



STUDENT HANDBOOK

(Including Code of Conduct)

Updated 2023_01_18

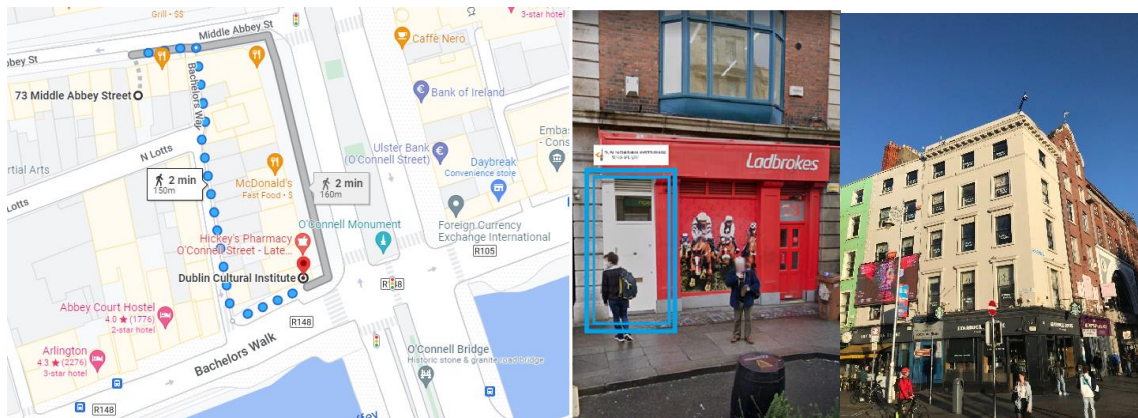
Introduction

Welcome to Dublin Cultural Institute (DCI.) We hope your time at our school will be enjoyable and productive. Please take the time to read through this handbook so you can fully understand the policies and procedures designed to ensure a safe, enjoyable, and effective learning environment. This handbook should be read in conjunction with the Induction Handout, which you will receive at the Student Induction.

Location and Opening Hours

Students study in either the main building on 34a Bachelor's Walk or at the Abbey Street building, at 73 Middle Abbey Street, which is a one walk-minute away. There is a canteen in both buildings. The school open from 8.30am to 5.30pm Monday to Thursday and until 3pm on Friday.

If you require a place to study, please ask at the reception in either building. The telephone number is +353 1 8728470 Out of Hours: WhatsApp +353 87 666 0500.



Level Placement

The first step on your English learning journey is to record your current level. On your first day you will take the Placement test in Reading, Writing, Use of English and Spoken Interaction. The Written part of the test takes around 70 minutes, and the Speaking interview around 7-8 minutes.

The Placement test takes places in the Abbey Street building. You can also arrange to take the test beforehand, so you can start class without delay on your first day. In the interview, you will receive feedback on your strengths and weaknesses discuss your own learning needs and you will agree goals.



Student Induction

On your second day, you are required to attend a New Student Induction after/before class. Here the Director of Studies will provide a comprehensive overview of the school and its services. If you cannot attend your scheduled induction, you should attend another Induction meeting within three weeks of starting classes. The induction lasts 30 minutes taking place every Tuesday at 12.20pm in room 3 Bachelors Walk.

Programmes

We offer General English, IELTS preparation, and English for Business Communications leading to one of to the following external examinations:

- Test of Interactive English (TIE)
- Cambridge General (PET/ FCE/CAE)
- IELTS (Academic version)
- Cambridge Business (B2/C1)

General English is available at levels from A1 to C1. We offer General English in the mornings and in the afternoons. IELTS and Business Communications classes are currently only offered in the mornings. For IELTS you will need to be at B2 level. Students are advised to enrol in IELTS for between six and twelve weeks. To commence English for Business Communications you will need to be B2+. Programmes may be suspended/combined due to low demand or other unforeseen circumstances. A0 and C2 levels are available which there is sufficient learners at these levels to open a dedicated class.

Timetable

All our programmes are full time, comprising 15 hours per week. The times of the classes are as follows:

General English (Mornings)

Monday to Friday

Session 1 (Teacher A): 9am to 10.30am

Session 2 (Teacher B): 10.45am to 12.15pm

General English (Afternoons)

Monday to Thursday

Session 1 (Teacher A): 1pm to 3pm

Session 2 (Teacher B): 3.15pm to 5pm

English for Business Communication (Mornings)

Monday to Thursday

Session 1 (Teacher A): 9am to 10.45am

Session 2 (Teacher B): 11.00am to 1pm



IELTS Preparation (Mornings)

Monday to Thursday

Session 1 (teacher A): 9am to 10.45am

Session 2 (teacher B): 11.00am to 1pm

Cycles

You will hear the term 'cycle' often during your time at DCI. A cycle is a six-week block of study in which you will be taught by the same two teachers, with the same group, in the same room, covering half the units in a course book. At the end of a cycle, you will be assessed and placed in a new class for the next cycle. Normally you are expected to move up a CEFR level after each cycle, but it is not unnatural for learners to require extra time at a certain level, especially if they missed classes.

The dates of the 2023 cycles are as follows:

Cycle 1: Jan 9 to Feb 17

Cycle 2: Feb 20 to Mar 31

Cycle 3: Apr 3 to May 12

Cycle 4: May 15 to Jun 23

Cycle 5: Jun 26 to Aug 4

Cycle 6: Aug 7 to Sept 15

Cycle 7: Sep 18 to Oct 27

Cycle 8: Oct 30 to Dec 6

Off Cycle Dec 9 to Dec 15

Christmas Holidays: Dec 18 to Jan 6, 2024.

Levels

The question is often asked how long does it take to learn English? The answer depends on many factors such as motivation, location, first language, lifestyle, resources, quality of teaching, aptitude for language acquisition and so on. However, on average we can say a typical learner takes 240 hours of guided learning to improve by two CEFR level (*e.g.*, A1 to B1).

At DCI we split each CEFR level into two shorter levels. For example, B1 is divided into B1 and B1+. Each (half) level consists of 90 hours delivered as 15 hours a week over a six-week cycle. It is expected that every week, a student is completing at least five hours of guided study outside the classroom in the form of homework, assignments, and guided reading. Table 1 below shows the indicative hours at each level.

Table 1

Description	CEFR Level	Weeks
(Proficiency)	(C2)	(6)
Advanced	C1+	6



	C1	6
Upper Intermediate	B2+	6
	B2	6
Intermediate	B1+	6
	B1	6
Pre-Intermediate	A2+	6
	A2	6
Elementary	A1+	6
	A1	6
(Beginner)	(AO)	(6)

Coursebook

Every student is required to buy or rent a textbook. Students enrolled on course over 12 weeks must buy a book. The current price is €40. If you return the book in good condition before changing level, the school will exchange your book. Therefore, do not write in ink, and erase all pencil marks before exchanging.

Homework

At DCI you should receive and complete homework every day. The homework is designed to review important elements of the lesson or preview the next day's lesson. It is not designed to be time-consuming, but it remains important. Research indicates that information revised within a short time will be retained for much longer. Homework and private revision should be part of your daily study routine.

Assessment

Every two weeks you will take a test. In week 2 and week 4, the test will be a short check or review of the grammar and vocabulary covered in the previous two weeks. In week 6, the test will be more formal and will assess your writing, reading, speaking, and listening. The results of the week 6 assessment will determine your next level in the new cycle.

Feedback

After each test, you will receive individual feedback from your teacher. In week 2 and week 4 the teacher will give you feedback on the following criteria:

- Motivation
- Punctuality
- Class Participation
- Homework
- Test



After the end of cycle tests in week 6, you will meet with your teacher to receive your test scores using the following criteria:

- Reading
- Writing
- Speaking
- Listening

The end of cycle tests normally follow the format of the Cambridge exams:

- A2: Key English Test (KET)
- B1: Preliminary English Test (PET)
- B2: First (FCE)
- C1: Advanced (CAE)

Exit Exams

Visa students on 25-Week Academic Year programmes are required to sit an external Exit Exam in one of the following exams:

- Test of Interactive English (TIE)
- Cambridge Preliminary
- Cambridge First
- Cambridge Advanced
- IELTS
- Cambridge Business Vantage

Registration will be handled by the school. We can also arrange exams for short term student who wish to sit an exam in Dublin. You can ask your teacher about the exams or request an exam consultation with an academic manager by emailing Exams@dublinci.com.

Library

DCI has a small but valuable and growing collection of graded readers, grammar revision books, exam practice materials, and DVDs available for loan. You can borrow from the reception in Abbey Street or speak to the Director of Studies or Academic Director for recommendations, or to make requests for purchases.

Social Programme

DCI typically offers one social or cultural activity per week, normally on a Friday afternoon. We try to minimise the cost, if any. In the summer months, we offer weekend excursions. Periodically we present workshops such as CV Writing and an Irish Cinema Film Club and discussion and Drama Workshop. If you have an idea for a social programme activity we would love to hear from you.



Behaviour & Participation

Students are required to act in a manner respectful of the school, its premises, staff and students. Students whose behaviour is deemed disrespectful or disruptive will receive a warning. Repeated incidents will result in expulsion from the school. Expelled students are not entitled to a refund of fees.

The Learner Contract

What your teacher expects of you

- Attend every day on time
- Explain any absence to the teacher (preferably in advance by email)
- Speak English in class
- Concentrate on the lesson
- Ask questions and don't worry about mistakes
- Engage in pair-work and teamwork
- Be respectful to the teachers and other students
- Complete homework and assignments
- Give honest feedback on the class when asked
- Observe the DCI Code of Conduct

What you can expect of your teacher:

- Explain the plan for each session, week, cycle in advance
- Correct appropriate speaking and written errors
- Actively include everyone in the lesson
- Issue and correct homework
- Give personalised feedback
- Make every effort to get you to next level
- Act in a professional and courteous manner at all times.

Code of Conduct

Normally, language schools are enjoyable places where learners and teachers from different cultures come together and share views and ideas. However, sometimes misunderstandings occur, due to different levels of English, stress, tiredness impatience and so on. We expect everyone to act in a respectful manner to staff and fellow students. The following indicative guidelines will help you conform to our Code of Conduct:

1. Do not smoke or drink alcohol on the premises.
2. Do not enter the school under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
3. Do not carry weapons into the school.
4. Do not bring your bicycle or scooter into the school building.
5. Be sensitive to cultural differences.
6. Avoid excessive loudness and allow other students to contribute.
7. Refrain from bullying behaviour including mockery.



8. Do not seek to dominate class discussion or to monopolise the teacher's attention.
9. Avoid advancing excessively strong opinions on racial, political, religious, sexual, or gender issues.
10. Be mindful of others' personal space.
11. Do not eat in the classroom or bring in food or unlidded drinks.
12. Do not wilfully damage furniture, fittings, equipment, study materials or other property.
13. Do not attempt to defame the school, its students or employees by sharing derogatory or insulting images or remarks on social media.

Attendance

To guarantee the achievement of the learning outcomes DCI requires 100% attendance on all programmes. Attendance is recorded daily by the teachers and monitored by the Director of Studies. Attendance is particularly important on the Academic Year programme. Visa-requiring students are required to demonstrate a minimum of 85% attendance in compliance with INIS regulations. Attendance in a language course implies active participation in the lessons and a willingness to follow the teacher's instructions. Behaviours such as eating, sleeping, using electronic devices such as mobile phones, acting in a passive-aggressive manner, or other anti-social or distracting behaviour are unacceptable, and will result in the student being asked to leave which will affect his/her attendance.

Attendance Rules

1. An absence is defined as non-attendance for any reason.
2. All absence needs to be explained to the Director of Studies by email to Dos@dublinci.com.
3. Each day consists of two sessions. There are 8 or 10 sessions a week in the Morning programme and 8 sessions a week in the Afternoon Programme. If you miss one session you will receive only 50% attendance for that day.
4. A one- or two-day absence needs also to be explained in writing in the form of a note to the teacher on your return.
5. An absence of three days or more requires a phone call or email during the absence, doctor's letter and a meeting with the Director of Studies upon your return.
6. If your total absence exceeds a cumulative 20% you will receive a first written warning.
7. If you have received a first warning and afterwards your total absence exceeds a cumulative 30% you will receive a second written warning.



8. If you have received a second warning and afterwards your total absence exceeds a cumulative 40% you will receive a final written warning.

9. If you have received a final warning and afterwards your total absence exceeds a cumulative 50% you will be expelled, reported to INIS and be rendered ineligible for a refund.

10. In the case of verified illness or emergency, the school may determine not to expel you but will report the attendance figures to the INIS.



Fig 2: Academic Year Attendance Warning System

Weeks	Days	First Warning		Second Warning		Final Warning		Termination	
		Days Absent	%	Days Absent	%	Days Absent	%	Days Absent	%
1	5								
2	10	2	20%						
3	15	3	20%	5	30%				
4	20	4	20%	6	30%	8	40%		
5	25	5	20%	8	30%	10	40%	13	50%
6	30	6	20%	9	30%	12	40%	15	50%
7	35	7	20%	11	30%	14	40%	18	50%
8	40	8	20%	12	30%	16	40%	20	50%
9	45	9	20%	14	30%	18	40%	23	50%
10	50	10	20%	15	30%	20	40%	25	50%
11	55	11	20%	17	30%	22	40%	28	50%
12	60	12	20%	18	30%	24	40%	30	50%
13	65	13	20%	20	30%	26	40%	33	50%
14	70	14	20%	21	30%	28	40%	35	50%
15	75	15	20%	23	30%	30	40%	38	50%
16	80	16	20%	24	30%	32	40%	40	50%
17	85	17	20%	26	30%	34	40%	43	50%
18	90	18	20%	27	30%	36	40%	45	50%
19	95	19	20%	29	30%	38	40%	48	50%
20	100	20	20%	30	30%	40	40%	50	50%
21	105	21	20%	32	30%	42	40%	53	50%
22	110	22	20%	33	30%	44	40%	55	50%
23	115	23	20%	35	30%	46	40%	58	50%
24	120	24	20%	36	30%	48	40%	60	50%
25	125								

Absence & Sick leave

All absence from class, including sick leave, must be explained by the student to the school. The student must both notify the school during the absence and provide further explanation upon return. The student must notify the school of his/her absence, or arrange notification of same, to the Director of Studies by emailing info@dublinci.com on the day of absence and each subsequent day of absence. Upon return the student must



submit an Absence Letter to reception. One Absence Letter should be completed for each absence period, whether it consists of a half day, full day, or extends over two or more days. If sick leave extends for more than two consecutive days, a medical certificate is required.

Back to School Meeting

The Absence Letter is reviewed and counter-signed by the Director of Studies and a follow-up Back to School meeting is scheduled if deemed necessary. A follow up meeting will be scheduled in all cases except where the student has a good record and is not in danger of a warning, or where the student is on a short programme and enjoys reasonable attendance record.

Punctuality

All students are requested to be in class at the scheduled time of commencement. You will not be admitted to class if you arrive more than 15 minutes late and will have to wait until the second session. This is a mark of respect to the teacher and the other students. Likewise, students leaving the class more than 15 minutes before the scheduled end of class will be marked absent for the period. Students who cannot remain for the entire session should not start the session. Students who leave the classroom during the session, whether on their own decision or because they are instructed to do so by the teacher, will also lose attendance.

Holidays & Breaks

There are no holidays or breaks outside the published calendar for long term students. Request for extraordinary or additional holidays cannot be entertained. In individual cases personal circumstances may arise to make an enforced break from classes necessary. Examples include a court appearance or the serious illness or bereavement of a close family member. In such cases the school will support the student in every way possible but still must record the student as absent for every day that he/she is away from class. It is important to stress that absence is a statement of fact. It is unalterable record of lack of presence in the classroom, often for unavoidable reasons. Marking a student as absent does not automatically confer censure. The school has no option but to record the statement of fact accurately. For this reason, the school encourages 100% attendance when possible as it allows for a generous 15% cushion of absence in the event of such unavoidable illness or absence. The student must also inform the school of unavoidable breaks when they occur.



Short Term Students

With the exception of three weeks' Christmas closure, there are no scheduled holidays for students on programmes for less than 25 weeks. You may apply to break your studies with a holiday week, once it is compliant with the rules governing your immigration status. For EU student and Non-EU students on tourist visas of a maximum of 90 days, you may wish to make two separate bookings to allow for free time between bookings.

Academic Year Holidays

Students on Academic Year Programmes of 25 weeks are entitled to an additional 8 weeks of holiday. For every three weeks of studies you complete, you accrue one week of holiday. For example, a student who has completed 9 weeks of studies, has accrued three weeks of holiday. The minimum number of holidays to be taken at one time is one week. You should confirm holiday intentions at the beginning of your course. If you do not inform the school of your holiday plans within the first 12 weeks of your course, your holidays will automatically default to the following: 12 weeks (class) 2 weeks (holidays) 13 weeks (class) during your course and then 6 weeks of holidays after your studies. Students on courses which overlap with the Christmas closure must take three weeks of their holiday weeks at this time.

Feedback

Informal Feedback

We hope that every student is satisfied with the service he/she receives at DCI. At all times we welcome comments and suggestions which can be brought up with the director of studies or any member of staff. Alternatively, you might prefer to email an anonymous comment to our virtual Suggestion Box here at info@dublinci.com.

Formal Feedback

Every six weeks you and your classmates will be asked to share your opinion all aspects of your classroom experience in the form of an online questionnaire.

Complaints

In the event that you are unhappy with any aspect of your experience at DCI please register a complaint. This can be done in person or in writing to our Customer Service Manager, Siobhan Smith: ssmith@dublinci.com. You will be contacted by an officer of the school within three working days with a view to resolving the issue.



Exit Questionnaire

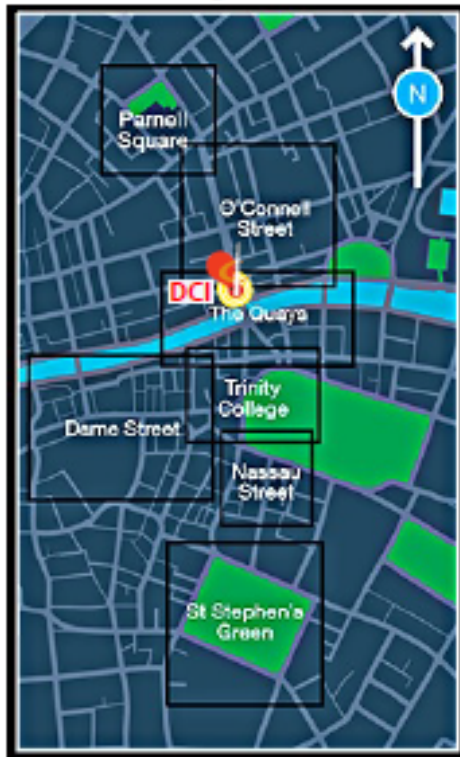
On leaving the school, we will ask for your closing remarks on your experience. As always, we ask for your honest feedback even if it is negative. As the school is relatively small you may be invited or requested to share your experience with the director or director of studies on your last day.

Public Transport links

BUS STOPS FOR DCI SCHOOL

CITY CENTRE BUS STOPS

Bus stops within the City Centre are divided into seven areas, below is a map of the areas and a list of the routes serving each area.



Stop Area: Parnell Square
Buses: 1, 9, 11, 13, 16, 38, 38a, 38b, 40, 40b, 40d, 44, 46a, 46e, 120, 122, 140, 747

Stop Area: O'Connell Street
Buses: 1, 4, 7, 7b, 7d, 9, 11, 13, 16, 29a, 31a, 31b, 32, 32x, 33, 33x, 38, 38a, 38b, 40, 41, 41b, 41c, 46a, 46e, 122, 123, 130, 140, 747, Dublin Bus Tours

Stop Area: The Quays
Buses: 14, 15, 25, 25a, 25b, 25x, 26, 27, 27a, 27b, 27x, 32x, 37, 39, 39a, 39x, 42, 43, 51d, 66, 66b, 66a, 66x, 67, 67x, 69, 69x, 70, 79/a, 83, 90, 151, Dublin Bus Tours

Stop Area: Trinity College Area
Buses: 1, 7b, 7d, 7n, 9, 11, 13, 14, 15, 15a, 15b, 15n, 16, 25, 25a, 25b, 25x, 25n, 26, 27, 27a, 29n, 31n, 33n, 37, 38, 38a, 39n, 40, 41x, 41n, 42n, 44, 44b, 46a, 46e, 49, 49n, 54a, 56a, 65, 65b, 66, 66a, 66b, 66x, 66n, 67, 67x, 67n, 69n, 70, 70n, 77a, 77x, 83, 84n, 88n, 116, 118, 122, 123, 140, 142, 145, 150, 151

Stop Area: Dame Street Area
Buses: 9, 13, 14, 15, 15a, 15b, 16, 27, 40, 49, 54a, 56a, 65, 65b, 68/a, 69, 69x, 77a, 77x, 79/a, 83/a, 122, 123, 140, 142, 150, 151, 747, Dublin Bus Tours

Stop Area: Nassau Street Area
Buses: 4, 7, 7b, 7d, 8, 11, 14, 15, 15a, 15b, 25, 25a, 25b, 25x, 26, 27x, 32x, 33x, 37, 38, 38a, 38b, 39, 39a, 39x, 41x, 46a, 46e, 51d, 51x, 61, 66, 66a, 66b, 66x, 67, 67x, 70, 84/a, 84x, 116, 118, 140, 142, 145, Dublin Bus Tours

Stop Area: St. Stephen's Green Area
Buses: 7b, 7d, 11, 14, 15, 15a, 15b, 25, 25a, 25b, 25x, 32x, 33x, 41x, 44, 46a, 46e, 51d, 61, 66x, 67x, 84x, 116, 118, 140, 142, 145, Dublin Bus Tours



Within these areas each stop is assigned a number. The number on the map shows the location of your bus stop. The stop number shown on the map also appears on the top of the bus stop to help you find your stop more easily.



See also: www.dublinbus.ie/

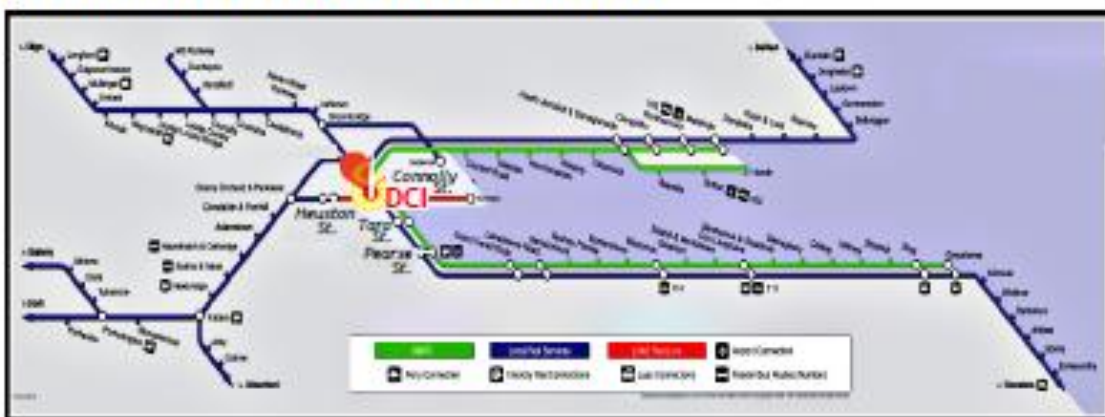
LUAS & DART STOPS FOR DCI

LUAS CITY TRAM LINES TO DCI



See also: www.luas.ie

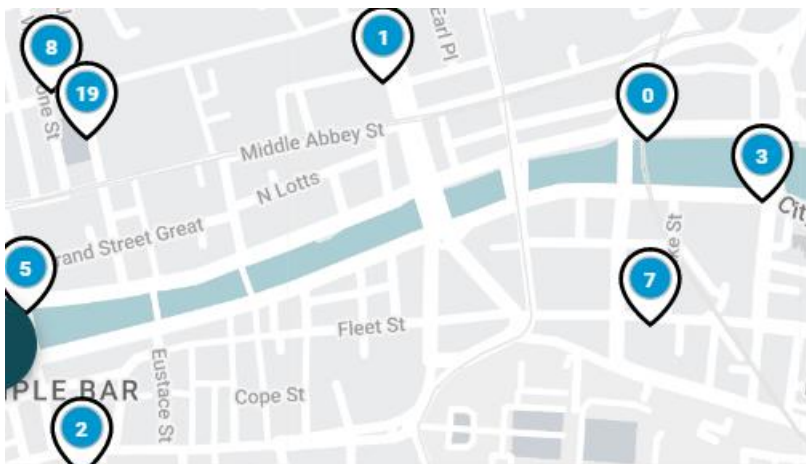
DART & CITY RAIL SERVICES TO CITY CENTRE/DCI



See also: www.irishrail.ie/fares-and-tickets/dart

Dublin Bikes

Full information on this healthy, economical, and environmentally-friendly mode of transport can be found at <https://www.dublinbikes.ie> The map below shows the nearest bike stations to the DCI





Your Physical and Mental Health

If you are suffering for poor health, physical or mental, please speak to our Customer Service Manager, Siobhan Smith in confidence: ssmith@dublinci.com. Please do not suffer in silence if you are feeling depressed, anxious or homesick. Talking through your problems can be very helpful. We also have contact with professionals who can provide more advanced care.

Using your Arachas Medical Insurance

- If you are feeling unwell you should visit a GP or Hospital. You may be asked to pay in advance for any medical appointment or treatment. If this is the case please ensure to keep all receipts (including receipts for any medicines required). You can then make a claim directly to Arachas and they should refund you any monies spent, over the excess fee of €100.
- If you are admitted to a hospital you will not be required to pay in advance and therefore you should contact Arachas when payment is requested from the hospital. Arachas should pay the medical bills directly to the health care provider.
- In general, dental procedures are not covered.
- For a full list of what is covered please check your policy.

General Practitioner (GP)

For minor illness and injuries you should visit a local General Practitioner (GP). In Ireland, you must visit a GP initially, if you require specialized treatment or follow up the GP will give you a recommendation letter to arrange a visit with a specialist consultant.

The following GP surgeries are close to the school:

- Abbey Street Medical Centre – 71 Middle Abbey Street, Dublin 1 - +353 1 873 4975 – www.abbeymedicalcentre.com
- Temple Bar Medical Centre 26 Wellington Quay, Temple Bar, Dublin, D02 R221 <https://templebardoc.com>



Mental Health

Being away from home can sometimes take a toll on your mental health. If you feel you are struggling to adapt to Irish life and need some support, please contact the school or one of the following services for assistance:

Organisation Name	Speciality	Phone	Website
Aware	Depression support	1800 80 48 48	https://aware.ie/
Pieta House	Suicide Prevention	1800 247 247 Or 0818 111 126 (arrange an appointment)	https://pieta.ie/
Samaritans	Mental health support	116 123 (available 24/7)	https://www.samaritans.org/
Spun Out	Lifestyle information	01 675 3554 (10am-6pm)	https://spunout.ie/
Mental Health Ireland	Promote positive Mental Health		https://www.mentalhealthireland.ie/

If you are looking for something a bit more long term, the following are a few low-cost counselling services based in Dublin:

Dublin Counselling and Therapy Centre	01 8788236	http://www.dctc.ie/
Insight Matters	01 891 0703 / 085 203 1478	https://www.insightmatters.ie/
The Therapy Centre	086 1083669 / 01 9629514	https://thetherapycentre.ie/services/low-cost-counselling/
Access Counselling	01 5240708 / 085 139 1846	https://www.accesscounselling.ie/

Gynecology

If you are experiencing gynecological issues you should visit a GP in the first instance. The GP will be able to refer you to a specialist, if required.

The following health care providers specialize in women's health:

The Dublin Well Woman Centre – www.wellwomancentre.ie