
+353 1 872 8389  
info@skybackpackers.com  
<http://www.skybackpackers.com>

### **Dublin 7**

*Generator Hostel*  
Smithfield Square, Dublin 7  
+353 1 901 0222  
dublin@generatorhostels.com  
[www.generatorhostels.com/destinations/dublin](http://www.generatorhostels.com/destinations/dublin)

*Dublin International Hostel*  
61 Mountjoy Square, Dublin 7  
+353 1 830 4555  
info@anoige.ie  
[www.anoige.ie/hostels/our-hostel-guide/dublin-international-hostel/](http://www.anoige.ie/hostels/our-hostel-guide/dublin-international-hostel/)

*Spire Hostel*  
90-93 Marlborough Street, Dublin 1  
+ 353 1 873 4173  
reservations@spirehostel.com  
www.spirehostel.com

### **Dublin 2**

*Ashfield A Star Backpackers*  
19/20 D'Olier Street, Dublin 2  
01 6797734  
stay@ashfieldhostel.com  
www.ashfieldhostel.com

*Kinlay House*  
2-12 Lord Edward Street, Dublin 2  
+353 1 679 6644  
info@kinlaydublin.ie  
www.kinlaydublin.ie

*Barnacles Temple Bar*  
19 Temple Lane, Temple Bar, Dublin 2  
+353 1 671 6277  
templebar@barnacles.ie  
<http://www.barnacles.ie/dublin/>

## Bed & Breakfast

Bed and Breakfasts (B&Bs) are usually cosier and quieter than hostels and often offer good facilities. B&B accommodation would suit people who are looking for comfortable and affordable accommodation.

Price: Prices vary between €90 and €180 depending on facilities, room type and time of the year.

Type of rooms: All rooms are private rooms. They range from twin rooms to double rooms. You have your own private bathroom (ensuite).

Location: There are many B&Bs in Dublin located close to O'Connell Street and along the route to the airport. Bear in mind that B&Bs may have a minimum number of nights stay.

## Hotels

The range of prices and amenities in hotels varies depending on what you are looking for. Hotels usually offer extra services and facilities such as swimming pool, Spa, fitness centre and room service.

Price: The average price is between €100 and €300 per night.

Type of Rooms: King room, double room, single room, family room and twin room.

Location: You can find hotels all around the city though city centre options are often more expensive. For cheaper options outside of the city centre, check that bus or tram lines are located conveniently.

## Long Term Apartment Rental

Guidelines to help you to find and rent an apartment:

- 1) The most popular rental website in Ireland is [www.daft.ie](http://www.daft.ie) but there is high competition among tenant applicants.

You can also check [www.rent.ie](http://www.rent.ie) and [www.spotahome.com](http://www.spotahome.com) which are smaller websites with lower demand. Bear in mind [spotahome.com](http://www.spotahome.com) charges a fee, whereas the other two are free.

- 2) Subscribe to an accommodation website such as [daft.ie](http://daft.ie) or provide your email address to receive updates on new offers that suit your requirements. This will allow you to be one of the first to know about new advertisements of rooms and apartments in Dublin.

- 3) If the advertisement (ad) does not provide any phone number, then send an email. The email should be friendly, including information like working/studying hours, age, gender and any relevant characteristics as a tenant (for example, quiet, neat, etc.). If you do not get a reply and you are still very interested in the property, send another email to reinforce your level of interest in the place.
- 4) If you are new in town and you do not have any work or landlord references yet, it is a good idea to focus on ads posted by tenants rather than landlords.
- 5) The average price for a single bedroom is around €500 per month, €700 for a double bedroom and approximately €300 for a shared room (bills not included). Prices vary according to location and number of flatmates/housemates (the closer to the city centre, the more expensive a room will be).
- 6) Always ask about bills to get a clear idea of your total monthly expenses. During the interview, ask about supermarkets in the area, public transport stops and the central heating cost.
- 7) Get an Irish mobile number if possible. It will indicate that you are staying in Ireland on a more long-term basis.
- 8) When looking at apartment location, note that Dublin areas with odd numbers (1, 3, 5, 7, etc.) are on the north side of the city and Dublin areas with even numbers (2, 4, 6, 8, etc.) are on the south side of the city.

## Emergency Contacts

### **Babel Academy of English**

During office hours (08:30 – 16:30) you can contact us through the office telephone:  
+353 1 5477 665

Outside of office hours Emergency contact: +353 87 938 6269

### **Police, Fire, Ambulance**

Emergency Services Number: 999

### **Tourist Assistance Office**

Located in Pearse Street Garda Station, Dublin 2

Open Monday to Saturday 10:00-18:00 and Sundays/Public Holidays 12:00-8:00

+353 1890 365 700 or +353 87 6575838

### **Garda (Police) Stations**

Dublin 1 - O'Connell Street: +353 1 666 8067

Dublin 2 - Pearse Street: +353 1 666 9000

When you are calling a landline or mobile phone in Ireland, put 00 353 before the number and delete the first 0.

## Safety Advice

- Stick to main roads you are familiar with – Don't take short cuts, particularly through parks, after dark.
- If you are travelling to remote areas to walk or cycle, tell someone where you are going.
- Don't take large amounts of cash, or original ID or passport documents around with you.
- Keep your excess cash, passport and other valuables in a safe place in your accommodation.
- Never leave your bag unattended in public spaces.
- Be careful of pickpockets in crowded areas such as train stations and shopping centres.

## Health

Students should notify Babel Academy of English of any medical conditions (physical or mental) that may influence your stay in Ireland. Please inform us of any allergies you have, particularly if staying in Host Family Accommodation.

Babel Academy of English will not accept responsibility for any illnesses resulting from a medical condition that has not been made known to Babel Academy in advance. Babel Academy of English reserves the right to send students home if, in the opinion of Babel Academy management, a medical condition makes continuing a course of study untenable. In this case a refund/credit note will be issued at the discretion of Babel Academy management.

If you cannot come to class because you are ill, you must bring a doctor's note to school when you return. If you do not, you will be marked absent for the classes you have missed. See section on *Punctuality and Attendance*.

## European Health Insurance Card

If you are a national of a member state of the European Union (EU), European Economic Area (EEA) or Switzerland and you are travelling or staying temporarily in Ireland, you are entitled to receive medical care if you become ill or have an accident. These services are provided free of charge through the public health system on production of a valid European Health Insurance Card (EHIC).

Information on applying for the European Health Insurance Card is available at:  
[http://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/travel\\_and\\_recreation/travel\\_abroad/e111.html](http://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/travel_and_recreation/travel_abroad/e111.html)

You should contact the Health Authority in your home country, well in advance of travelling to Ireland, to fulfil any registration requirements and to obtain the necessary forms that you will need.

You will normally have to pay for all optical and dental services while in Ireland. Regarding hospital services, if you have not obtained the necessary documentation entitling you to free or minimum-cost services, costs can be as much as €550 per day.

## Health Insurance for Non-EEA Students

Health cover is compulsory for international students wishing to obtain a student visa to study in Ireland. You must have paid for health cover in order to be granted a visa into Ireland.

You can make your own arrangements in your home country or ask Babel Academy of English for advice. You will need to show evidence of your health insurance to immigration authorities.

- For newly-arrived first year students, Irish travel insurance will be proof enough if it covers you for one full year or the duration of your stay.
- You are required to have at least a basic policy covering emergency medical expenses, e.g. cover in the event of an accident requiring hospitalisation, coverage of a minimum of €25,000 for accident and €25,000 for disease, and as stated, for any stays in hospital.
- Your health insurance policy must be in the English language.
- After the first year, travel insurance is no longer valid and you must source private medical insurance for any subsequent years.
- For registration in second or later years, all non-EU students can show they are in receipt of private medical insurance from Ireland by way of a letter of renewal.

Note: The cancellation of medical insurance following registration is a breach of immigration conditions.

## Money

### Money Exchange

The currency in Ireland is Euro (€). You can exchange money in a *Bureau de Change* at the airport, banks and post offices. Exchange rates vary.

It is possible to change most foreign bank notes in USIT Now (19 Aston Quay, Dublin 2) free of commission with an international student card (ISIC).

## **Banks and Withdrawing Money**

There are many ATMs (Automated Telling Machines) or Banklinks in Dublin city. They are located in or outside bank buildings, in many shops, shopping centres and large train stations. The ATM will show which international bank cards it accepts.

Major banks in Ireland include Bank of Ireland, AIB (Allied Irish Banks), Ulster bank, and Irish Life and Permanent.

Bank opening hours are normally Monday to Friday 10:00 – 16:00. Banks are closed on Public Holidays.

## **Opening a Bank Account**

Banking costs vary, however, many banks offer special student rates or even 'free banking' so it is well worth shopping around before opening an account.

You'll need two documents to open an Irish bank account:

1. one valid form of photo ID - Your passport, driving licence or national identity card (if you are an EU citizen)
2. a document to prove your address - a recent utility bill (less than 6 months old), a recent bank statement (less than 6 months old) or correspondence from a government department or authority or a letter from Babel Academy of English confirming that you are a student with us.

## **Public Transport**

### **Dublin Bus:**

- The 41 bus and 16 buses travel from the airport to the city centre.
- When you are at a bus stop, you have to put your hand out to tell the bus driver that you want him/her to stop so that you can get on the bus.
- You must use a travel pass or have the exact fare – no change is given.
- There is a Dublin Bus App you can download on your phone which will give you information about specific bus routes.
- This route planner website is useful to check which routes are the most convenient for you.
- If you are not sure whether the bus arriving at your stop is the right bus for you, ask the driver. They are usually quite happy to give you information and advice!

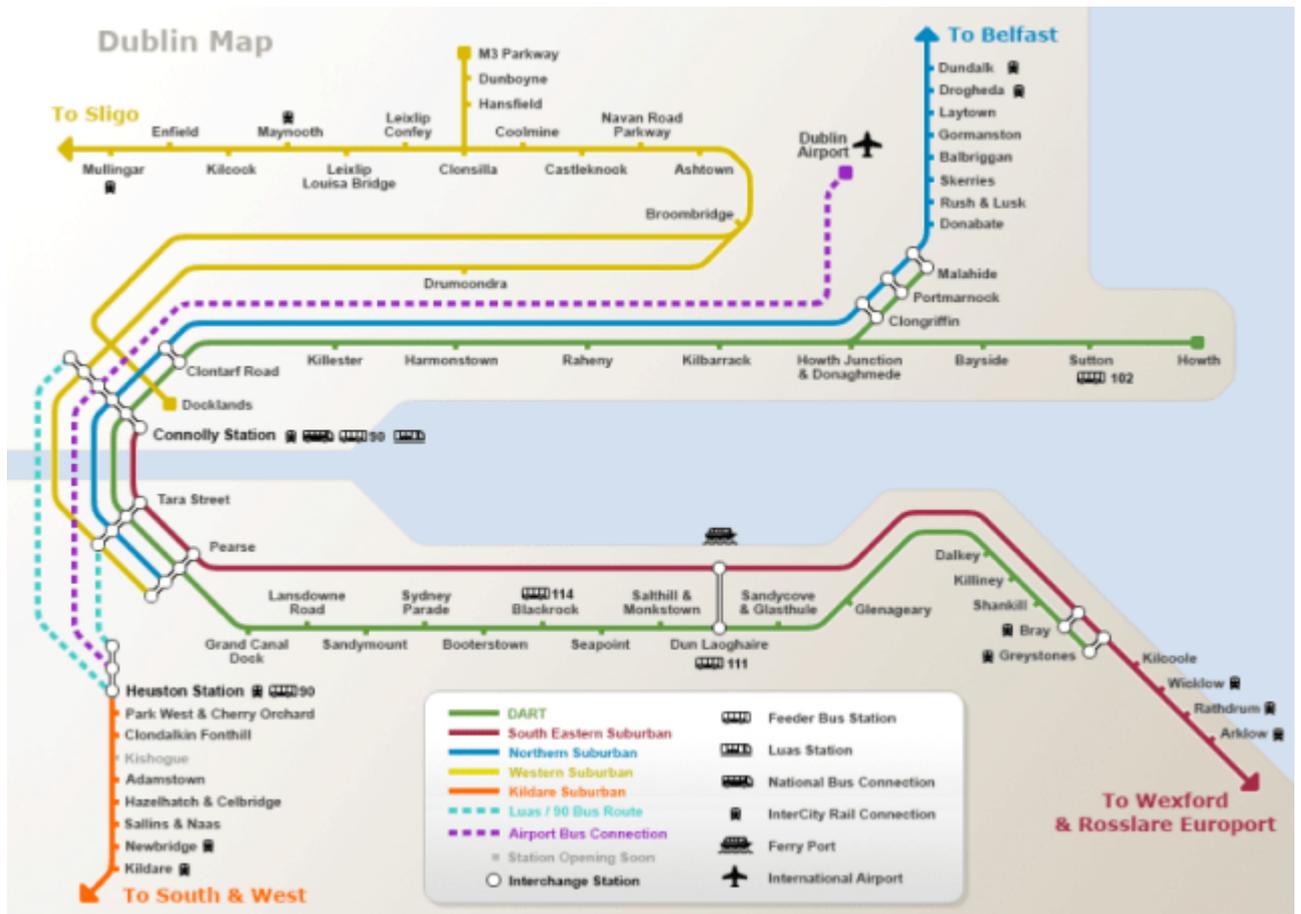
### **LUAS – Intercity Tram:**

- You can pay using the machine at the station or by 'tagging on' and 'tagging off' your travel pass card – This is when you touch the pay sensor and it records your fare.

- If you don't 'tag off' when you get off at your stop, you will be charged the maximum fare. Don't forget!

### DART – Intercity Train:

- This is most useful if you are travelling from the city to suburbs along the coast



### Dublin Travel Passes:

- These public transport passes are called LEAP cards. You can buy them online, in local shops and at DART ticket machines.
- You top-up your card with money as an alternative to a cash fare. If you use a LEAP card (city travel pass) you have 20% cheaper fares on the Luas, Dublin bus and the intercity DART.
- Students can get a discounted LEAP card

You can book a travel pass with Babel Academy of English before you come. Please let us know if you wish to do this when you are booking your course.

## Study Visa Information & FAQs – Non-EEA Students

If you are an EEA student you do not need a visa to enter Ireland to study. If you are not an EEA student, you may need a visa to study in Ireland.

You can use this online facility to check if you need a visa:

<http://www.inis.gov.ie/en/INIS/Pages/check-irish-visa>

If you do not need a visa to enter Ireland you may still need to register with the immigration authorities.

### **How do I apply for a visa to enter Ireland?**

You can apply online for your student visa: (The Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS) provides supporting information in several languages)

<https://www.visas.inis.gov.ie/avats/OnlineHome.aspx>

When you complete the online form, you are given a unique reference number which can also be used to track the application.

At the end of the online application, you will receive a summary of the supporting documentation required, the fee payable and where it should be submitted to (often the nearest Irish Embassy or Consulate).

### **What documents do I need to apply for a study visa?**

These are the key documents:

- The letter of acceptance from Babel Academy of English confirming
  - (i) you have been accepted on a full-time language course
  - (ii) you have paid your course fee

Note: When you first apply for a course, Babel Academy of English will send you a letter confirming your enrolment and an invoice stating the fees. When you confirm all details are correct and you pay the full course fee (which includes the exam booking fee) you will be sent a letter of acceptance and confirmation of course fees paid.

- Evidence that you have sufficient funds to support yourself while studying in Ireland. Academic Year students must have access to at least €3,000 (in addition to your course fees) at first registration.
- Evidence of private medical insurance. (See section above *Health Insurance for Non EEA students* for more information)
- A passport valid for at least 6 months after the completion of your course

### **What happens when I arrive in Ireland?**

At the airport an immigration officer will check your documents. If they are satisfied that everything is in order, they will stamp your passport and then add a date to the stamp.

You must register with immigration authorities before the date on the stamp.

### **Where do I register with immigration authorities?**

In Dublin City the registration office is located at:  
13-14 Burgh Quay, Dublin 2

You must book an appointment online before your visit:

<https://burghquayregistrationoffice.inis.gov.ie/>

### **What do I need to do at school before I attend my appointment?**

You will need to confirm your course schedule, ie. your holiday dates, in the first week of your course (See section on *Holiday and Sick Leave* for more information). Please confirm at reception that you have booked your INIS appointment so that Babel Academy can inform INIS of your finalised course schedule before you attend your appointment.

### **What happens at the immigration registration office?**

When you go to the registration office, an immigration officer will meet you and record your details. If your application is successful, the immigration officer will:

- Put a stamp in your passport to grant you permission to stay in Ireland
- Give you a registration certificate (also called a 'GNIB card') to show that you have been registered

There is a registration fee of €300 (payment by bank giro or credit card)

See this website for information on study visas:

<http://www.educationinireland.com/en/>

## Working in Ireland

### EEA Students

If you are an EEA student, you are free to take up full-time or part-time employment in Ireland while studying. You are not limited in the length of time you can study and work in Ireland.

Within each EU/EEA member state, there are EURUS advisors, specially trained placement officers, who provide free information and advice to workers and employers including:

- advice and guidance on how to look for a job in the EEA and the possibilities that exist for finding work in another country
- A recruitment service to employers who wish to recruit in EEA member states
- Information on living and working conditions in EEA member states

If you are looking for work, you can post your CV on the EURES website, where it can be accessed by thousands of employers throughout the EEA:

<https://ec.europa.eu/eures/public/en/homepage>

## Non-EEA Students

Students attending a full-time course and in possession of a GNIB card are entitled to take up casual employment.

- Casual employment is defined as up to 20 hours part-time work per week.
- It is permissible to work full-time (i.e. up to 40 hours per week) during two standardised periods only:  
*15th December to 15th January and 1st May to 31st August.*

These periods correspond to the traditional summer and winter college holidays. These dates are fixed for all non-EEA students.

## Part-time work

Part-time jobs are often advertised in shop windows, in shopping centres, through daily Irish newspapers and through employment agencies.

You should bring an up-to-date CV in the English language with you, as you may be requested to supply information on any experience or expertise you may have.

At Babel Academy of English, you can register for a free Elective each week. Choices include CV preparation, interview techniques and job applications. Ask at reception to register.

## Qualifications

NARIC Ireland provides advice on the academic recognition of a foreign qualification by comparing it, where possible, to a major award type and level on the Irish National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). You can find a comparability statement for each qualification. NARIC Ireland website:

<http://qsearch.qqi.ie/WebPart/Search?searchtype=recognitions>

## PPS Number

If you are working in Ireland you need a PPS (Personal Public Services) number. It is a unique number that government bodies will use to identify you.

- You cannot apply for a PPS number before you arrive in Ireland. You must be living here.
- You must show that you need a PPS number for transaction with a specified body. For example, if you are taking up employment, you need a PPS Number to register with the Revenue Commissioners. However, looking for work alone is not considered a transaction with a specified body.
- Employers should not look for your PPS number when recruiting. An employer should only seek a PPS number if you are actually taking up employment with the organisation.
- To get a PPS number, you will need to fill out an application form in the PPS number centre, provide evidence of your identity (passport) and evidence of why you need a PPS number allocated. You must also provide proof of your address (eg. household bill, financial statement, tenancy agreement, etc.)
- The PPSN registration centre in Dublin is the Intreo Centre on Parnell Street  
Address: 197/199 Parnell Street, Dublin 1 Phone: (01) 8899500  
Opening Hours: 09:30 - 16:00 (Open Thursday 10:30)
- You will need to make an appointment for the centre online at:  
<https://www.mywelfare.ie/Account/Login>  
You will first need to register with the site. To do this you need a mobile phone number and two email addresses (a main address and an alternate address).
- When you have made your appointment, print the notification and bring it to your appointment along with the required documents (listed in the notification).

## Holiday and Sick Leave Policy

### **Holiday Arrangements: Academic Year Programmes**

Our long term academic year courses on the internationalisation register are designed for students to take a minimum of 25 weeks of study over an 8 month period. Students enrolled on these courses may require sick leave and/or holidays.

On enrolment, Babel Academy gives each student their tuition schedule. This includes a holiday plan. Where feasible, academic year students are given holidays from June to September and during the Christmas period.

New students are given one opportunity to amend their assigned holidays during their first week. The holiday timetable agreed in the first week at school will be recorded for the GNIB (Garda National Immigration Bureau) and cannot be changed.

## Important Information

- Students must have completed at least 6 weeks of their course before holidays will be granted.
- Students cannot take holidays in their final 4 weeks of tuition.
- Holidays must be for a minimum of 1 full week.
- Holiday periods granted cannot exceed 1/3 of the course time elapsed. For example, after the first 9 weeks of your course, you can take a maximum of 3 weeks holiday.

The only exception to this is when the school is closed for Christmas holidays.

## Holiday Arrangements:1 – 24 Week Programmes

Generally no holidays are allowed for students who are studying on courses that are less than 12 weeks.

One week's holiday is allowed for students who are studying on courses from 12 to 24 weeks. Please request your holiday by email to [roisin@babelacademy.ie](mailto:roisin@babelacademy.ie). You must request the holiday at least one week in advance. Please note that holidays won't be given after the week has already begun.

## School Holidays

The school is closed during public holidays and for 2 weeks over the Christmas period.

Public Holidays:

- New Year's Day (1 January)
- St. Patrick's Day (17 March)
- Easter Monday
- First Monday in May, June, August
- Last Monday in October
- Christmas Day (25 December)
- St. Stephen's Day (26 December)

## Sick Leave

If a student cannot attend class because they are ill, they must notify the academic department in the school by email to [roisin@babelacaemy.ie](mailto:roisin@babelacaemy.ie)

- When a student returns to class, they must submit a doctor's note including the number of day's leave to be awarded. Once this certificate is produced, a student's attendance will not be affected and the sick leave will be recorded.
- Uncertified sick leave will be recorded as absence and will negatively affect a student's attendance rate.

Please note sick days will not be added to the end of course period.

## Compassionate Leave

Students may have reason to take an unscheduled break from their studies due to extended personal sick leave, or an emergency visit home due to the death or ill health of a close family member.

In this instance, students should contact the school immediately. The application for unscheduled leave must normally be accompanied by documentary evidence, for example, medical certificates from a registered medical practitioner.

## Contact

Roisin Keane, Academic Manager      [roisin@babelacademy.ie](mailto:roisin@babelacademy.ie)    +353 1 5477 665

## Punctuality and Attendance Policy

At Babel Academy of English student attendance is monitored closely to ensure that all students are able to maximise their learning opportunities and successfully complete their course. Students are strongly encouraged to attend 100% of classes to ensure successful academic outcomes but a minimum of 85% attendance is required. When students miss a class session, they miss an opportunity for learning. They also cause some disruption for the other students in the class as they will have gaps in their knowledge which are required building blocks for further language development.

We monitor the attendance of non-EEA students on Academic Year Programmes to ensure that they meet the requirements of their student visa as set out by the Department of Justice. **It is a legal obligation for those who have come to Ireland on a student visa to attend a minimum of 85% of the course they have enrolled in.**

It is the student's responsibility to attend classes and inform the school if they are unable to attend for some reason. Students can request an update on their attendance rate anytime by emailing the academic department on [roisin@babelacademy.ie](mailto:roisin@babelacademy.ie)

### Procedure for Recording Attendance

During each class the teacher will manually record student attendance. Attendance by students is defined as attending the full designated tuition hours. Therefore, arriving more than 15 minutes late or leaving more than 15 minutes early means the student is marked absent for the class or class segments. Manual attendance sheets are submitted to the academic department at the end of each week. On a weekly basis attendance is digitally recorded on the school data system.

### Absenteeism – Academic Year Students

Please note that it is the responsibility of the individual student to ensure that the contact details Babel Academy of English holds are up-to-date.

### *First Warning Email*

Students who have completed 4 weeks, and whose attendance is below 85% will receive an email as an initial warning for them to improve their attendance rate.

### *Second Warning Email; Notification to INIS*

Any student who has completed 6 weeks, whose attendance is below 75%, will receive a second email warning. An email will be sent to INIS informing them of the student's low attendance rate. This is in accordance with Department of Justice regulations.

The student will be given one month to bring their attendance up to 85%. If their attendance is too low to allow them to bring their attendance up to 85% they must have full attendance for the month.

### *First Warning Letter; Meeting with Academic Manager*

Following the second email warning, If the student fails to bring their attendance up to the minimum level of 85%, or fails to have full attendance for the month, they will be issued with a warning letter.

The first warning letter will outline the student's low attendance rate giving instructions on contacting the Academic Manager to discuss their situation. A student who is issued with this letter is advised to meet with the academic manager before returning to class.

The student must have full attendance for the month. Students who fail to have full attendance for the month will be issued with a second warning letter.

### *Second Warning Letter*

If a student who has been issued their first warning letter fails to have full attendance for the month, they will be issued with their second warning letter.

### *Expulsion*

Students that have received a second warning letter must have 100% attendance for the following month, if they miss any day or part of a class they will be expelled from the school immediately.

### **Absenteeism – Short Term Students**

EEA students or students on a Visa for less than 90 days will also have their attendance recorded. Failure to attend classes will result in your inability to attain the level of English you set out to achieve. If you do not attend a minimum of 85% of classes, you may not receive end-of-course certification.

### **Contact**

Roisin Keane, Academic Manager      [roisin@babelacademy.ie](mailto:roisin@babelacademy.ie)      +353 1 5477 665

# Cancellation and Refunds Policy

## **Cancellation of course due to visa refusal**

If a student cannot obtain a visa they may cancel their course.

- Cancellation due to inability to obtain a visa  
= Full refund minus €100 cancellation fee

*Note: Students must provide evidence of visa refusal*

## **Cancellation of course for other reasons**

Refunds will be given at the discretion of Babel Academy management. Each case is dealt with on an individual basis. The following conditions apply:

- Over 4 weeks prior to commencement date  
= Full refund (no cancellation fee)
- Within 4 weeks of commencement date  
= Full refund minus €200 cancellation fee

Cancellations are only permitted prior to the date on which services commence. Please note that the term "services" refers to all parts of the booking and not just to the course booking. Where a student does not commence services and no prior notification is received by the School no refund can be made and the full amount as invoiced is due.

- After commencement date  
= no refund

Where a student has commenced services and then leaves for any reason, no refund can be made. Credits will only be allowed at the discretion of the management of Babel Academy.

## **Important information**

Notification of cancellation must be received in writing (letter/email) during normal office hours in local time in Ireland (08:30 to 16.30).

Approved refunds will be sent within 20 days of notice of cancellation. Sending bank charges will be deducted from the balance being refunded.

## **Contact**

David Ferguson, Managing Director      [david@babelacademy.ie](mailto:david@babelacademy.ie) +353 1 5477 665

## Complaints Policy

Babel Academy of English endeavours to deal with any complaints or grievances in a speedy and comprehensive manner. Disputes relating to services provided by Babel Academy should be brought to the attention of Babel Academy management immediately so that the issue can be resolved as soon as possible.

If a student has a complaint about any aspect of their time at Babel Academy of English, please follow the steps below:

(i) If a student has an issue with the lessons they are attending, they should first speak to their teachers. Examples of complaints might be:

- A student feels that they are not at the right level for their ability
- A student does not feel the material covered in class is relevant to them

Where a student is dissatisfied with the teacher's response or does not feel comfortable discussing matters with the teacher, they should speak with:

Roisin Keane, Director of Studies - Email: [roisin@babelacademy.ie](mailto:roisin@babelacademy.ie), call +353 1 5477 665, or request a meeting at reception

Examples of such complaints might be:

- A course or programme is not as described in a brochure, website or other sales material
- Facilities in the school building are not up to standard

(ii) If a student has an issue with their accommodation or social programme, they should speak with:

Maria Gattari, Social Programme Manager - Email [maria@babelacademy.ie](mailto:maria@babelacademy.ie), call +353 1 5477 665, or request a meeting at reception

Examples of such complaints might be:

- A social programme activity that was booked was not delivered as described
- A student is placed in a shared room when a single was booked
- A host family does not meet their expectations
- A fellow guest in an accommodation is not suitable

(iii) If a student or agent has an issue with another aspect of Babel Academy of English services, they should speak with:

Managing Director, David Ferguson - Email [david@babelacademy.ie](mailto:david@babelacademy.ie), call +353 1 5477 665, or request a meeting at reception

Example of complaints might be:

- A service that was booked was not delivered as confirmed, for example, A driver failed to arrive for an airport transfer
- A customer is at a personal loss or injury as a result of Babel Academy of English negligence, for example, a student is injured on an activity where adequate safety precautions were not taken
- An employee or person contracted by Babel Academy of English has not fulfilled their duties or has acted unprofessionally

One of the Management team should decide whether or not a complaint is of a serious nature and should be recorded in writing. It is the policy of Babel Academy of English to take a written record of any serious complaint received. The procedure below is followed:

1. The following information should be noted on a Babel Academy of English complaint form:
  - Name of Student/Agent making the complaint and contact details
  - Details of complaint or problem, including relevant dates and times
  - Any steps taken so far to resolve the issue, including relevant dates and times
  - Record of any supporting documents (if relevant)
  - Name of Babel Academy of English staff member dealing with the complaint
  - Date and time complaint was logged
2. The student will be asked to sign the form stating that they agree with the information entered. In the case of agencies, they will be sent an email summarizing the issues raised and asking for confirmation that all the details are correct.
3. Complaints should be dealt with immediately and within 24 hours of the complaint being logged. If this is not possible a full update should be given to the student/agent involved.
4. Following documentation of the complaint, the relevant Babel Academy of English staff member should note actions taken such as investigation of the complaint and resolution, including names of all relevant parties, and dates and times of actions taken.
5. Babel Academy of English staff will then arrange to meet with the student or send an email to the agent to explain how the problem has been resolved.

If the student or agent is not happy with how this problem has been dealt with, the complaint will then be referred to the Director where the complaint will be investigated further.

## Other School Policies and Important Information

### Changes to Personal Details

Babel Academy of English needs to keep all student records up to date. If you change your name, address or contact number please inform us at our reception immediately. It is your responsibility to make sure that we have accurate contact details for you.

## Use of Electronic Devices

While mobile phones, tablets, and other electronic devices can be useful learning tools, they can also annoy and distract other students, and inhibit learning if used inappropriately. Please switch off these devices unless your teacher has specifically permitted their use.

## Code of Conduct

### **Immersive Language Learning Environment**

We intend that your stay with us will fully maximise your learning opportunities. We also value our multi-cultural environment. You will meet people from a variety of different countries and backgrounds. Please use English as your common language. Speak in English inside the school and on trips organised by the school. Not speaking English in the school limits your learning opportunities, and damages the learning environment for others.

If you are distressed or have difficulty understanding any aspect of school life, we will make every effort to communicate important and useful information to you in order to make you feel comfortable in your surroundings. Please talk to us if you do not understand any aspect of school policy.

### **Class Participation**

We expect students to participate in all classroom activities in order to achieve academically and encourage a positive and inclusive learning environment. Class participation extends to class attendance. See section on *Punctuality and Attendance*.

### **Respect, Politeness and Inclusivity**

Babel Academy of English prohibits discrimination towards any group or individuals in any form, inclusive of, but not limited to age, gender, sexual orientation, race or nationality, ethnic or ethos-religious background. We insist that staff and students treat each other with respect and politeness at all times.

## Unacceptable Conduct

Disciplinary action will be taken against students for breaches of Babel Academy of English rules and directions concerning acceptable and unacceptable behaviour either on campus or where such breaches occur off-campus while on course related activities or while availing of Babel Academy of English services.

Unacceptable behaviour includes but is not limited to:

- Disobeying any reasonable direction by a Babel Academy of English staff member;
- Not observing class rules set by the teachers;
- Smoking in the building (You may only leave the building to smoke during scheduled breaks);
- Swearing, abusing or disrespecting other students or staff;
- Endangering the lives of others;
- Selling, using, distributing and/or being in possession (under the influence) of drugs whilst attending classes;
- Selling, consuming, distributing or being under the influence of alcohol whilst attending classes;
- Wilful damage to or theft of Babel Academy of English property, or property entrusted to the School's care;
- Accessing, storing, processing or transmitting any information deemed to be threatening, obscene, pornographic or harassing in nature;
- Unauthorised use of Babel Academy of English intellectual property including School name, logo, training manuals/materials, trademarks, designs, confidential information and copyright material;
- Behave in a manner that interferes with the learning of others;
- Failure to return library or other property loaned by Babel Academy of English by the required date;
- Viewing or distributing offensive material via the Internet, e-mail or other means;
- Discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- Bullying and intimidation;
- Making racist or sexist comments;
- Behaving in a disruptive manner such as swearing, yelling or using offensive language;
- Assaulting or attempting to assault anyone while on Babel Academy of English premises;
- Inappropriate possession of guns, knives or other weapons while engaging in Babel Academy of English activities.

## Consequences of Unacceptable Conduct

Where behaviour is unacceptable, disciplinary action can be taken. A teacher can ask a student to leave the classroom or refuse entry to a classroom if behaviour is disruptive or dangerous. The teacher issuing the suspension will advise the Academic Manager immediately and complete an incident report.

The Academic Manager will discuss the reason for suspension with the student and will give the student reasonable opportunity to be heard in respect to the misconduct. At this point the Academic Manager will:

- modify or dismiss the charge;
- reprimand and warn the student against repeating the behaviour;
- recommend that further action be taken.

A student may also be suspended by the Academic Manager, or expelled by the school Director for behaviour that threatens the safety of others, interferes with the duties of staff or other students' study, damages or threatens Babel Academy of English property, or the good order of Babel Academy of English. Violence, intimidation, theft and harassment are not consistent with a safe and supportive learning environment and will not be tolerated. The police will be contacted in cases of alleged criminal behaviour.

## Disciplinary Appeal Process

If the student wishes to appeal the decision made they must complete a Student Complaint Form within 7 days of the decision being made. The appeal will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Complaints Policy and Procedure.

## Disputes

Any disputes relating to services provided by Babel Academy of English must be brought to the attention of the Babel Academy management while the complainant is in Ireland. Babel Academy will not entertain complaints about services provided where these complaints were not reported to management at the time. Where necessary, any legal disputes will be heard in the courts of the Republic of Ireland.

## Insurance

Babel Academy of English holds insurance as required by Irish law. Babel Academy does not provide travel insurance for students. However, we may offer information on booking medical insurance for Academic Year students. Please consult with us when you are booking your course if you would like information on this.

Before arrival all persons participating in Babel Academy programmes must arrange their insurance or ensure against all expenses that might arise due to accident, illness or loss of luggage, personal effects and money.

## Data Protection

You should be very careful of host family information we send you as it contains many personal details. You agree to keep private all host family details and any other personal information we send you and to only use it in connection with your booking.

## Photos and Footage

We may use photos or footage taken of students at events or at school for promotional purposes. If you do not wish us to do so, please inform a Babel Academy of English management. For under 18s guardian consent is requested.

## Useful Organisations and Websites

<http://www.educationinireland.com/en/>

Education in Ireland - national brand under the authority of the Minister for Education and Skills – information about studying in Ireland

[http://www.icosirl.ie/eng/student\\_information.html](http://www.icosirl.ie/eng/student_information.html)

Irish Council for International Students – information about moving to and living in Ireland

[http://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/moving\\_country/moving\\_to\\_ireland/](http://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/moving_country/moving_to_ireland/)

Citizens Information Service – Information about moving to Ireland

<https://www.dfa.ie/travel/visas/visas-for-ireland/>

Department of Foreign Affairs – Visa information