

IAESTE Ireland Outgoing Trainee Guide

www.leargas.ie/iaeste



Welcome to IAESTE

Every year, the IAESTE programme exchanges over 5,000 students between 80+ countries- and you are about to become one of them! Soon you'll be working and living in a completely new environment, and meeting a lot of people both from your host country and from all over the IAESTE World. All of this can make an IAESTE traineeship the experience of a lifetime and a bit of preparation can make it even better! This guide aims to provide the information you'll need before, during and after your traineeship, but of course IAESTE Ireland is always here if you have any questions or need assistance. Please do keep in touch during the traineeship and let us know how you're getting on- above all, enjoy your IAESTE experience and make the most of the opportunities that are about to come your way!



Best regards and good luck!

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How IAESTE Works

By now you'll know that IAESTE stands for the International Association for the Exchange of Students for Technical Experience. However, you may not know that there are three levels to the association; IAESTE A.S.B.L (Association sans but lucrafit i.e. non-profit organisation), NC's and LC's.

IAESTE A.s.b.l

Term for the international network of 80+ countries, overseen by an elected General Secretary and Board Members Responsible for deciding and implementing the association's policies

IAESTE National Committee (NC)

The national office of a member country e.g IAESTE Norway, IAESTE Austria, IAESTE Australia Responsible for administration of all aspects of the traineeship exchange process

IAESTE Local Committee (LC)

The Organising group of students is a particular region e.g. LC Belfast, LC Dublin Responsible for trainee accommodation and social events at local level.

During your traineeship you might get to know LC members only, particularly if your host country's NC is based in a distant city. But it's important to know that all LC's are responsible to their country and NC, and all NC's are ultimately responsible to IAESTE A.s.b.l. Although you might not directly meet the people concerned, as a trainee you are part of the worldwide IAESTE network and your sending and host countries remain involved throughout the traineeship. We all want traineeships to go well, so that the employer you work with this year will want to offer places again next year, and a new generation of students can have the IAESTE experience!

What to do before you go

So, the exams are just over, you're moving house; you have goodbyes to say and a hundred things to organise... Where do you find the time to get ready for your traineeship? It can be difficult, but just a little bit of forethought will make things much smoother! Use the checklist to make sure that you have done the following before you go:

- Organised adequate health insurance
- Informed IAESTE Ireland of your travel plans, including any changes made since you returned your 5b form.
- Made contact with your receiving LC or NC and receive information about accommodation and pick up (note that these might not be confirmed before your internship)
- Contact your employer to introduce yourself.
- Check with your bank that your ATM/ Credit card works abroad
- Bring enough money to pay for first month's rent and living expenses as it can take up to a month for you to receive your first pay cheque.
- Check what currency your host country uses and get enough out for emergencies
- Apply for a EH11 card if you don't already have one, this can only be used in European countries.
- Make sure that you have enough medication, contact lenses as they may not be available in your host country.
- Do some research on your host country/city, including the climate and local customs. A guidebook and phrasebook can be very useful!
- Bring a photocopy of your passport, travel insurance, visas, work permit, birth certificate. It is important to have an easily accessible copy in case of loss or emergencies

What to do during your traineeship

Once you've packed and got on the plane, what next? In most cases you will be met on arrival by IAESTE LC or NC members, who may also take you to your accommodation and show you around your local area. If your host country doesn't have the resources to do this, they will send you extensive pre-arrival information and assist you in any way they can.

Either way, the first few weeks of a traineeship can be a bit of a whirlwind, as you get used to your job, your local area, and culture you're living in. Paying attention to the following will really help you settle in and make the most of your traineeship:

- Contact your family/friends to let them know you've arrived safely, and make sure to stay in touch throughout the traineeship
- Find out if other trainees are living in the area and arrange to meet up. Asked to be added to the Facebook and WhatsApp trainee groups.
- Learn a little of the local language. Even a few basic phrases will indicate your interest and be greatly appreciated.
- Be culturally sensitive and aware of the different standards and norms in other societies, especially as you may be working/living with people from many different backgrounds. Bear in mind that behaviours and attitudes which you consider normal may be seen as unusual or even unwelcome by others, and vice versa! Be mutually respectful and learn to appreciate the differences which make up diversity.
- Work out your what your income will be each month (including any tax or other deductions), and budget appropriately. Trainees are paid a salary in accordance with the cost of living in the receiving country, so if you want to travel a lot during or after your traineeship you may have to economise!
- Know what to do in case of an emergency. List a local emergency contact number in your phone, along with the number of Irish embassy/consulate.

While at work:

- Make sure you are clear with that your employer expects of you, and ask questions if you are not.
- Be friendly and social with your co-workers, not just the ones you deal with directly or who speak English. Many societies place a high importance in workplace relations, and you will find your working environment an easier (and more enjoyable) place to be if you are considered open and approachable.
- Take your job seriously and behave in a professional manner, although you are a trainee, your employer will expect the same of you as any employee; always be polite, on time, neatly dressed and fully prepared for the work day ahead!
- If you want to extend your traineeship period, you need to check with your LC/ NC first before making any commitment to the employer. Although in many cases it is possible to extend training, there may be restrictions on doing so e.g. if you have an IAESTE- sponsored visa or work permit.

How to deal with difficulties:

- Although the vast majority of traineeships pass without any major incident, the big unexpected can always happen and difficulties can occur. Whether the problem is big or small, the most important thing to remember is that you are not alone. IAESTE has been in existence for over 60 years and has long-established and well-developed support structures in place. Your safety and welfare is the paramount concern for everyone involved in your traineeship- your employer, IAESTE Ireland, your host country and IAESTE A.s.b.l. However, we can't help if we don't know about your problem, so don't suffer in silence!

Below are general guidelines about how to approach particular situation, but if you are in any doubt please don't hesitate to contact IAESTE Ireland directly.

Problems with arrival

If someone is scheduled to meet you on arrival and you can't find the,, call the host IAESTE LC (oc NC, if applicable) and state a clear landmark where you will wait for the relevant person. In the unlikely event that you cannot contact them, take a taxi directly to your accommodation or to a nearby hostel and email the host NC/LC and IAESTE Ireland. Ensure you have the relevant addresses in your hand luggage and that you have enough local currency to cover your costs should this situation occur

Problems with accommodation

In the case of minor difficulties (e.g. you're not sure how an appliance works, Wi-Fi, access problems etc.) contact the host LC/NC which arranged the accommodation. If there are more serious issues which could affect your health and safety, contact your host NC and IAESTE Ireland.

Problems at your workplace

Trainees occasionally experience interpersonal difficulties in the workplace, or find that they are unclear about their work duties. The best approach is to tackle the problem early; tell your local LC/NC immediately, as they are likely to have worked with the employer before and will be the best places to negotiate any potential language or cultural barriers. In the case of a more serious problem, such as late payments or wages of difficulties in the working environment, inform IAESTE Ireland as well as the host LC/NC.

Breaking your traineeship

Occasionally, emergencies occur which require a trainee to return home and cut short their traineeship. Should this happen, it is vital that you inform your employer, your host LC/ NC and IAESTE Ireland of the situation immediately. Cutting short a traineeship should not be done lightly, as it can adversely affect the relationship between the employer and IAESTE, and jeopardise future traineeships. It may also have financial implications for you (e.g. if your rent is paid in advance). Please consider whether you need to end the traineeship completely, or if a short break would suffice (e.g. if you have to resit an exam). Employers understand that trainees have ties and responsibilities in other countries, and will do their best to accommodate if possible.

Problems with an IAESTE LC or NC

If you feel you have been treated unfairly by an IAESTE LC or NC, contact IAESTE Ireland in writing so that we can try resolving the problem with the committee concerned. If you are not happy with the outcome, you can then make an appeal to the IAESTE Ombudsman either individually or as a student group. The ombudsman is an impartial mediator who will investigate the matter in confidence, and make preventative recommendations as a result. Complaints must be made within 6 months of the incident occurring.

What to do when your traineeship ends

As you come to the end of your traineeship, take some time to prepare for your return. There will be practical issues to take care of, but also the sometimes difficult business of saying goodbye and resuming everyday life.

Before finishing your traineeship:

- Ask your employer for a written reference and for their permission to list them as a referee on your CV. While IAESTE Ireland or your host NC can attest that you completed a traineeship, we're not in a position to comment on your job performance or duties.
- Arrange for payment of any outstanding bills and close any accounts you will no longer use
- De-register with the Irish Embassy/Consulate if you did so at the start of your traineeship.
- Assemble any documents you may need in the future for taxation purposes or similar.

- Take some photographs of your daily life- your house, workplace, and local surroundings – to help you remember the customary parts of your traineeship, not just the special events and nights out!

After finishing your traineeship:

- On completion of your traineeship, IAESTE Ireland will send you a Trainee Report Form (see sample at the end of this guide). Trainee reports are absolutely vital for monitoring and improving the IAESTE programme, and are often a deciding factor in which traineeships we accept and which countries we exchange with, so please make sure to submit yours.
- Once we have received your trainee report, we will send you an IAESTE Certificate to show you have successfully completed practical training through IAESTE.
- In late October/ early November each year, IAESTE Ireland organises a Trainee of the Year Award for that year's outgoing trainees to showcase their experience on the programme. Trainees make presentations to before and audience of employers, academics and students, with prizes awarded to the top three presenters. Details of the event are sent by email in September each year.
- Maintain your connection with IAESTE by assisting in promotion, job raising or student reception in Ireland. We are always looking for volunteers and there are many opportunities to catch up with international friends and colleagues through official IAESTE events such as JUMP, Get Together, and Central European Convention. Contact the IAESTE Ireland office and we'll let you know how to get involved.

Dealing with Reverse Culture Shock

Be aware that even a short time working and living away can alter you, and sometimes lead to difficulties in re-adjusting to life at home. Your experience may have affected you more than you realise, and people and situations you left behind may have changed during your absence. Often, the transition back to your own culture can be difficult precisely because you don't expect any difficulties in returning to what should feel familiar. This is called Reverse Culture Shock or Re-entry Shock, and in most cases will be quiet mild. However, some people can experience real difficulties with reverse culture shock and may take several months to re-adjust to life at home. There are steps you can take to minimise or cope better with its effect:

- Share photos, stories, mementos, and your feelings during your traineeship with your family and friends. These will help to provide some context for your experiences. However, don't expect everyone to be equally interested in your adventures, and bear in mind that sharing experience is a two-way street; give your friends and family the opportunity to explain what's been happening in their lives too!
- Make use of the work experience you have gained. Some trainees find returning to structured university studies a little restricting after the relative independence of

their traineeships. If so, talk to your lecturers and see if there are any other outlets for your new knowledge e.g. assisting with specific projects, contributing to research etc.

- Continue to seek out new experiences and people. Home life can sometimes feel mundane if you have spent a period of time travelling to a new place or even country every weekend, meeting people from every corner of the world, and routinely encountering new sensations. If you then find yourself back in the same place talking to the same people as you were last year, it can feel like nothing has changed. If so, try to remember that something important has changed; you. You may have gained new perspectives and interests, which you can continue to explore. Find ways to interact with people from your host country- there may even be students on your campus- or keep up your interest through online newspapers and language sites.

Using IAESTE when seeking further employment

IAESTE is a great way to build an international network of professional contacts. With over 350,000 IAESTE Alumni, you may be surprised at the places in which you encounter former trainees and committee members. Make use of your connection with IAESTE by checking in regularly to the IAESTE Alumni Network, looking at the job postings there, and stating on your CV that you were an IAESTE trainee. You can also make reference to your participation in IAESTE to demonstrate your independence, flexibility and intercultural knowledge when writing applications or cover letters- these are all attractive qualities for potential employers.

Final Words

Gueti Reis! **sikur vjaðg!** **bezpečnou cestu!**
सुरक्षित यात्रा **turvallista matkaa!** **veilige reis!**
säker resa sigurno putovanje! **آمنة رحلة**
Gute Reise! **行ってらっしゃい!**
Have a safe, enjoyable trip ... agus go n-éirí an bóthar leat!

IAESTE Contact Information Sheet

Fill out two copies, leaving one at home and packing one in your luggage

IAESTE Ireland Address:

Person responsible:

Tel: Fax:

E-mail:

www.leargas.ie/iaeste

IAESTE National Committee in host country:

Address: Person responsible:

Tel: Fax:

E-mail:

Web:

IAESTE Local Committee in host country (if applicable):

Address: Person responsible:

Tel: Fax:

E-mail:

Web:

Accommodation in host country:

Address:

Person responsible:

Tel:

Employer (see N5b form):

Address:

Person responsible:

Tel:

Fax:

E-mail:

Web:

Irish Embassy/Consulate for host country (a complete listing is available from www.dfa.ie; choose Services to the Public – Travel Advice – Irish Embassies and Consulates abroad):

Address:

Tel:

Fax:

E-mail:

Sample Trainee Report Form

Your report helps us to evaluate the IAESTE Programme. Please complete this form in as much detail as possible, giving your impressions of the different aspects of your traineeship. This information will be forwarded to the IAESTE Committee in the country of your traineeship. Your feedback is essential in order to improve the services of the IAESTE Programme and your assistance is very much appreciated.

Country of training:	Ref. No	Year:
Trainee	Employer	
Name		
Home Address:	Company Address:	
E-mail:	Start date- Finish date:	
Length of Traineeship	Payment per month:	
University:	Faculty:	

		Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
1.	Was your training in accordance with your expectation?				
2.	Was the payment sufficient to cover the cost of living including accommodation, food and commuting?				
3.	Did you have any influence on the training program?				
4.	How would you describe your relations with management and other employees?				
5.	Was your knowledge in the required language good enough?				
6.	Was the information from / contact with IAESTE Ireland to your satisfaction?				
7.	Did the over-all performance of IAESTE in Ireland satisfy you?				
8.	Did the over-all performance of IAESTE in your receiving country satisfy you?				
9.	Did you complete a special project?				
	For your company?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>		
	For your university?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>		
10.	Do you expect to get credit for this experience from your university/college?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>		
11.	Please give an outline of the work experience obtained during your placement. Make sure to mention any positives or negatives about the experience gained:				

12.	Please give details of your accommodation:	
13.	Social Programme - Please give details of any cultural/social programme which was provided by the host committee:	
14.	Please give your overall impression of your IAESTE experience and include any suggestions on how the programme could be improved, either in Ireland or your receiving country:	
15.	Would you recommend this offer for next year's exchange?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
16.	Would you be interested in helping to develop IAESTE Ireland at university level (e.g. assisting in promotion, reception of foreign trainees etc.)?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

Date:	Signature:
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Thank you for your contribution!