

Abstracts

App-based Distance Learning Project during Year2 Work Placement in Germany

Danielle Martin, Shannon College of Hotel Management, a School of NUI Galway.

Our Hotel Management students spend their second academic year on operative placement in 5-star hotel properties in German cities. This presentation outlines a new fully App-based Distance Learning Project, which our Year2 placement students complete in staged submissions. The project guidelines define two strands: The first strand involves sharing intercultural observations, personal and professional highlights and new experiences in multimedia format on the Messenger App, WhatsApp. The second strand involves task-based writing practice on our LMS' App, Blackboard Student. The mix of technology is an ideal fit for students with many demands on their time and working up to 50 hours a week in a challenging environment. This new initiative has resulted in improved student engagement, a higher volume of content and improved contact between students and lecturer. The more reflective content has also positively informed and personalised year1 preparatory content for placement and has been the basis for many new ideas for year1 & year3 projects and in-class oral activities.

Making Language Graduates Employable

Kristin Brogan, ITT (Institute of Technology, Tralee) School of Business and Social Studies, Dept. of Humanities

This paper will introduce the CES&L (Crafting Employability Strategies & Languages) project. This was a two year Erasmus+ funded collaboration between partners from Austria, Bulgaria, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Poland and the UK. The output, 10 workshops, is a resource for practitioners working with Modern Languages students that aims to enhance their employability by engaging them in work related activities as part of their academic studies. The Project Team has worked with employers across Europe to seek their views on how HEIs can support students to become more employable and recognise the significance of their modern languages degree in the international job market. This has informed the adaptation of the generic AHECS (Association of Higher Education Careers Services in Ireland) Employability module into a resource localised to, and translated for, each of the member countries. Two new workshops have been created that address intercultural awareness, during residence abroad, and entrepreneurship as a career pathway. Each workshop has comprehensive facilitator notes that include: an introduction, activities and timings, (with information and activity sheets supplied), learning outcomes, assessment strategies and PowerPoint slides. A website that includes online activities and areas for higher education practitioners, students and employers was launched in TCD during September 2017.

Year Abroad Portfolio pilot module 2017-18

Siobhan Mortell, UCC

I will introduce a module I am currently piloting.

Based on observations over many years of coordinating BComm Int'l students on their year abroad, I have seen that students are able to process their YA experience into conscious learning only in a very superficial way. "I made lots of friends from different countries/I became independent" and other equivalent statements. I wanted to develop a way for them to think about these issues *during* their year abroad rather than after their return, and in a deeper and more flexible way. The aim of the module is to enable students to go through their YA experience in a more conscious way, to translate these reflections into a form which is more useful to them post-university, and also to capture some of the students' knowledge of individual locations and universities for future students to benefit from.

The 'Connect' Project – Intercultural Learning Network at UL

Gisela Holfter & Maria Rieder, UL

We will introduce the 'CONNECT Intercultural Learning Network for Europe' project which we are currently developing with partners in eight European countries and which is funded the scheme Erasmus+. CONNECT is a cross-sectoral project, bringing together practitioners and experts from the university and youth sector. It was initiated to create an innovative intercultural learning scenario, consisting of an e-learning platform and curricula for pre-departure and re-entry orientation, to support Erasmus participants (students and interns) in the higher education sector before, during and after their exchange by integrating methods and concepts from non-formal youth education to formal education. Our presentation will report on our experiences and give an idea of the structure, topics and benefits and introduce the Experience Map.

Vorbereitung von Universitätsstudierenden auf das Auslandsjahr – Das „Crossing Boundaries“ Modul an der Maynooth University

Arnd Witte, Maynooth University

An den meisten Universitäten in Irland werden die Fremdsprachenstudierenden nicht explizit auf das Auslandsjahr vorbereitet. Man nimmt einfach an, dass sie sich als Erwachsene schon irgendwie im fremden soziokulturellen Umfeld zurechtfinden werden

und dass sie ihren Fremdsprachenlernprozess autonom organisieren und steuern können, sei es an der Universität oder im Alltagsleben. Jedoch stellt der Auslandsaufenthalt vielfältige Anforderungen an die Studierenden, nicht nur in sprachlicher, sondern auch in pragmatischer, interkultureller, emotionaler, leiblicher, identitäts- und verhaltensbezogener Hinsicht. Ausgehend von der gegenwärtigen Erfahrungs- und Erwartungslage der Studierenden versucht das Modul sowohl auf pragmatischer als auch auf theoretisch-interkultureller Ebene, sie für die die komplexen und transformierenden Einflüsse des einjährigen Auslandsaufenthaltes zu sensibilisieren.

Education for a Changing World – Languages for Employability in a post-Brexit Ireland

Andreas Zürn, Goethe-Institut Dublin

I will talk about a conference, proposed by the Goethe-Institut, but to be organized in collaboration with EUNIC, (European Cultural Institutes) and education bodies. It aims to make the case for revisiting the HE curriculum in the light of the future orientation of Irish business and industry arising from the impact of major changes. The changing political and economic situation in the world (Brexit, USA, increasing protectionism) requires a re-evaluation of Irish education to ensure graduates have a broad range of skills for the evolving world. Ireland is uniquely exposed to a wide range of economic consequences which require new approaches.

The objective of the conference is to examine this situation and propose actions (also in regard to the FL strategy) which could support diversification and the search for new markets as called for by the government, Enterprise Ireland, IBEC and other bodies. A deeper knowledge of European Affairs along with languages and intercultural understanding can help businesses diversify and enter new EU markets.