Guide for Visiting Students

Welcome to the University of Limerick. I really hope that your stay here will meet your expectations or even exceed them.

Since living in a new country can be quite a challenge, at least in the beginning, we have put together a booklet with advice and information that may make your everyday life a little easier. I hope you will find it useful.

Josephine Page

Head of International Education Division
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Faculties at the University of Limerick
PLANNING YOUR STAY
EU Citizens

As an EU/EEA citizen, you have the right to work in Ireland without a work or residence permit. The same applies to your family members if they join you. You and your family members are entitled to begin working immediately. You can stay in Ireland for up to 3 months without restriction. If you plan to stay more than 3 months, you must either:

• Be engaged in economic activity (employed or self-employed) or
• Have sufficient resources and sickness insurance to ensure that you do not become a burden on the social services of Ireland or
• Be enrolled as a student or vocational trainee or
• Be a family member of a Union citizen in one of the previous categories

When you come to Ireland you do not need to register with the local immigration officer and you do not need a residence card to live here. If you wish to have a record of your residence in Ireland you can register with your embassy of your country in Ireland.

Non-EU citizens

A Citizens of certain countries who wish to pursue a course of study in Ireland must apply for a visa to enter Ireland before they travel here. Visa applicants must apply online for their visa. If you wish to study in Ireland for less than 3 months you should apply for a ‘C study visa’. If your course lasts longer than 3 months, you should apply for a ‘D study visa’. Generally speaking, the duration of a ‘C study visa’, is not extended once you have arrived in Ireland. Extensions will be granted in exceptional cases only. It’s very important, therefore, to make sure you know the duration of your course before you apply for a visa.
You will need to provide the following with your visa application. (Please remember, original documents are required and must be in English or accompanied by a notarised translation):

• Letter of acceptance from a recognised school/college/university in Ireland confirming that you have been accepted on a course of study. This course of study must be full-time (lasting an academic year) and have a minimum of 15 hours per week study time.

• Evidence of your academic ability to pursue the chosen course through the English language (unless it is an English language course).

• Evidence that the fees for the course have been paid in full.

• Evidence that you have enough funds (€7,000) to maintain yourself for the initial part of your stay.

• Evidence that you or a sponsor have access to at least €7,000 for each subsequent year of your studies, in addition to the course fees for each of those years.

• Evidence that you have private medical insurance

• An explanation of any gaps in your educational history

• Confirmation that you intend to return to your country of permanent residence when you leave Ireland.

Remember, the granting of a student visa to study in Ireland does not confer the automatic right of anyone to join or visit you in Ireland (whether they are a relative or not).

You will find more detailed information on the exact requirements for a student visa on the website of the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service of the Department of Justice and Equality.

If you do not require an entry visa to enter Ireland, you do not require a student visa to study in Ireland. However, all non-EEA nationals, including those with visas, must obtain permission to enter the State by reporting to an
Immigration Officer at the port of entry. You should have all documentation relating to your studies on your person when coming through immigration. In other words, you should have your letter of offer of a place at the school, or educational institution ready for inspection at immigration.

Students from a non-EEA country who intend studying in Ireland for a period of more than 3 months must register, after they arrive, with the local immigration officer for the district in which they are living (Garda National Immigration Bureau if living in Dublin). Their passport will be endorsed with the conditions and period of time for which they have permission to remain. Since 1 April 2011 they must have €3,000 when they first register. Information on what documentation students require when applying for permission is available on the website of the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS).

From September 2008 non-EEA students coming to Ireland for the first time may not get permission to remain in Ireland if they have their children with them, or intend their children to join them later on. Non-EEA students are not entitled to social welfare payments. One of the conditions of their residence permission is that they have enough money to support themselves and live in Ireland without claiming State benefits.

As a general rule non-EEA students coming to Ireland have no right to bring their family with them. Spouses, partners and children of non-EEA nationals can apply to enter and live in Ireland in their own right, but they cannot apply on the basis of their relationship to a non-EEA student. There are some exceptions to this rule, for example, for Ph.D. students or for students who can prove they have sufficient funds to support their family.

If you are attending a course on the Internationalisation Register you will have stamp number 2 endorsed on your passport when you register with your
local immigration officer. You will be allowed to take up casual employment of up to 20 hours part-time work per week in term time or up to 40 hours per week during normal college vacation periods. The stamp will be valid until you have finished your course of study and your entitlement to take up employment ceases when your permission to remain expires. If you are not attending such a course, you will not be entitled to take up part-time work or engage in any business or profession. You will get stamp number 2A on your passport. This stamp gives you permission to remain until you have finished your course. The visa issued to you allows you to enter the State once. If you wish to leave for a short while and then return you must apply for a re-entry visa. It is your responsibility to ensure you have the correct visa (if required) for the country you intend travelling to. Please note that you must obtain a visa from the UK authorities before travelling to Northern Ireland (Counties Antrim, Armagh, Derry, Down, Fermanagh and Tyrone). Before applying for a re-entry visa you must register with the local immigration officer for the district in which you are staying, You must send your completed Re-Entry Visa Application Form along with all required documentation by registered post to the Re-entry Visa Processing Office. You can also apply in person for a re-entry visa at the address below within certain hours. You will need to have a completed application form and all required documentation with you. Apply for your re-entry visa well in advance of your proposed dates of travel. Postal applications for re-entry visas will be processed within 4 days of receipt and your re-entry visa will be returned to you by registered post. There is more information on applying for a re-entry visa, as well as information on photographic requirements on the Irish Naturalisation & Immigration Service website.
Accommodation

At Campus Life Services at the University of Limerick, we welcome over 500 students each year from all over the world. Live in any of our five village communities on campus where you can make the best of your time in Ireland living in the heart of it all. Rooms are reserved each term for Study Abroad, Erasmus, Erasmus Mundus and Exchange students. We have a choice to suit all budgets while each Village Residence offers excellent accommodation and service.

Your social and residential experience at UL is just as important as your academic studies at our university. We understand that to make the most of your short time on campus it is important that you take every opportunity to meet and live with others. In each of our five villages, our management team take care to allocate rooms so that you will live with Irish students as well as others from around the world. As we appreciate that this may be the first time for you to travel from your home country, you can be assured that your Village Manager will be on hand to make the transition from home a smooth experience.

All five residential villages at University of Limerick are self catered. We provide all cooking facilities and inventory so that all you have to worry about is what you want to cook! While kitchen/living areas are shared with a maximum of 7 others, all study bedrooms are private. This allows for greater privacy while you can still enjoy the camaraderie of others. While some villages offer shared bathrooms (maximum 4 sharing) our apartment residences offer ensuite facilities for those who wish to have their own toilet/shower.

Our Village Management Team live on site and are on call 24 hours a day. We have an open door policy and our team are always available to meet with
residents, regardless of the request. Our Village Managers pride themselves on keeping residents happy and aim to solve any problem a resident may have. Our team have many years’ experience assisting new students. Whether the problem is homesickness, having a problem with housemates, trying to find a doctor or dentist or simply opening a bank account, you will find that our team have dealt with it on many occasions.

The Village Management Team are supported by Resident Assistants (RA’s) whose primary aim is to protect the safety and welfare of our student communities. Our Village Receptions are open from early morning right up to 11pm each night which means that there is always staff on hand to assist or even just for a chat. We also provide a professional maintenance service who can fix any problem from changing a light bulb to attending to a major plumbing or electrical fault.

Our Security Officers are on call 24 hours a day and regularly patrol each residence. While campus security aim to keep the villages safe and secure, each officer assists the Village Management in maintaining order. The Village Management take antisocial behaviour very seriously and aim to maintain a living environment conducive to study and relaxation.

Students can apply directly with the Accommodation Service at the University of Limerick. If you have received your UL ID number, you can apply online today. If you have yet to receive your ID number and would like to organise your accommodation now, please email Deirdre.Ryan@ul.ie at International Room Bookings and we would be happy to take your application via a booking form. To confirm a room, you will be required to pay an application fee of €250.00. On arrival, the application fee becomes your damage deposit and is returned to you following your departure provided final room inspections are satisfactory.
Insurance
Under EU / EEA regulations students from other member states who are attending a course of study are entitled to medical services in Ireland. In order to be eligible for any of these services, you will be required to provide the Irish health authorities with documentation from your home country that validates your entitlement.

You should therefore 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.

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

The Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS) states: “All non-EEA students are required to have private medical insurance when coming to and residing in Ireland for the purpose of study. The private medical insurance should provide cover for accident and/or disease and should cover the student for any period of hospitalisation.” Proof of insurance is required at the time of registration with immigration authorities. For short-term students and newly arrived first year students, travel insurance may suffice in some circumstances.

Firstly, you should enquire about medical insurance with the International Office at the institution(s) to which you intend to apply as they may have a medical insurance scheme for international students.
Secondly, there are three main Private Health Insurance schemes operating in Ireland from which insurance may be purchased. This may not be straightforward from outside of Ireland.

Quinn Healthcare  
Mill Island, Fermoy, County Cork  
Tel: +353 25 42121 (or 1890 89 1890 within the Republic of Ireland)  
Web www.quinn-healthcare.com  
Voluntary Health Insurance (VHI)  
VHI House, 20 Abbey Street Lower, Dublin 1  
Tel: +353 56 7753200 (or 1850 44 44 44 within the Republic of Ireland)  
Web: www.vhi.ie  
Hibernian Aviva Health  
One Park Place, Hatch Street, Dublin 2  
Tel: 1850 717 717 (available within Republic of Ireland only)  
Web: www.hibernianavivahealth.ie

Under some policies, you may not be entitled to make any claims from the insurance company until you have been with them for over 26 weeks. However, some companies have special insurance schemes where no waiting period is required. It is important to confirm the options with the health insurance company directly.

Thirdly, you may obtain private medical insurance in your home country - but you must be certain that it is valid in Ireland.
Health

Your entitlement to health services is mainly based on residency and means, rather than on your payment of tax or pay-related social insurance (PRS). Broadly speaking, if you are living here and intend to continue to live here for at least a year, you will be considered to be “ordinarily resident”. This applies regardless of your nationality and anyone who is accepted by the Health Service Executive (HSE) as being “ordinarily resident in Ireland” is entitled to either full eligibility (i.e. to hold a medical card) or limited eligibility for health services. Your nationality, in itself, does not determine your entitlement but there are specific rules covering EU/EEA nationals and Swiss nationals.

If you are sent by your employer to work in Ireland on a short-term basis (less than 12 months), you are entitled to receive necessary health services free of charge. You should have a European Health Insurance Card, provided your posting is expected to be for less than 12 months and does not involve replacing someone else on a similar assignment. Where your assignment in Ireland is for a longer duration or involves the replacement of another person, EU regulations do not apply and you should be regarded as being “ordinarily resident” in Ireland. If you have come from Great Britain, you will not require a European Health Insurance Card to receive urgent health services free of charge but you will be required to show proof of your UK residence.

If you are a student from another EU country, you may receive necessary treatment free of charge if you are covered by a European Health Insurance Card or produce evidence of UK residence. If your academic course is of at least one year’s duration, you may apply for eligibility under the health system in Ireland and would be considered as “ordinarily resident”.
In general, if you are a national of a non-EU or non-EEA country (with the exception of Switzerland), you are regarded as ordinarily resident in Ireland if you can show the Health Service Executive (HSE) that you intend to live here for at least a year. The HSE may look for evidence that you are legally entitled to live here for at least a year. Here are some examples of this evidence:

- A work permit or visa, a statement from your employer or a contract of employment
- Evidence of transfer of funds, bank accounts, pensions
- Proof of purchase of a property or property rental (i.e., a lease), including evidence that the property in question is your main residence
- A GNIB (Garda National Immigration Bureau) residence permission as stamped on your passport.

If you are a student from a non-EU or non-EEA country (with the exception of Switzerland), you are generally regarded as ordinarily resident if you are registered for a course of study that will last for at least one academic year. If you are here for a shorter period, you are regarded as a visitor and you do not have any entitlement to free or subsidised health services.

In addition to the public health system, people in Ireland can avail of a range of private health care services. You must pay the full costs of treatment if you opt for private health care. There are two private health insurance companies in Ireland - VHI and BUPA. As long as you are from the EU/EEA/Switzerland or normally resident in Ireland, you are entitled to the same benefits from your private health insurance with either of these two companies as any other Irish citizen. Your private health insurance premium attracts tax relief at the standard rate (20%).

**Travel**

Limerick’s central location makes it easily reachable by a variety of means.
The most convenient access is by air via Shannon Airport, located about 30 minutes west of the city. Limerick’s city centre can be easily reached by taking the bus provided by Bus Eireann. These airport buses depart frequently from outside the terminal, taking passengers to Colbert Station in about 30 minutes. The Bus Eireann desk is located in the Arrivals Hall, and is open from 08:00am until 16:00pm (tel: +353 61 313333).

Taxis are also available 24 hours from the taxi desk located outside the Arrivals Hall. For something a bit more personal, you can hire a VIP chauffeur limousine to take you to your lodging in Limerick (tel: +353 86 8175500). There is no train service from Shannon Airport. If you rent a car, simply follow the N19 from the terminal to the N18 leading into Limerick, which is well-signposted and easy to navigate.

Limerick is conveniently situated at the crossroads of several of Ireland’s main highways. From Dublin, the N7 runs straight into the city in under 3 hours. The N20 motorway connects the city with Cork to the south in about 1 hour, 30 minutes and driving from Galway involves taking the N6 motorway to the N66 and then the smaller N19, which will lead you into Limerick.

There are regular train services from every main town in the country to Limerick. Irish Rail operates direct trains from Dublin, Cork and Killarney, and all other towns can be accessed from these hubs.

Eight trains run daily from Dublin; two from Rosslare Harbour, Tipperary and Cahir; and one each day from Cork. All trains arrive at Limerick’s Colbert Station, which is centrally located and also serves as the city’s main bus terminal. A high-speed commuter rail line runs between Dublin and Limerick, it runs hourly services between the two cities. For more information on train schedules and fares, contact Colbert Station (tel: +353 61 315555).
Life in Ireland

Ireland is an island on the western fringe of Europe between latitude 51 1/2 and 55 1/2 degrees north, and longitude 5 1/2 to 10 1/2 degrees west. Its greatest length, from Malin Head in the north to Mizen Head in the south, is 486 km and its greatest width from east to west is approximately 275 km. Since 1921 the island has been divided politically into two parts. The independent twenty-six county area, comprising 70,282 sq. km, has a population of 4,670,976 (2011). Northern Ireland, which is part of the United Kingdom and contains six of the nine counties of the ancient province of Ulster, has a population of 1.8 million (2011). In 1973 Ireland became a member of the European Union (EU).

Climate

Ireland’s mild and equable climate is a reflection of the fact that its shores are bathed by the relatively warm ocean waters of the North Atlantic Drift. Valencia, in the extreme south-west, has an average January temperature of 7°C and a July temperature of 15°C, a range of only eight degrees. The figures for Dublin are 4.5°C in January and 15.5°C in July, a range of eleven degrees. Extremely high or low temperatures are virtually unknown.

Rainfall is heaviest on the westward facing slopes of the hills where it may exceed 3,000 mm in Kerry, Mayo and Donegal. The east is much drier and Dublin records on average only 785 mm annually.

The outstanding feature of the Irish weather is its changeability, a characteristic which it shares with all the countries that lie in the path of the temperate depressions. However more stable atmospheric conditions may
arise in winter with the extension of the continental high pressure system bringing clear skies and cool conditions, especially to the eastern part of the country. In summer an extension of the Azores high pressure system may bring periods of light easterly winds and bright sunny weather.

**Geography**

Ireland is situated in the Atlantic Ocean and separated from Great Britain by the Irish Sea. Half the size of Arkansas, it occupies the entire island except for the six counties that make up Northern Ireland. Ireland resembles a basin—a central plain rimmed with mountains, except in the Dublin region. The mountains are low, with the highest peak, Carrantuohill in County Kerry, rising to 3,415 ft (1,041 m). The principal river is the Shannon, which begins in the north-central area, flows south and southwest for about 240 miles (386 km), and empties into the Atlantic.

**Language**

English is the most commonly used language, with 94% of the population calling it their mother tongue. Irish, the first official language of the state, is spoken by 10%; with 9% calling it their mother tongue. Irish is the main language of the Gaeltacht regions, where 91,862 people live. Read more about Ireland and the Irish at www.discoverireland.ie.
GETTING SETTLED
Working in Ireland and Income Taxes

Students from the EEA - In the past, all nationals from the European Economic Area (EEA) have been free to take up employment in Ireland while studying. However, nationals of Romania and Bulgaria - countries which joined the EU in 2007 - may work while studying only if they meet the criteria for non-EEA students outlined below.

Students from outside the EEA - At present, students attending a full time course of at least one year’s duration leading to a qualification recognised by the Minister for Education and Science are entitled to take up casual employment (defined as up to 20 hours part time work per week or full time work during normal college vacation periods). The course of study must be listed on the internationalisation register of recognised courses maintained on behalf of the Department of Education. Access to employment is denied to all other students.

Important points to note:
Unless you are attending a recognised course, you will not be allowed to access employment during your stay in Ireland.
The right to work lapses automatically once the period of study is completed, except for a 12 month extension available to third level graduates.
When applying for your student entry visa, you will need to show that you have sufficient funds to cover the entire period of your course, without having to rely on income from a part-time job.
If you are attending a foundation/preparatory course prior to enrolment on a full time course you are not entitled to work until you have commenced your full time course.
Everyone who has permission to work in Ireland has the same rights in the workplace, regardless of their nationality or immigration status. This means
that you have a right to a legal contract, to lawful hours of work, to a salary at or above the minimum wage and other entitlements as set out in Irish law, including holiday leave, sick leave, parental leave and the right to join a union.

The Migrant Rights Centre Ireland (MRCI) and the Immigrant Council of Ireland both offer an advice and support service on workplace issues.

Citizens of other EU/EEA countries generally require no special permissions to continue living and working in Ireland after their studies. However, specific provisions apply to Bulgarian and Romanian nationals wishing to work in Ireland.

Non-EEA graduates and postgraduates can apply for a green card or work permit under the Third Level Graduate Scheme on completion of their studies.

In all other cases, the right to take up employment will cease upon the expiry of your student visa.

New arrangements to facilitate recruitment of qualified researchers from abroad to carry out research in Ireland were introduced in October 2007. These new arrangements implement a European Union Directive on the admission of third country researchers for the purpose of carrying out research. Under the new arrangements approved research organisations can recruit researchers from outside the European Economic Area (i.e. the EU Member States as well as Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway) to carry out research in Ireland without the need for a Green Card or Work Permit.

Procedures have been put in place for accreditation of research organisations to enable them to make use of the new arrangements. Accredited research organisations can now enter into a hosting agreement with a third country researcher to carry out defined research. Once a hosting agreement is in place, the researcher will be admitted into the State for the purpose of carrying out
the research, subject to normal immigration requirements
Details of the Scheme for Accreditation of Research Organisations and further information regarding hosting agreements is available from the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Innovation.
For researchers interested in research job opportunities in Ireland see Ireland’s Researchers Mobility Portal

**Income Taxes**

Most employees pay tax through the **PAYE** (Pay As You Earn) system. This means that your employer deducts the tax you owe directly from your wages, and pays this tax directly to the Revenue Commissioners. The Revenue Commissioners collect taxes from citizens on behalf of the Irish Government.
You will also pay **PRSI** and the **Universal Social Charge** on your income.

It is important to ensure that your tax is dealt with properly from the start and that your new employer deducts the right amount of tax from your pay. To ensure that this happens, you will need to do two things:
Give your employer your **PPS Number** (formerly known as your RSI No.). This number is your unique personal identification number for public services in Ireland. Your employer will then let your tax office know that you have started work and that they are your employers.
Your Personal Public Service Number (PPS Number) is a unique reference number that helps you access social welfare benefits, public services and information in Ireland. State agencies that use PPS Numbers to identify individuals include the Department of Social Protection, the Revenue Commissioners and the Health Service Executive (HSE).
You can use your PPS Number for:
• All social welfare services
• Pupil ID
• Public health services, including the medical card and the Drugs Payment Scheme
• Child immunisation
• Schemes run by the Revenue Commissioners, such as mortgage interest relief
• Housing grants
• Driver Theory Testing and driver licences

You cannot apply for a PPS Number before you arrive in Ireland. You must be living in Ireland to apply for a PPS Number. You will be asked to produce documentary evidence of identity and residence in Ireland. Different documentary evidence will be required, depending on your nationality.

Tax credits reduce the amount of income tax that you have to pay. Your gross tax is calculated depending on your income. Tax credits are then deducted from the gross tax to give the amount of tax that you have to pay.

Tax credits consist of various credits and reliefs which you may be able to claim, depending on your circumstances. Every individual can claim a personal tax credit for example, and you can also claim relief for items such as private health insurance premiums and mortgage interest. Details of all the main tax allowances and reliefs (including the amount due for the current year) are given on the explanatory leaflet issued to you each year from the Revenue Commissioners with your certificate of tax credits.

Tax is payable on earnings of all kinds that result from your employment (including for example, bonuses, overtime, non-cash pay or benefit-in-kind such as the use of company car, tips, Christmas boxes etc.). You do not pay tax on: scholarship income, interest from savings certificates, savings
bonds and national instalment savings schemes with An Post, and payments
to approved pension schemes.
Pay that you receive through working extra hours (overtime), bonuses etc., is
included as part of your taxable pay for that week or month. You do not get
any additional tax-free allowances against these additional earnings.

**At the University of Limerick**

Limerick is Ireland’s third largest city and has 90,000 inhabitants. It is situated
in the Mid-West on the banks of the majestic Shannon River. Limerick is
Ireland’s sporting city and UL is Ireland’s sporting campus. Limerick is an
important centre of higher education in Ireland. It is home to a number
of higher-education institutions including the University of Limerick,
Limerick Institute of Technology and Mary Immaculate College and has a
student population of over 20,000. The University of Limerick (UL) has a
student population of over 13,000, and is about 5 km east of the city centre
in the suburb of Castletroy. It was established as the National Institute for
Higher Education (NIHE) in 1972, and in 1989 was the first university to
be established since the foundation of the State in 1922. It is notable for
its programs of engineering, information technology, materials science, sports
science, humanities, teacher education, social sciences and music.

In 2007, the university opened a graduate medical school. The Irish World
Music Centre specialises in traditional music and dance, and UL is host to
the Irish Chamber Orchestra. The campus includes a 50m Olympic-standard
swimming complex, the first to be established in Ireland. The University has
one of the longest footbridges in Europe, called the “Living Bridge”, designed
by Wilkinson Eyre Architects of London. Thomond College of Education,
Limerick was a successful teacher training college for secondary level and was integrated into the university in 1991.

Your host department will see to it that you have a work space, along with an IT account that enables you to access the internet, email and the university server. If you are employed by the university, you will receive information from the Department of Human Resources concerning payment of salaries, hours of work, insurance, pensions, work environment, equality matters, annual leave etc.

The University of Limerick conducts active security work and risk management. The security work must prevent risks and damage through cost-effective security solutions with IT security, physical security, personal security, administrative security and emergency/crisis management. All University of Limerick staff are provided with an ID card as are all students.
LIVING IN LIMERICK
Banking

Different banks have different conditions for opening an account. The bank will require the following documentation when opening an account: your PPS number, your passport, your present address and a letter from your landlord confirming your residence. Banks are generally open Monday through Friday from 10am to 4.00pm and are closed on public holidays.

Postal Service

The postal service in Ireland is called An Post. In order to receive letters and packages, your address must include your name, street and your city. Please see www.anpost.ie for further details. There are post offices located in all major urban areas where you can buy stamps and post letters, parcels etc. You can also buy stamps in many city centre newsagents. The General Post Office is located on Cecil Street.

Post office opening hours are 9.00am to 5.30pm Monday to Friday with larger post offices also open on Saturday. You can identify the post office by the green sign with POST in white lettering.

Mobile Phones

Mobile phones are widely used in Ireland. There are several network providers available including: Vodafone, O2, Meteor, E-Mobile, Tesco Mobile and 3 Mobile. There are two phone plans available: bill pay or ‘pay as you go’. ‘Pay as you go’ allows you to purchase phone credit in denominations of €5, €10, €20, €30, €40 and €50 and you simply top up your credit when you are running low.
Internet

There are various internet cafés in Limerick city. There are also free wifi spots dotted around the university campus and you will also have internet access in your accommodation should you choose to live on campus. You can also purchase USB pre-pay modems from any mobile phone provider and there are various price plans available starting from €9.99 per month for 1GB.

Health & Medical Care

General Practitioner (GP) is the official term for the doctor who provides services to people in his/her surgery or in the patient’s home. Most people simply refer to GPs as their doctor or family doctor.

GPs provide services free of charge to medical card holders. Visits by GP Visit Card holders are also free of charge, but other services may not be. They also provide maternity and infant welfare services and services to certain people with Hepatitis C free of charge. Other patients must pay for GP service, generally €55 per consultation.

Under the Drugs Payment Scheme, individuals or families who are registered with their Local Health Office pay only a maximum of €120 per calendar month (in 2010) for approved prescribed drugs and medicines.

In general, prescribed drugs and medicines can be obtained from your local pharmacy. Virtually all pharmacies have contracts with the Health Service Executive (HSE) to provide approved prescribed drugs and medicines to medical card holders, people with Hepatitis C who have Health Amendment Cards and long-term illness card holders and to implement the Drugs Payment Scheme. In certain circumstances, drugs and medicines may be provided directly by doctors or by hospitals and other specialist institutions. GPs and
Pharmacies are listed in the yellow pages (telephone directory). In case of an emergency, dial 999 or 112. This is the emergency number for the ambulance service, police service and fire brigade. There is an A&E department at the Mid-Western Regional Hospital located in the Dooradoyle area of Limerick city.

The University of Limerick also has a student health centre and 24 hour security team. All medical districts have a dental clinic, usually located in the same area as the medical care centre. There is also a wide range of dentists listed in the telephone directory. From 1 June 2011 all dentists must display private fees in a place where patients can view them before consultation. A single fee must apply for some procedures while the fees for others may be shown as a range, with a minimum and maximum clearly stated.

**Tourist Attractions**

Everything is close at hand in Limerick city. In fact, the University of Limerick is only a 10-15 min bus ride from the city centre and buses run every 15mins to and from the city centre. Limerick City is one of the country’s main tourist destinations, only a 15-minute drive from Shannon Airport. Tourist attractions in the city centre include King John’s Castle (1212), St Mary’s Cathedral (1168), Hunt Museum, several seasonal tours (Angela’s Ashes walking tour of Limerick City, historical walking tour and boat tours along the River Shannon), the University of Limerick, Georgian house and gardens and the Treaty Stone. Adare village and the Foynes Flying Boat Museum, approximately 35 km (22miles/30 minutes) from Limerick City along the scenic coastal N69 route from Limerick to Tralee, are also
popular attractions. One of Ireland’s most celebrated museums, the Hunt Museum, is based in the historic 18th-century former Custom House. The museum was established to house an internationally important collection of approximately 2000 works of art and antiquities formed by John and Gertrude Hunt during their lifetimes. On display are the 9th century Antrim Cross, a sketch by Picasso and a bronze sculpture of a horse, said to be from a design by Leonardo da Vinci.

Local Market

The Milk Market located at Cornmarket Row in the city centre sells locally produced foods and products. The market is run by the Limerick Market Trustees and is one of the oldest markets run in the country. The market is open on Friday, Saturday and Sunday with the Saturday market acting as the flagship and most popular market day. In 2010 work was undertaken to redevelop the existing market premises to an all-weather, all year round market facility as the market operated in an outdoor environment. The work involved constructing a large canopy over the existing market premises and was officially re-opened in June 2010.

Local Public Transport

Local public transport is provided by Bus Éireann, Ireland’s national bus operator. Bus no. 308 and 308a run to and from the city centre to UL every 15 minutes from 07.00am to 23.00pm. The cost of a single journey is €1.780 and you pay the driver on entering the bus. It is also possible to avail of a day-saver ticket which allows you to travel on unlimited Limerick city bus services for one day at the cost of €3.70.
USEFUL INFORMATION
Sports
Rugby, Gaelic football, hurling, cricket and association football are popular sporting pastimes in Limerick. The city and suburbs also has many tennis, athletics, and golf clubs. The city is host to many large sporting events. Recent examples include the 2008 and 2009 Irish Open Golf Championships, the 2010 Irish Special Olympics, the All-Ireland Corporate Games and the World Baton Twirling Championships. Limerick has been designated as a European City of Sport for 2011 by the European Capitals of Sport Association (ACES).

Clothing
The best way to pack efficiently for Irish weather is to take clothes that can be easily layered, so that as temperatures fluctuate you can take off a layer or add another one. In winter, pack a couple of warm sweaters and a good quality waterproof (not just shower proof) jacket. If you are planning to walk in the Irish hills or by rivers a pair of waterproof trousers and proper waterproof walking boots would also be advisable. A warm hat and a scarf are indispensable items in the colder months and useful even in summer, especially by the south and west coasts where the winds coming in from the Atlantic can really drop the temperatures. In summer a couple of light and roomy sweaters that you can pull on over a t-shirt will suffice, along with a light shower proof jacket. The type of jacket that folds up into a small package is most useful as you are more likely to actually have one with you when the rain starts. The temptation to leave this vital item at home because the morning is sunny and bright should be avoided – showers can be sudden and heavy even on the best summer days. You will almost certainly do a lot of walking in Ireland and comfortable shoes are essential.
Driving

In Ireland, we drive on the left hand side of the road and all vehicles are right hand drive. You must bring you driving licence whenever you drive. It is possible to exchange a driving licence issued by an EU member state or an EEA member state (Norway, Liechtenstein and Iceland) for an Irish driving licence. It is also possible to exchange a driving licence issued by certain recognised states for an Irish driving licence.

If you are the holder of a driving licence issued by a country that is not recognised for driving licence exchange, you cannot exchange your licence for an Irish licence. You will only get an Irish driving licence after you have gone through the full driver licensing procedure, starting with the driver theory test.

If you have a driving licence issued by an EU/EEA member state you can drive in Ireland as long as your existing licence is valid. If you wish to exchange your driving licence for an equivalent Irish driving licence, you must do so within 10 years of your driving licence expiring.

Ireland has agreements with certain other countries/states that designate them as recognised states for the purposes of driving licence exchange. These are:

- Australia
- Gibraltar
- Guernsey
- Isle of Man
- Japan
- Jersey
- South Africa
- South Korea
- Switzerland
- New Zealand*
• Taiwan*
* Under the Road Traffic (Recognition of Foreign Driving Licences - New Zealand and Taiwan) Order 2010 (SI 402/2010) New Zealand and Taiwan were added to the list of recognised states but with certain qualifications. If you are a holder of a licence issued by one of the above states you can drive in Ireland when visiting, providing your licence is valid. If you become normally resident in Ireland, you can drive for up to 12 months from the date of becoming resident, as long as your licence has not expired. You are considered to be normally resident in Ireland if, because of personal and occupational ties, you usually live here for at least 185 days in each calendar year.
If you wish to exchange your driving licence for an equivalent Irish driving licence, you must do so within one year of your driving licence expiring. If you are not from any of the above countries, (for example, if you are from Canada or the United States), and you hold a national driving licence or an international driving permit from your own country, you may drive in Ireland for the duration of your temporary visit (up to 12 months). If your stay in Ireland will be more than 12 months you can apply for an Irish driving licence but you will need to go through the full driver licensing procedure. You must first complete a driver theory test, apply for a learner driving permit and complete your driving test in Ireland. If you pass your driving test, you will be issued with a full Irish driving licence.
Motor vehicles in Ireland are divided into different categories for driver licensing purposes. This is a standard practice throughout the EU. Ireland has 14 categories in total, ranging from motorcycles to agricultural vehicles.
To exchange your driving licence for an Irish driving licence, you must complete an application form for a driving licence (form D401). You can
obtain a copy of application form D401 from your local Motor Taxation Office. You will also be required to complete an Exchange of Drivers Licence Declaration (form D900). A copy of form D900 is available from your local Motor Taxation Office. For more information on driving licences in Ireland, please check out http://www.limerickcity.ie/OurServices/MotorTax/DrivingLicences/.

Electricity

Ireland uses 230v AC, 50 HZ – 3 square pin plugs.

Emergency Services

In the event of an emergency, dial 999 or 112 and ask for ambulance, the fire department or the gardaí (the police).

Public Holidays

A list of important Irish public holidays can be found at http://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/employment/employment_rights_and_conditions/leave_and_holidays/public_holidays_in_ireland.html. Most public sector workers have the public holidays off but those working in the private sector especially in retail often have to work.

Religion

The predominant religion in Ireland is Christianity, with the largest church being the Roman Catholic Church. Ireland’s constitution states that the state may not endorse any particular religion and guarantees freedom of religion. In 2006, 86.8% of the population identified themselves as Roman Catholic. Other significant Protestant denominations are the Presbyterian Church in Ireland,
followed by the Methodist Church in Ireland. The second largest Christian denomination, the Church of Ireland (Anglican), declined in membership for most of the twentieth century, but has more recently experienced an increase, as have other small Christian denominations. The country’s Hindu and Muslim populations have experienced significant growth in recent years, due chiefly to immigration. In percentage terms, Orthodoxy and Islam were the fastest growing religions, up by 100% and 70% respectively.

**Telephone**

The international country code for Ireland is 353. The area code for Limerick is 061. To call abroad from Ireland, dial 00 followed by the country code.

**Time**

The time in Ireland is GMT. Daylight saving time is used; the clocks move forward one hour at 1am on the last Sunday of March and are moved back one hour at 2am on the last Sunday of October. Dates are often written as DD/MM/YY e.g. 21/11/2011. American visitors in particular should note that 12/10 does not mean the 10th of December.
FACULTIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LIMERICK
Faculty of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences:
http://www.artsoc.ul.ie/

Faculty of Education and Health Sciences:
http://www2.ul.ie/web/WWW/Faculties/Kemmy_Business_School

Kemmy Business School:
http://www2.ul.ie/web/WWW/Faculties/Education_%26_Health_Sciences

Faculty of Science and Engineering:
http://www2.ul.ie/web/WWW/Faculties/Science_%26_Engineering