
The Value of International Field Based Learning in Developing Entrepreneurial Characteristics in Undergraduate Students

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About Ireland

- 5 million people
- Capital city – Dublin
- Very popular with international tourists
- Mountainous country with very green image
- Very beautiful scenery





The Northern Lights Viewed from Ireland





The Golden Eagle

Dolphins and basking sharks

Porpoise, Bottlenose Dolphin, Minke whale
and Risso's Dolphin



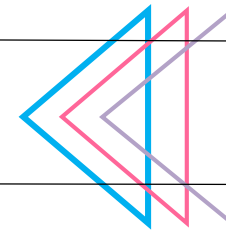


Game of Thrones, filmed in Northern Ireland



Star Wars Film Location, Co. Kerry

Technology Multinationals



ORACLE

PayPal



CREATIVE



accenture
High performance. Delivered.



LinkedIn



salesforce.com



Tourism and Hospitality in Ireland

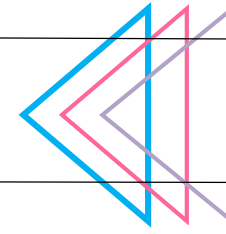


- 2018 was the best year on record for Irish tourism;
- 11 million visitors to Ireland in 2018 (double Ireland's population);
- Record spending – worth about €8billion to the Irish economy;
- Approx 250 working in tourism in Ireland, about 10% of the working population;
- 2016 – best hotel in the world (Ballyfin Demense);
- 2015 (Guinness), 2016 (Titanic) 2017 (Spike Island), 2019 EPIC – attraction awards;
- New Michelin star restaurants (18)



Context

Higher Education in Ireland



200,000 students in Higher Education

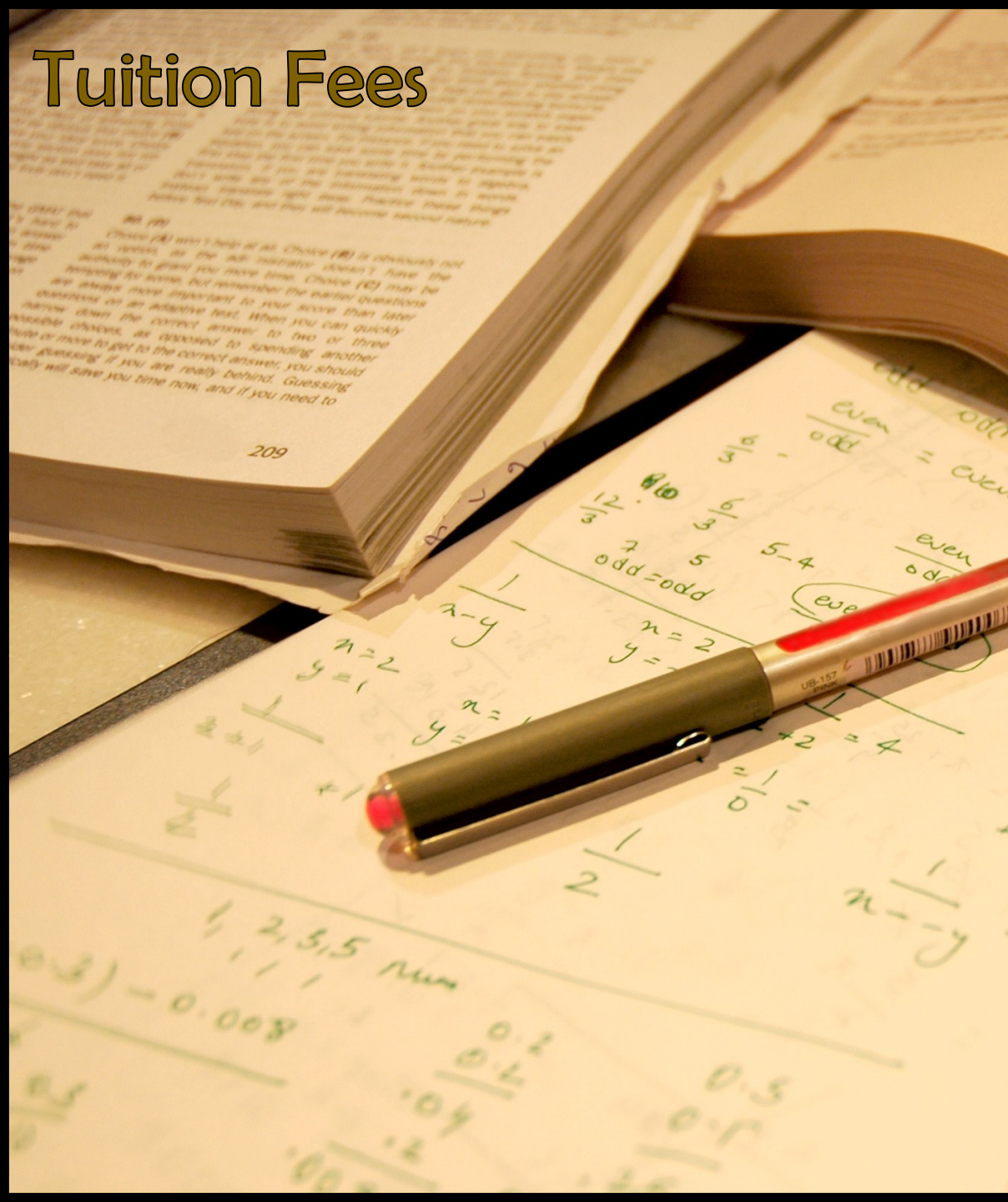
160,000 full-time

26,000 International Students

65% of second level students go on to Third level

Highest % in EU of 25-34 year olds with third level qualifications
High Participation due to value for money

Tuition Fees



Tuition Fees

- Undergraduate
- Fee €6,500
 - Irish Government pays €3,400
 - Students pay €3,100 – EU same as Irish

Approx 60% pay nothing and in addition receive grant of €2,500 per year

Many from low income background

Mobility Challenge

1. Increase outbound student mobility (in all forms)
2. Increase student engagement
3. Develop entrepreneurial characteristics among students

Convert this to this...



These to those...



And that to that...



Structure



Research Aims



Research Design



Reflective Practice



Key data to emerge

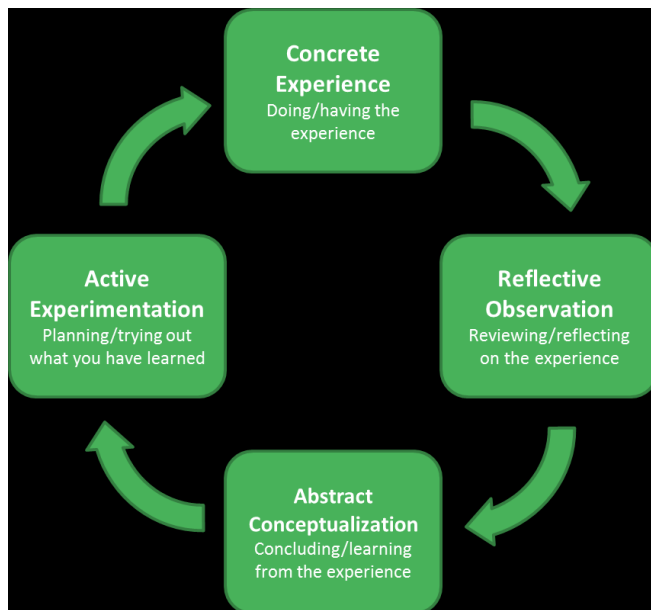
Research Aims

To explore the development of entrepreneurial attributes among students participating in international field based learning;

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Methodological approach



- This research is drawn from reflective practice
- Involves exploring one's actions to see where improvements can be made to outcomes;
- Process of continuous learning;
- Kolb's model is useful to reflect on the development of entrepreneurial attributes in students;
- Developing entrepreneurial attributes in non-business graduates

Experience with leading and teaching on international fieldtrips		
Year	Location	Student numbers (approx.)
2004	Beijing (from NUI Galway)	48
2008	Shanghai (from NUI Galway)	30
2010	Sarajevo (from NUI Galway)	15
2011	Sarajevo (from UHI, Scotland)	15
2011	Kerala (from King's College London)	45
2014	Donegal, Ireland (from University of Derby)	40

Reflective practice

Trip information

- Trips are not credited or formally examined, however preparatory and reflective work is expected
- Students self fund trips (short haul approx. €400, long haul €1,200)
- Trips are generally open to all students in the department
- Attendance, engagement, motivation used to select if over subscribed



AIT Department of
Hospitality, Tourism
and Leisure

Short residential
international
fieldtrips
Key data 2016-2019

City	Numbers	Average age	Age STDEV	Age Range
Buxton	6			
San Sebastian	4			
Barcelona	6			
Parma (2017)	7			
Parma (2018)	4			
Dubai 2019	30	24.4	8.75	19 - 50
Shanghai 2018	22	24.8	8.95	19 - 55
Dubai 2017	24	22.8	7.15	19 - 53
Paris 2016	18	26.8	10.81	19 - 42
Beijing 2016	30	29.3	11.31	19 - 60
Total	150			

Planning and fundraising

- Not a pre-requisite to participation but frequently emerges organically
- Fundraising has included pastry and themed cake sales (in excess of €10,000 raised)
- Event hosting, including meal experiences in hospitality training restaurants, therapies, tours, etc

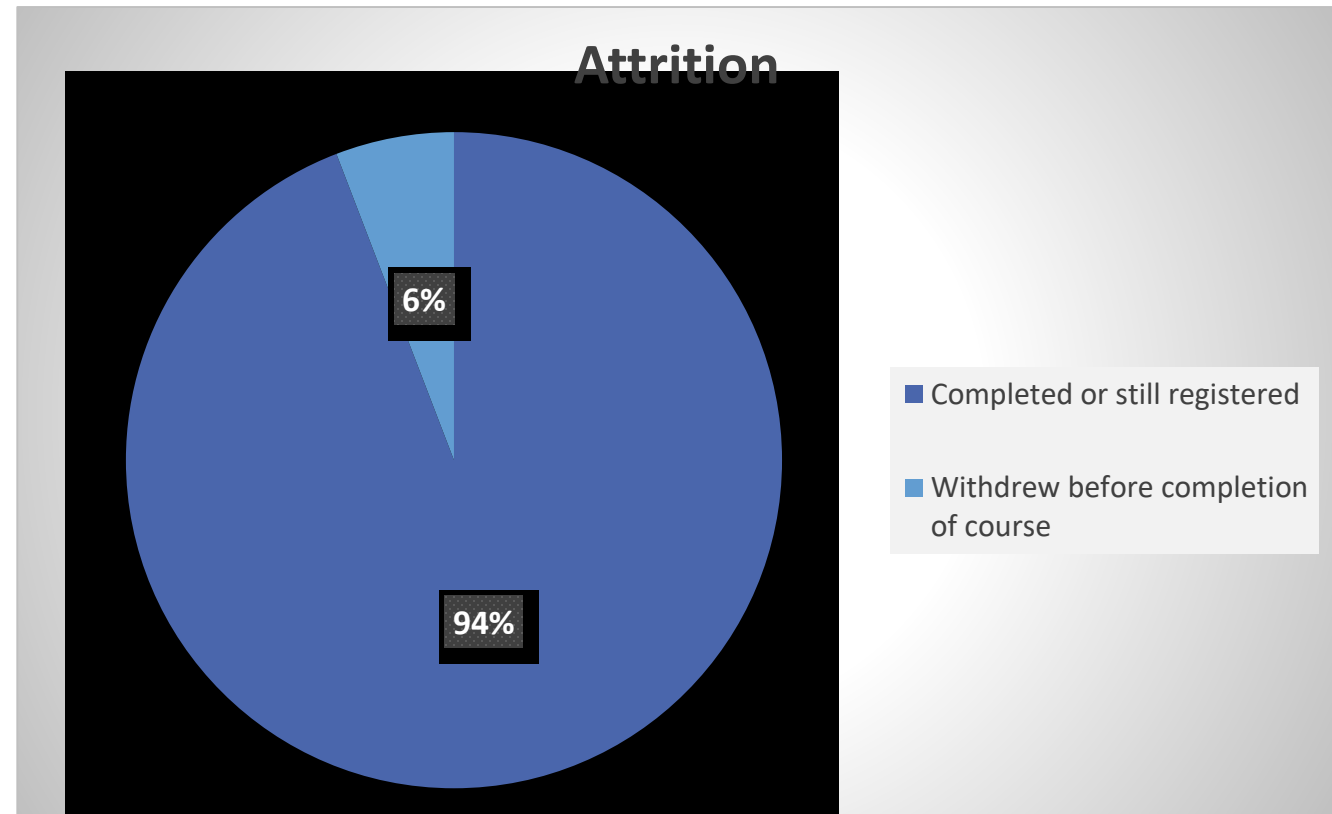




Retention value of field based learning

National attrition rate in IOT sector is approximately 25%;

While fieldtrips attract more engaged students, these experiences have also helped develop others in terms of maturity, confidence and subject knowledge;





Development of entrepreneurial attributes

- Market knowledge
 - Requirement that research skills are developed - possibility to use VR to introduce locations
- Product knowledge
 - The role of data in travel, security systems, visas, hospitality management systems, etc
- Passion and motivation
 - Engagement developed through knowledge transfer and cultural exchange

Development of entrepreneurial attributes

- Self belief
 - Ability to interact with wide range of ages and nationalities – technology can assist with this
- Organisational and management competences
 - Fundraising, free days, preparatory project work
- Development of networking skills
 - Meeting other students, international educators, business people and policy makers, requirement to have online profile, recognition that business is done between people

Development of entrepreneurial attributes

- Resilience building
 - Sharing rooms, travel, course expectations
- Technological interaction
 - Learning latest technologies – airports, hotels, hospitality systems, satisfaction surveys, VR in attractions, follow up online contacts with networks developed
- Confidence to take risks
 - For several students it is their first time abroad
- Strong money management
 - Self-funded trips with fundraising opportunities

Student feedback

‘The experience of a lifetime is a much overused phrase; however I struggle to find a phrase to better encapsulate our extraordinary trip. I would advise any student, if they get a chance to go on one of these organised trips.’

Dubai student, 2017

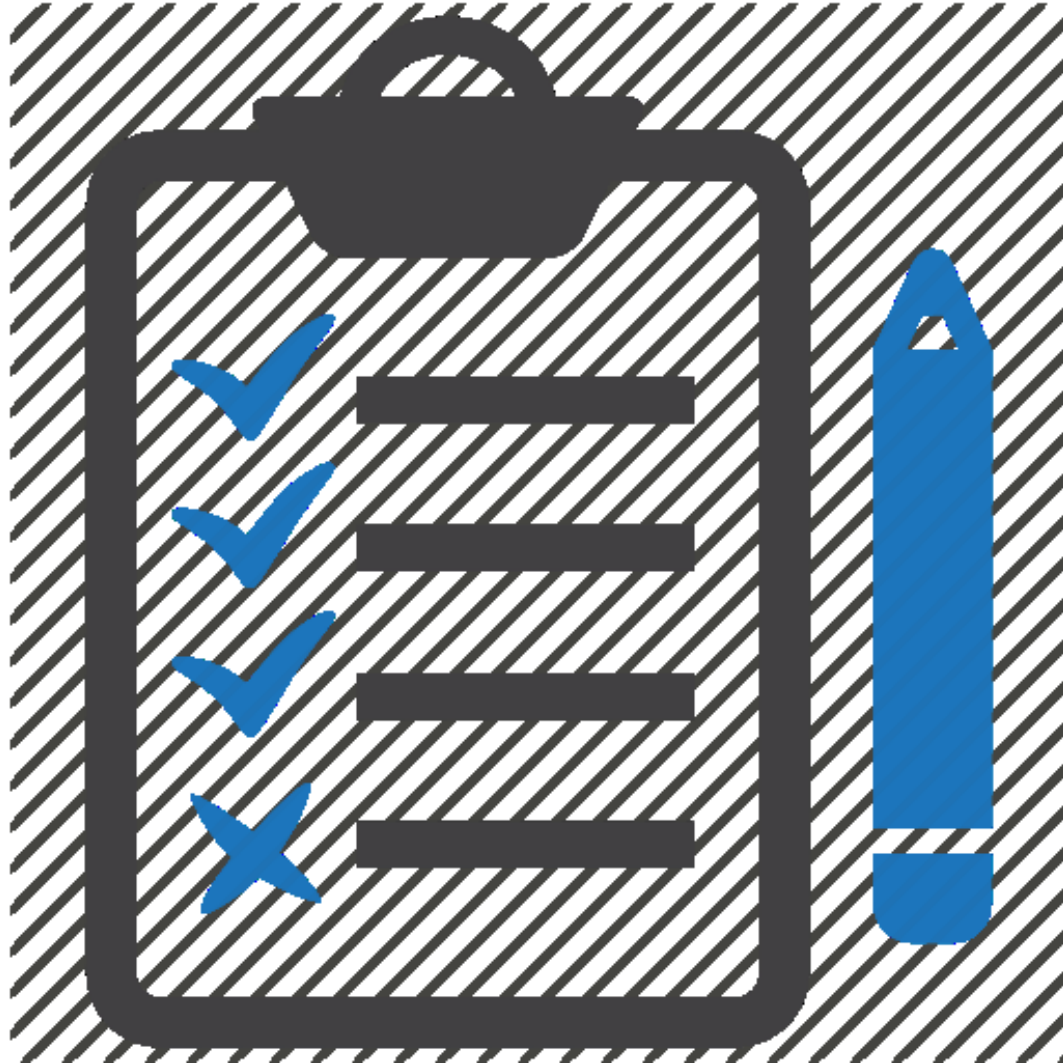
‘Going to Shanghai with the college was one of the best decisions I have made so far. I never thought I would enjoy going to a country that is so different from our culture, but it was such an amazing experience.’

Shanghai student 2018



Q1 of 5

Why does your school run international field-based learning (or why not?) and how do you encourage participation?



Q2 of 5
Preparation &
Assessment – what
tasks should be
conducted to prepare
students for an
unfamiliar setting?



Q3 of 5

Location/ Setting – how do you choose settings for international fieldtrips and why are they chosen?

*(e.g. rural/ urban/
developed/ developing/
university hosted etc)*



Q4 of 5

How do you coordinate the volume of operational details to make the trip effective?

(e.g. staff and student numbers, length of time, costs, payments, etc)



Q5 of 5 How do you assess the impact of international learning?

Summary & Implications

- Key retention benefits as students become more engaged;
- Clear development of entrepreneurial attributes;
- Useful promotional and retention value to field based learning;
- Suggest the incorporation of international field based learning short residential trips;
- Resist over-emphasis on technology – e.g. VR to *supplement* but not to *replace*





Thank you
for listening.
Any final
thoughts?