



Student Guide **Under 18**

We hope that the time that you spend studying in Ireland will be enjoyable and rewarding but here as with anywhere it pays to be aware of your personal safety. Here is some advice to help you when you first arrive in Ireland.



LOOKING AFTER YOUR BELONGINGS

Take special care of your passport, travel documents and tickets and keep them in a safe place. You shouldn't take your passport or travel documents with you when you go out- just take a photocopy. If you lose your passport, contact the police and your Embassy immediately and give them your passport details. Avoid using a computer case when carrying a laptop. Use a less obvious bag to carry it in. Avoid displaying other expensive items, such as jewellery, watches, iPod earphones or mobile phones in public places.

SAFETY ON THE STREETS

When crossing the road, remember that vehicles drive on the left in Ireland.

If you are returning home late at night, try not to walk home by yourself. Walk in a group preferably or use public transport. Avoid putting yourself at risk by taking shortcuts e.g. through dimly-lit alleyways or parks. Do ensure that you have a mobile phone with you and that it is fully charged. Do let a friend know where you are going.

Sit near other passengers on the bus or Luas. On a bus sitting downstairs near the driver is safest. Tell the driver if someone is causing a problem or making you feel uncomfortable. If necessary, get off the bus at the next stop, where there are other people. Do not get off where the people causing trouble do even if it means missing your stop.

If you decide to take a taxi, on the street only take NRC taxis with yellow and blue light on the

top, both driver and cab are licensed. To take a minicab you need to phone for one. LFL Worldwide Chauffeur Services is a reliable taxi company (phone number 00353 (0)86 4141837). Make sure the driver tells you your name before you get in. Only pay the driver after you have got out of the taxi. If you feel you are being followed, cross the street more than once if necessary and if you still feel threatened move as quickly as possible to a public area such as a restaurant or a bar and phone for help (your host family- you could ask them to accompany you home).

Be alert and be brief when using a mobile phone. Be discreet and try to conceal it. Don't wander along the street with your iPod earphones on.

If you are withdrawing money from a cashpoint machine be aware of others around you and try not to use them at night or in poorly lit areas.

ADVICE ABOUT PROTECTING YOURSELF FROM PICKPOCKETS

Keep your bag, wallet or purse close to you at all times. Do not put your bag on the ground beside you or on the back of your chair when you are in a cafe or a restaurant.

Avoid talking to strangers. They might be asking you for directions or just pretending to be friendly while distracting you for a nearby partner to rob you.

Stopping to consult a map in the street is a good indication that you are a tourist and easy prey for pickpockets while you are concentrating on your map. Try to plan your route before you leave your home or while you are sitting in a cafe.

Try to be as subtle as possible about where you are keeping your money. Avoid carrying large amounts of money when you are out.

Avoid crowded places such as buses, tubes and lifts during the rush hours. These are favourite places for pickpockets.

Keep your keys in your pocket, if possible, or at least separate from your other belongings.

If you are robbed do report it immediately to Finola, the Welfare Officer, (phone 00353 (0)83 4741176) who will help you.

If you need the police, fire service or ambulance the number to call is 999 or 112.

CERTAIN FACTS YOU NEED TO KNOW

Smoking

You must be 18 years or over to buy cigarettes or tobacco. Smoking is banned in all public buildings in Ireland including bars, restaurants, shops, stations, cinemas and on all public transport. You can smoke in the street.

Drinking

You must be 18 years or over to drink alcohol in pubs, bars, restaurants and nightclubs.

Drugs

As in most European countries, Ireland has strict laws against the use of illegal drugs and punishments can be very heavy. You are strongly advised not to use illegal drugs during your stay.

Shoplifting

People who are caught stealing from shops will probably have to go to court.

Weapons

It is illegal to carry any weapon for defence including gas and sprays.

You will be arrested if the police stop you and you have a knife.

Cycling

You cannot ride a bike on a pavement and you must have lights if you cycle at night. A helmet is not obligatory but it is highly recommended.

If you go out at night or weekends, do tell your host where you are going and with whom.

Leave a telephone number where you can be contacted.

If for any reason you cannot come to school, do phone Finola on 00353 (0)83 4741176 and let her know.

You will be introduced to Finola, the Welfare Officer, soon after you arrive.

If at any time you are subject to or witness any behaviour which makes you feel uncomfortable or upset you should talk to Finola, the Welfare Officer.



Finola Dunne
Welfare Officer