

UNIVERSITY OF GALWAY (OLLSCOIL NA GAILLIHME)



2023-24

University of Richmond Exchange Program

*Most of this information in this handbook has
been copied from this website:

<https://www.universityofgalway.ie/international-students/studyabroad.html>

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Students must be aware that not all circumstances are predictable and that one must take self-responsibility very seriously. The University, its agents, and employees cannot be held responsible for the actions of the host institution or of the student.

Please read this carefully and share this with your parents.

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University of Galway

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Most of the information you need is available on the web at
<https://www.universityofgalway.ie/international-students/studyabroad.html>
(scroll to the “Pre-Arrival Information” section).



IMMIGRATION

If you are a citizen of the United States, Canada, Mexico, or the European Union (or others under the list of “Schedule 1” countries), **then you do not need to apply in advance for a visa to study in Ireland.** Citizens of other countries should double-check whether or not they need a visa by checking the Ireland Department of Foreign Affairs website: <https://www.dfa.ie/travel/visas/visas-for-ireland/> or check the list of Schedule 1 countries [here](#) (PDF) to see if your country is listed. Be aware that even if you do not have to apply in advance for a visa, there are other requirements you must meet, as described below.

Upon arrival in Ireland, you must typically provide documentation to a border agent (see complete list here: <https://www.irishimmigration.ie/at-the-border/entry-for-non-eu-non-eea-and-non-swiss-nationals/>). The list currently includes a travel itinerary (typically a roundtrip airline ticket), a valid passport, and a letter of admission from the exchange institution (University of Galway) to present to immigration officials. **Do not pack these items in your luggage, and do not enter the country as a tourist.** You will want to indicate that you are entering the country for studies. You should also be sure to have financial documentation to show that you can support yourself during your studies (see below for exact requirements). Finally, you should also carry your health insurance card and policy with you, which you may download from Gateway Abroad (this is called the IECL packet, or ‘Insurance/Emergency Cards & Letters’ packet). It is also a good idea to have proof of accommodation, so you should have a document showing your housing assignment, for example. Make sure that the immigration officer properly stamps your passport upon entering the Republic of Ireland.

***Note:** Those entering through Northern Ireland are not subject to border control but must present themselves at the **Garda National Immigration Bureau** as soon as possible (typically within 30 days) to have their passport stamped.

Registering with the Garda National Immigration Bureau

By the date of expiry stamped in your passport upon arrival, **all non-EU/EEA visiting students are required to register with the Garda National Immigration Bureau.**

There is a fee for doing this (300 Euro at the time of publication, payable by debit/credit card only).

For students at University of Galway, registration will be at the Garda (police) registration office in Galway city (by appointment) or the Immigration Service may provide a registration opportunity on the university campus. If the latter, you will be informed of the dates and venues on which the service is available as part of the Orientation Program. For a directory of Garda stations, see <https://www.garda.ie/en/contact-us/station-directory/>.

For registration you will need the following (some of which you already had prepared when you entered Ireland):

- Completed immigration form (available at orientation in Galway)
- Original letter of offer from Galway
- Valid passport that will not expire while you are overseas (and entry visa, if your country was not on the [Schedule 1](#) list)
- Student Identity Card (presented to students after arrival at Galway)
- Evidence of financial support (*see full details below; very important*)
- Yearlong students will need to open a bank account and provide proof of this (*instruction on opening a bank account will be given at orientation*)
- A certificate of attendance (this can be obtained from University of Galway)
- Letter from U. of Richmond certifying insurance coverage and exchange status (this proves you do not need to pay Galway tuition since you pay Richmond tuition while abroad); students should also print the insurance card and policy provided by Richmond – *this can be printed from your account in Gateway Abroad (see the IECL section – “Insurance/Emergency Cards & Letters”)*
- Proof of address in Galway (e.g., utility bill or a letter from your landlord/student residence, indicating your address)

❖ **Specifics Regarding Evidence of Financial Support**

Be sure to check if this is the most current information below, as details can change. Please see further information about evidence of finances on the [Irish Immigration website](#). The documentation described below is for U.S. citizen students going abroad for ONE SEMESTER. If you will be abroad in Ireland for the year, or if you do not have U.S. citizenship, double-check the requirements because they will differ.

The current guidance for U.S. citizen students going abroad for one semester (who do not require a visa to enter Ireland) is that you must show **€500 per month or €3,000 (whichever is lesser)** to cover living expenses.

- Option 1: Provide two original bank statements from a non-Irish bank (for example from the bank in your home country) in the student's name (as written in

the passport), one dated no more than one month old, together with a past statement from the same bank and same account, dated no more than 6 months old, PLUS a debit card from the same account to show you have access to those funds.

➤ Option 2: Students who receive scholarship/financial aid support may show a letter from the sponsoring body/university confirming financial status. You may request a Fund Certification Letter from the UR Financial Aid Office if you receive financial aid to help with your room/board costs.

➤ Option 3: Students could choose instead show a pre-paid credit/debit card with the required minimum funds, but you would have to be very careful not to lose this card (the equivalent of 500€/month for a 4-month semester abroad, for example, is 2,000€ or roughly \$2,210 as of the Dec. 27, 2023 exchange rate).

➤ Option 4: If you think any of the above would be difficult, you may open an Irish bank account and provide a statement after transferring in sufficient funds (you must first ensure you are eligible to open a bank account in Ireland; note for yearlong students, opening a bank account is required).

➤ Option 5: Provide documentary evidence that money (same minimum amount as above) is held in trust for a student by a financial services body regulated in Ireland by the Central Bank of Ireland.

➤ Important Notes: Regardless of which option you select, you must show **€500 per month or €3,000 (whichever is lesser)** is available to the student. In general, copies and printouts from online accounts will not be accepted.

NOTE: If your country of citizenship is not a Schedule 1 country and/or if you are planning on staying in Ireland for longer than the academic term, or if you are interested in working and/or living in Ireland, please go to the following webpage: <http://www.embassyofireland.org> and click on “Visas for Ireland.” You will find information regarding study visa applications, work visas, and other long-stay visas there. In addition, you should do additional research at <https://www.irishimmigration.ie/>.

IRP Card

On successful completion of your INIS registration, you will be issued **an IRP Card/residence permit** (formerly known as GNIB). You will either be contacted when this is available for pickup or it may be sent to you by post/mail. The IRP card is valid for one year, or for single semester students, until the end of their course. You must carry your IRP with you at all times and present it to an immigration officer or a member of An Garda Síochána (police) if requested. **This includes whenever you leave or re-enter the country.**

ARRIVAL

The major airports in Ireland are at Dublin (on the East Coast, approximately 135 miles from Galway) and Shannon (on the West Coast, approximately 55 miles from Galway). Galway also has a smaller airport approximately 5 miles from the city (this small airport has no trans-Atlantic flights, but you may be able to take local flights from there).

Dublin to Galway

Dublin airport is on the outskirts of the city. Buses leave Dublin Airport approximately every 20 minutes for the Central Bus Station (Busáras). Many of these buses continue to Heuston Railway Station, from which trains for Galway depart. You can also get a taxi from the airport to the centre of the city but the bus is much cheaper and just as quick.

To Galway by Train

There is a frequent train service from Dublin (Heuston Station) to Galway (Ceannt Station). The journey takes approximately two and one half-hours.

To Galway by Bus

There is a regular bus service from the Dublin Central Bus Station (Busáras) to Galway. The journey takes about three hours. Some private bus operators also run scheduled buses from Dublin Airport to Galway. Contact the information desk at the airport for further details.

Shannon to Galway

There is a regular bus service from Shannon Airport to Galway. Allow approximately one and one half hours for the journey.

All train timetables can be accessed on the following WWW address:

<http://www.irishrail.ie>.

All bus timetables can be accessed on the following WWW address:

<http://www.buseireann.ie>.

Arrival in Galway

Upon your arrival at Galway Station there are taxis that can take you to your final destination. Before your arrival in Galway, it is advisable to arrange temporary accommodation if long-term accommodation has not already been secured. See the section on accommodation for further details.

The cost of a taxi from the Galway station to Cuirt na Coiribe (just one of the possible housing options) is approximately 10-15 Euros. You will need to pay the driver in cash only, or download an app on your phone, like 'mytaxi,' to call a taxi in advance and pay by card.

Important Tip! No matter what your lodging, be sure to look up directions to your

accommodation in advance and keep them in your carry-on luggage. This will help you have a much smoother arrival, as you don't want to be wandering around lost on arrival (carrying your luggage, no less), so it is important to plan ahead.

HEALTH CARE

A Student Health Service (medical and psychiatric) is provided on campus by appointment, 9:15 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., and again from 2:30-4:30 p.m., Monday to Friday, which is free (for basic service) and completely confidential. There are charges for some services. Nurses run an emergency triage in the mornings on a first-come, first-served basis. Currently operating by appointment only (see website for [appointment link](#)). Referral to other agencies and specialist services is available as required. Please note that the Student Health Service does not cover the cost of prescribed medicine, hospitalization, optical, or dental treatment. Students are therefore advised to have a thorough medical check-up before leaving home. For more information, see https://www.universityofgalway.ie/health_unit/. For weekend and after-hours emergencies, see link above and scroll down to "emergency hours service" under "Opening Hours."

Students from countries other than EU countries are required to pay full charges for in-patient and outpatient services in a public hospital and all charges for doctors' services, drugs, and medicines. If you then make a claim to the ACE/AXA health insurance agency (which UR purchases for students; see below), if the claim is approved you will be reimbursed for your expenses. See below for details ("Insurance" section).

Telephone no.: 353 91 492604

Emergency telephone no.: 087 262 3997

In serious non-medical emergencies, contact Cyril Reddington in the International Office at (353-91) 492-105.

INSURANCE

University of Richmond students are automatically enrolled in a travel, accident, and sickness insurance plan called ACE Travel Assistance (AXA), for which the costs are paid by UR (see <https://international.richmond.edu/study-abroad/health-safety/insurance.html> for exclusions and details). Your insurance card is available to you for download in the Insurance/Emergency Cards & Letters (IECL) packet in your Gateway Abroad online file (in the "Digital Backpack"). The policy wording, instructions on how to use the insurance, and a claim form are all online (go to the study abroad

website > Health and Safety > Health Insurance). The study abroad insurance covers you worldwide except in your home country.

CDC (Center for Disease Control)

Check the following web page for the latest health updates concerning Ireland (<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/ireland>) or any other locations where you may travel (<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list>).

If you plan to travel outside of Western Europe, it is important to check the CDC's webpage for information regarding health issues:

<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel>.



SAFETY

Students should check the U.S. Dept of State Country Information Sheet for Ireland via the following webpage <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/Ireland.html>.

The UR Office of International Education also recommends that U.S. students register with the U.S. Embassy in Ireland (citizens of other countries should check with their embassy to inquire about a similar service). This makes your presence and whereabouts known, in case it is necessary for a consular officer to contact you in an emergency. During a disaster overseas, American consular officers can assist in evacuation if that becomes necessary, but they cannot assist you if they do not know where you are. You can register with the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate through the State Department's travel registration website: <https://step.state.gov/step/>. In accordance with the Privacy Act, information on your welfare or whereabouts may not be released to inquirers without your expressed written authorizations. Registration through the website is not considered proof of citizenship.

Remember to also leave a detailed itinerary and the numbers or copies of your passport or other citizenship documents with a friend or relative in the United States.

Important safety numbers: The nationwide telephone number for fire, police, and ambulance is 999. The EU emergency number is 112. This number can be used in all EU countries.

If leaving campus after dark, avoid poorly lit areas or areas that are not frequented by the public. A Campus Watch Service operates on the University and its objective is to make University of Galway a safer place in which to study, live, and work. If you notice anything suspicious contact Security staff at extension 3333 (full number 091-493333; available 24 hours/day).

Safety is always a concern when visiting a new country. Fortunately, Ireland has comparatively low rates of crime (though urban areas do have higher rates than more rural areas). Despite this, you should not become complacent. Keeping safe and out of trouble requires common sense and awareness of your surroundings. Take the chance to talk to local students and take heed of any advice they can offer. For example, students in all housing locations are advised to lock windows and doors even when they are inside to reduce the likelihood of burglary or home invasion robbery.

Pickpockets may target tourists, so you should try and look as much like a local as possible to blend into your surroundings. For example, planning your travel routes in advance saves looking at maps and drawing attention to you. Always keep an eye on your belongings, especially in crowded places such as in market areas and on subways and buses. Make sure you are careful when withdrawing money from ATMs; it is always advisable not to withdraw large amounts of money and to make sure you have stored it away safely before leaving the machine. **Tip!** There is an ATM at the Galway campus in the Arts and Sciences building, which may be a safer place to withdraw money than in town.

Ireland's public transport system is considered relatively safe, although late at night you may feel more comfortable by traveling in groups. If at any time you feel uneasy about other passengers, consider moving to the next carriage at the next stop or to the front of the bus. If you are traveling very late at night you may want to consider taking a taxi. If you encounter poorly lit areas it may be best to avoid them unless you are very familiar with the area.

Alcohol Use and Laws

Pubs are a major aspect of Irish student life but it should be noted that the effects of alcohol consumption do raise safety issues. The lower legal age of drinking in Ireland means local students may be more used to drinking larger amounts, so moderation should be encouraged. Remember, beer in Europe and Ireland has much higher alcohol content. Don't feel pressured to drink in excess!

Students are advised to leave the pubs before closing time since sometimes fights may ensue when the pubs close. Operate on a buddy system and do not leave without a friend and do not leave your friend(s) behind when you leave. It is wise not to travel home alone when intoxicated, as you could become an easy target for thieves; again, this is where common-sense plays a great part. As a visiting student, you shouldn't be driving, but if you make a local friend who drives, remember that drunk-driving laws are very strict in Ireland, so make sure these laws are obeyed and do not get in a vehicle with anyone who has been drinking.

Drug Use and Laws

According to the U.S. Dept. of State, Ireland continues to play a relatively small role in international drug trafficking. However, drug abuse is on the rise, especially among adolescents and teenagers. From heroin to marijuana to ecstasy, so-called

“recreational drug use,” particularly among club-goers, is a problem. When clubs and night spots close, there are often problems with the resultant foot and vehicular traffic on the streets. Petty crimes (theft, robberies, etc.) may be committed by drug-users to support their habit. According to the World Factbook of Criminal Justice Systems, in Ireland the “[p]roduction, supply, possession, possession with intent to supply, and offenses related to the importation and exportation of controlled drugs are illegal.” Do not turn your study abroad experience into a nightmare—do not participate in drug activity of any kind.

Fire/Natural Gas

Students need to be aware of safety in their residence. As one would do in the U.S., be sure to locate the nearest fire escape route and know the phone numbers of emergency services in case they are needed. It is a good idea to take a battery-operated smoke detector with you abroad since many buildings are older and may not have smoke detectors or sprinkler systems in place. See this website to learn more about fire safety abroad: <http://www.firesafetyfoundation.org/>.

As in the U.S., natural gas may be used to provide heat as well as to provide hot water. Be aware of the heating situation provided by your host institution and host residence. For locations where carbon monoxide-producing appliances may be present - i.e., any appliance that burns fuel such as gas, oil, kerosene, wood, or charcoal – be sure to ask for detailed information on usage of these appliances in order to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning. For further information, please visit the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) website at <https://www.epa.gov/indoor-air-quality-iaq>.

BANKING

- **Bank of Ireland, University of Ireland, Galway**
Code No. 904018 Intl. Tel. No. +353 91 524555, Fax No. +353 91 520973
- **Allied Irish Bank, Distillery Road, Newcastle, Galway**
Code No. 937436 Intl. Tel. No. +353 91 524466, Fax No. +353 91 524095
- **Ulster Bank, Newcastle Road, Galway**
Code No. 985753 Intl. Tel. No. +353 91 529013, Fax No. +353 91 529015



To open a bank account, you typically need your passport, Galway student identification card, and a letter from the Galway Int'l Office verifying your home address in the States and your local Galway address (you can get this after arrival).

If you wish to open an account in one of these banks prior to arrival, your own bank may be able to facilitate this. It can take up to two weeks for the international transfer of money through the banking system. You should therefore allow for delays of this duration when deciding how much currency to bring with you in order to meet your initial expenses in the first few weeks after arrival.

Ireland places no limit on the amount of money that you may bring into the country in local currency or foreign currency notes, traveler's cheques, banker's drafts, or letter of credit, but you may need the approval of exchange control in your own country for any transfer of funds. Immediately on arrival you will certainly need to cover such expenses as train, bus, and taxi fares, overnight accommodation, and meals. It is advisable to have about €200-400 in cash (some may prefer traveler's cheques, but these are not used as often due to the fees charged). You may order this foreign currency at your own local bank (for a small fee), but you are advised to place your order well in advance of your departure date because the process can take between several days and several weeks, depending upon the availability of the currency. You may also withdraw money upon arrival at an ATM in the airport.

Most banks in Galway provide Bureau de Change and Traveler's Cheque facilities. There are also Bureau de Change at Dublin Airport and Shannon Airport. Banks are typically open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday to Friday, and until 5 p.m. on Thursday.

- All Irish banks will change foreign currency and travelers checks and provide a full range of services.
- You may be able to get a debit card from your bank; generally, purchases with this card have a minimum charge.
- Visa and MasterCard credit cards are widely accepted throughout Europe, the UK, and Ireland. However, one must remember that your bill will be sent to the U.S. and arrangements must be made to pay it in the U.S. (or online). Most purchases have a minimum amount that must be charged. Some merchants may charge an extra fee for using a credit card.

COSTS

Students pay to Richmond the current University of Richmond tuition.

Payment of these fees includes:

- ✓ Advising and orientation at Richmond
- ✓ Tuition fees at University of Galway
- ✓ Travel, accident, and sickness insurance plan through Chubb Insurance / AXA Assistance while abroad
- ✓ \$1,000 travel allowance (<https://international.richmond.edu/study-abroad/programs/semester/process/budget.html#travel-allowance>)

Does not include:

- ✓ Housing, including deposits and utilities
- ✓ Food
- ✓ General start-up costs for linen, kitchen utensils, telephone connection,



and bills

- ✓ Books, club fees, school supplies
- ✓ Personal expenses
- ✓ Travel expenses (beyond travel allowance listed above)
- ✓ Medical expenses not deemed reimbursable/allowable through insurance
- ✓ Immigration/Irish registration/residence fees

For specific cost information and estimates, check the “Dates and Costs” pop-up window on the Galway brochure page of the Office of International Education web site: <https://studyabroad.richmond.edu/>.

The *estimated* study abroad costs listed on the web are intended only as a guideline for the student, the student’s parent(s)/guardian(s), and, with regard to eligible students, the undergraduate financial aid counseling staff of the Office of Financial Aid. *Aided students must not assume that their revised off-campus budgets will necessarily correspond exactly to the estimates provided on the web and should consult their assigned financial aid counselor to discuss their need and the expense categories covered by aid.*

The cost of a semester or full year of study abroad is chiefly affected by the individual student’s budgetary habits and the fluctuations of currency exchange rates against the dollar. Students have different lifestyles as well as different personal resources and must adapt their standards of living abroad accordingly. Therefore, the bottom line of each student’s actual expenditures abroad may be different, but all students should approach the prospect of living abroad with maturity and a sense of financial responsibility.

Cost estimates have been established on the basis of the most recent information available to the staff of the Office of International Education concerning the current cost of living in the program site. Costs may be listed in the foreign currency, in which case current conversion rates can be found on the following web site <https://www.xe.com/currencyconverter/>. Students and parents must bear in mind that the fluctuation of international exchange rates may at any time have an impact on the financial needs of a participant. In the event of unexpected hardship due to dramatic fluctuation in exchange rates, the Office of Financial Aid may be able to offer additional loan assistance to financially aided students upon direct written request. Such a request must include fairly accurate evidence of increased monthly expenses and a letter of support from the resident program director or officer of the host university attesting to the revised circumstances.

The estimates for listed expense categories should be considered as adequate to cover normal predictable expenses and not as bare minimums. Often, students can reduce costs by as much as 10-15% in some categories as they learn where to find local

student-priced bargains. Pre-departure expenses for clothing, gear, etc. and expenses related to personal weekend or vacation travel are the responsibility of the student.

Note: The travel allowance and health insurance premium costs paid by Richmond on behalf of its semester/year abroad students are available only to Richmond degree-seeking students accepted to participate on UR-affiliated abroad programs.



HOUSING

The University of Galway has a full-time director of accommodation who assists students in locating housing and in negotiating leases. Students have a variety of housing options. Students have the option of living in residence facilities near/on campus such as Corrib Village or in a flat or other accommodation off-campus such as Niland House or Cuirt na Coiribe (or others).

Residences usually provide basic amenities and are fully furnished. Most students live in flats and cook for themselves. Students should bring (or plan to purchase while abroad) towels, pillows, kitchen utensils, and bed linens (varies somewhat by housing). The commute to class depends on the location of accommodation and classes, but is usually 10 to 20 minutes by foot, or 5 to 10 minutes by bus.

Website:

<https://www.universityofgalway.ie/student-life/accommodation/>

Contact:

accommodation@universityofgalway.ie

Payment for some housing options can be made with a MasterCard or Visa. There is usually a charge for each transaction. Otherwise students may send a wire transfer deposit to complete their housing application.

Although many residences in Galway are normally rented for the full academic year, Richmond students are usually able to find semester-only accommodation.

Important Note: *Richmond students who sign a year lease and who cannot find a spring replacement student may be responsible for paying for the full year's rent. For students who are studying abroad fall semester only, it might be a good idea to recruit another Richmond student (or a student from another university) to Galway for the*

spring to avoid paying the spring rent.

Pre-Book Housing Option

The University of Richmond has developed a pre-booking relationship with Cuirt na Coiribe (owned and operated by Hubble Living), as they have been a popular choice for Richmond students. Shortly after acceptance, students will be invited to pre-book a room at Cuirt na Coiribe. This is optional as students are able to book other accommodation if they prefer, but each semester UR reserves rooms at Cuirt na Coiribe, which is an advantage in a housing market where accommodation options are tight. For more information on Cuirt na Coiribe, see <https://www.cuirtnacoiribe.com/>.

Note: Students on exchange to Galway will not receive a CAO number, which you may see requested on housing forms. Just leave this spot blank, as it is not relevant to your situation. You should still be able to submit accommodation applications without this number.

Temporary Accommodation

If you want to arrive early, but cannot check into your housing early (it depends on the individual facility), you may stay in a hotel, hostel, or other temporary accommodation until your permanent housing is available.

Some temporary housing options:

Budget Accommodation in the City Centre:

Kinlay Hostel {Reservation necessary}	*Student discounts may be available
Merchants Road,	*€54 avg. per person per night
Eyre Square, Galway	Email: info@kinlaygalway.ie
Tel:+353 91 565244	Web: http://www.kinlaygalway.ie/

- High Season March to October, Special Events & Bank Holidays
- Alternative: Sleepzone, Bothar na Mbab, Galway Tel: 353-91-566-999, <https://www.sleepzone.ie/hostel-galway>

FOOD

Most accommodations are “self-catered,” which means students prepare their own meals. Expenses are estimated to be approximately 325 Euros per month for food. Students on a budget should try to shop for groceries at larger supermarkets and make their meals. Students who choose to eat at restaurants or those who shop at expensive corner mini-marts should budget an extra amount.

DATES

Specific ending dates for each semester depend on the exam schedule of a student's particular schedule. **Students are advised to book return flights after exams end.** No special provisions can be made for early examinations. See the "Dates and Costs" pop-up window on the OIE website brochure page for University of Galway. Dates can also be found on the University of Galway website.

CLASSES

The final list of courses on offer in an academic year is not normally determined until the preceding July. In practice, there is little change in the courses on offer from one year to the next. Course descriptions are generally available in the Galway Visiting Student Handbook (find the handbook by clicking the 'Our Programmes' tab via this link: <https://www.universityofgalway.ie/international-students/studyabroad.html>).

The Irish system is back-loaded, which means that most assessment is by formal essay or exam at the end of the course. Galway, as with most UK and Irish systems, works on the lecture-based system. There is no size limit to lecture classes. The first-year courses are very large, but the higher-level courses tend to be smaller. There may be limits to some courses (i.e., sociology, psychology, and political science). The philosophy and approach to education in Irish universities is different in some ways from the U.S. system. Irish students specialize in a specific subject, rather than study a wide range of subjects as in the U.S. university system. Irish undergraduates typically study for three rather than four years.

In the Irish system, a greater emphasis is placed on independent study. Very often there is no detailed schedule or syllabus, as one would expect in the U.S. system, but rather a reading list from which it is the student's responsibility to choose what to read. Students are expected to read from a wide range of resources and to conduct more independent research than they would typically for a paper or essay at Richmond. Assessment differs according to the course. It may range from one essay with a final exam at the end of the course to 3 essays and 2 exams. UR students may typically enroll for any courses at Galway listed in the visiting student handbook as long as they meet prerequisites (some limitations listed on the next page). UR exchange students are full students and thus have access to all facilities, student unions, clubs, and sports facilities.

Courses consist of both lectures, tutorials (seminars), and laboratory classes, where appropriate. Lectures are generally 50 minutes in length. Lectures are larger than the tutorials that typically have 10 - 15 students. The tutorial is the traditional strength of the Irish University system. Participation in the tutorial is very important and can count for a significant part of the total grade. In most classes, students prepare and present a seminar paper.

The normal load is 5-6 courses per semester. Credits are listed in the ECTS system (European Credit Transfer System). UR students should take no less than 24 and no more than 30 ECTS credits per semester.

A full course load is designated as follows:

Full Year:	60 ECTS
Semester:	30 ECTS

To determine the unit value of an individual Galway course, the following formula will be used by the UR Registrar's Office: # of ECTS credits divided by 7 and rounded up to the nearest quarter of a unit.

Students attending Galway for a single semester only cannot take yearlong courses (you cannot split a yearlong course in two).

100 level courses = first year courses (generally equivalent to 2nd year at UR)

200 level = second year (generally equivalent to 3rd year level courses at UR)

300 level = third year (generally equivalent to 4th year level courses at UR)

Keep the following in mind when selecting courses:

- In all Faculties, course prerequisites must be met.
- Not all Psychology courses are available to visiting students.
- In the subject Sociological and Political Studies, admission to final year seminar courses will be limited.
- In the subject English, students may only select one seminar course per semester and admission to seminar courses is limited.
- In Second Year Science, a quota system applies to all subjects. Therefore, class sizes are limited and places in subjects may not be available to visiting students. Permission for entry into any subject in Second Year Science must first be obtained from the Head of Department of the relevant subject. Applicants should therefore indicate clearly on their application forms any Science Courses they may wish to take.
- Additional limitations will be listed in the Visiting Student Handbook.

As in the case of work completed at UR, students are advised to keep either hard copies or a disk copy of all of their work for future reference and for the rare instance when their work is misplaced.

Most departments will have an academic coordinator who assists students with any particular problems. The Registrar's office at the University of Galway is also available to assist students.

REGISTRATION

Students will be informed of the date, time, and venue of registration. Students must supply one passport-type photograph at Registration, with their name and registration number on the back.

Visiting students, as part of the orientation process, are provided with comprehensive information on:

- classes on offer
- timetables
- venues
- examination arrangements

In addition, the departments popular with visiting students conduct advisory sessions for the students to help with course selection.

IMPORTANT: Students at the University of Galway are given two weeks before being required to specify their choice of courses, and a further 'drop/add' week is then allowed. During this period course timetables may change, so be flexible. This is quite different from what UR students are used to, but please do not feel disconcerted that your schedule is not locked down immediately.

UR students will also find the grading scale at the University of Galway to be much different from UR. For example, a mark of 70, which is an excellent grade, is very rarely given to students.

The following conversion scale is used to translate Galway's grading scale.

<u>Galway</u>		<u>UR Equivalent</u>
70% or above	First Class Honours	A
65-69%	Second Class Honours, Grade 1	A-
60-64%	Second Class Honours, Grade 2	B+
55-59%		B
50-54%		B-
45-49%		C+
40-44%		C
Below 40%		Fail

COMPUTING SERVICES AND E-MAIL

Further information on computing services and email is available in the left menu at <https://www.universityofgalway.ie/information-solutions-services/services-for-students/>.

MOBILE PHONES

The Student Union at the University will have information on student rates for mobile phones. Mobile phones are inexpensive and students are not charged for incoming calls. It may also be possible to buy a used mobile phone. Past participants have recommended that you wait to buy your phone upon arrival in Ireland rather than buying “international phones,” which tend to be more expensive. You may also purchase a new SIM card that can be placed in your own (unlocked) phone, which gives you an Irish phone number and data; the amount of data depends on which plan and carrier you choose.

WEATHER

Western Ireland's proximity to the Gulf Stream ensures that the climate is mild with temperatures generally in the range of 32 degrees - 70 degrees F. The climate is damp, so waterproof clothing, a warm jacket or raincoat, an umbrella, non-porous footwear, and fleece sweaters are essential items for winter wear. These can all be purchased in the larger chain stores in Galway.

WORK IN IRELAND

Ireland immigration regulations permit *academic year* students to work up to 20 hours per week. **Important:** Single semester students cannot seek employment.

See this website for more information: <https://www.irishimmigration.ie/>.

TRAVEL INFORMATION

Galway Student Travel Centre (GSTC), the on-campus agent of the student travel company USIT, is located in the Basement of the Library Building. Here, you can book flights and receive information about travel in Ireland.

Bus Service: Bus Eireann (Irish Bus): Irish Bus has a nationwide network of buses serving all of the major Irish cities outside the Dublin area. In addition, there is an interlink service connecting these major points to small towns or villages. Buses leave from and arrive at Busaras (Bus Centre), which is located on Store Street in the city centre.

Rapid Transit: DART (Dublin Area Rapid Transit): Within the Dublin area, the train service operated by Iarnrod Eireann is the Dublin Area Rapid Transit (DART), which runs along the coast from Malahide or Howth in the North of Dublin to as far as Greystones in the South. The times of the DART vary between every fifteen minutes at rush hour to every half an hour on Sundays. The main DART stations servicing Dublin city centre are Pearse Station, Tara Street Station, and Connolly Station. The nearest station to UCD (if you are visiting friends studying there) is Sydney Parade - a no. 3 bus links to Belfield.

Trains: Iarnrod Eireann (Irish Rail): Irish Rail operates services to all provincial cities from two stations in Dublin; Heuston Station and Connolly Station, both of which are located in the city centre. There are two classes, standard class (economy) and super standard (1st class).

Taxis: Taxis are available in all cities. The best places to get taxis are at hotels, rail or bus stations, or at taxi ranks, which are clearly marked. Taxi metres are in operation in Dublin and you should always check that the metre is switched on. For longer distances, fares may be negotiated in advance. If a taxi is ordered, there may be a pick-up charge. Usually a small tip is given to the taxi driver. Cabs are also available; these cars are not marked and cab drivers are not permitted to use the taxi ranks. Instead there are cab offices from which a car can be hired.

Cars: We do not recommend that students buy or rent cars to drive in Ireland. Cars are driven on the left-hand side of the road and there are many narrow streets and different “rules of the road,” which may make it dangerous. It is illegal to drive a car in Ireland if it is not correctly taxed and insured.

Note on Personal Travel: Be aware that the cost of personal travel and entertainment is the greatest discretionary expense for students on study abroad. You should make deliberate decisions about where and how you will travel in your free time. Many students succumb to peer pressure and make a lot of short, impromptu and superficial trips while on study abroad. (“Come on, you *have to* hit Prague with us this weekend!”). People often come home saying they have been to 10 new countries, but have not really learned anything about any of them, and have incurred thousands of dollars in debt. IE suggests that you take just a couple of well thought out, longer trips during your semester abroad...you will learn more and spend less.

SUGGESTED READING

A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, James Joyce
Culture Shock!: Ireland, Patricia M. Levy

Have an excellent adventure!!