

The FL Approach to Language Learning

Communication: Our approach to English language teaching is to focus on the realisation of real-world oral and written communication tasks. The teacher's role is to support the students as they work to complete these tasks by helping them to bridge the gaps in their language knowledge and provide formative group and individual feedback on their work in progress.

Collaboration: In addition to developing students' communication skills, the project-based aspect of all our courses helps students to learn effective collaboration. They work together over a number of days to discover things about the topic, solve problems and complete the various tasks involved in the creation of a final digital product. The teacher facilitates this by breaking the project into manageable steps and helping them to take individual and collective responsibility for achieving each day's goal.

Technology: The third element of our approach is the use of technological tools whenever they can be of benefit. They are used as a source of world and language knowledge as well as a platform for the creation and publication of their project work. By making use of the everyday devices and applications that our students already have access to, we place our courses in their world and boost student engagement and motivation.

Using Digital Creation & Publication

On all our courses students work on a digital product in which they describe their experience in Ireland in English and what they have learned while here. Using digital tools will include looking things up, checking ideas, and finding visual material, but it is primarily about students creating something for themselves that they can publish and share with parents and teachers back home. Digital products include:

- Presentation slides (research & explain)
- Blogs & Websites (write & design)
- Videos (record & edit)
- Interactive maps (locate & describe)

It is very important to us that students feel that they have travelled to encounter a different culture and all our projects are about the students engaging with the local life and culture and learning new skills. We offer a real-life alternative to the typical language learning exercises that they could just as easily do at home. Where the students' level is sufficient, the videos can include interviews with host families and local people.

| COMPARISON | Summer Courses | Mini-Stay Courses |
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| Duration | 2 - 4 Weeks, 15 hours of lessons + 10 hours CLIL activities per wk | 3 - 5 Days, 3 - 4 hours per day + choice of optional activities |
| Group Project | The culmination of each two-week session. | The main focus of the course. |
| Individual Blog or Portfolio | One 90-minute session each day is devoted to each student developing and getting feedback on an individual blog or portfolio. | - |
| Activity Linking | The other 90-minute session each day is devoted to preparing the class to understand and describe their afternoon activities in English. | Is an option where groups opt for organised activities that complete the project theme. |
| Content Integration | Content integration on our activity programme where students experience a range of subjects through English, including Art, Science, Cooking and Music. | - |
| Mixing | Mixed groups in all our main centres | Only if integration is requested. |
| Integration with Irish students | - | Available during the academic year (September to December & February to May except holidays). |
| Pre-course tasks / texting | - | This can be provided where the group's leaders liaise directly with our academic staff on it. |
| Certification | Criteria based certification of communication, collaboration and technological skills. | Project participation and completion certificate. |

What is the difference with an integration programme?

Integration with Irish students is part of every day's lessons on these programmes. Once they get to know each other project groups are organised with one Irish and 2 foreign students in each. Irish students serve as a primary source of information, which is then confirmed with internet research. Groups who work with an English speaker get greater and more authentic exposure to the language and have a greater motivation to extend their own use of it. Students get the most out of integration programmes at B1 level and above.