

# **Waterford Academy of Education**

## **Teachers' Handbook**

### **Junior Programmes**

**June 2010**

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## Section 1: Information about Waterford Academy, Campus Services at WIT and Contact Details

### 1.1 Waterford Academy of Education

Waterford Academy of Education is a private institution located in the city of Waterford in the South East of Ireland. Its mission is to provide high quality, affordable educational opportunities for learners from overseas. The two owners/directors, between them, have over eighty years experience in Irish education at both secondary and third level. They are dedicated to the provision of an excellent teaching and learning environment and cultural experience for all learners.

The Directors believe that supporting a team of the best teachers available is their key to excellence and they will endeavour to do this at all times.

The Academy has strong links to a wide range of state and private Universities, Institutes and Schools all over the Island of Ireland and in Europe, Americas, the Middle East and Asia.

### 1.2 Campus Services at WIT

Campus Services at WIT is a Company established by the Institute to manage student services. These include accommodation, restaurants, coaches, secretarial services sport and recreational facilities.

WAE is contracted by Campus Services at WIT to provide the English Language programme for students attending their Hello Ireland programme.

### 1.3 Roles

Because there are two groups involved in this programme, each with different responsibilities, it is important that the student experience is unified and seamless. To assure this, the two groups form a Hello Ireland Management group that liaises closely with the agents, the group leaders, the teachers, the other support service deliverers and the students.

The roles undertaken by Campus Services include:-

- Programme promotion;
- Student recruitment;
- Student enrolment;
- Accommodation at Manor Village and food;
- Transportation;
- Recreational and cultural programme;

- Classroom provision in WIT College Street Campus.

The roles undertaken by Waterford Academy of Education include:-

- Student induction (academic);
- Teacher recruitment and administration;
- Programme design and delivery;
- Quality assurance;
- Assessment and evaluation;
- Certification.

As a teacher on the programme you will be given details of the recreational and cultural programme organized by Campus Services and you will be asked to integrate this into the teaching. The main medium for this integration is the blogs kept by the students (see later).

#### 1.4 Contact Details

If you have any difficulty or questions, feel free to contact one of the following.

Name	Mobile Number	Email
Dr Venie Martin, Director (academic)		
Mr Ken McCormick (Director (HR and Finance)		
Ms Peggy McHale (General Administration)		
Mr Padraig Fanning (Manager Campus Services at WIT)		
Group Leaders		

## Section 2: Student arrival and Induction

This section deals only with the induction to the academic programme provided by Waterford Academy of Education.

Prior to this the students will have been briefed by their agent and will have studied the web site [www.helloireland.ie](http://www.helloireland.ie) and the programme brochures. Some of them will have contacted Campus Services about particular practical concerns.

The students are met by a WIT Coach at the airport and are transported to Waterford one or two days before classes commence. The initial welcome is provided by Campus Services at their accommodation, Manor Village. The details of the accommodation regulations, including safety, are given orally and in writing to the students. They are also given maps of the city and details of bus timetables. If time permits, they will be given a guided walk around the city and major landmarks will be pointed out to them.

### 2.1 WAE Welcome, introductions and orientation

This takes place on the first day of classes with the help of our teachers and group leaders. All the students assemble in a large auditorium. They are welcomed to the English programme and are introduced by the directors to the teachers and administrative staff. The programme ahead is outlined to them.

Then they sit for a one hour placement test. This test comprises a one hour multiple choice and structured question section which tests grammar and vocabulary. This is followed by a listening and comprehension test. While the written test is underway, each student meets a teacher for 5 minutes and their oral ability is estimated.

After their break, they are entertained to a lively illustrated introduction to the history of Waterford city by a local historian.

While they are enjoying this, the teachers mark the placement test. The administrator collates the results and places the students in groups, allocates teachers and rooms and prepares timetables.

### 2.2 Placement of Learners in Groups

Learners are placed in classes according to the following criteria:

- Level attained in the placement test;
- Maximum in each class is 15;
- Age Groupings.

Based on this they are divided into groups, not exceeding 15 students.

Since the Hello Ireland Programmes are not focused on examinations, the groups are not labelled Elementary, Intermediate etc. Instead WAE uses less judgemental names – normally flowers.

- Two teachers are allocated two groups;
- One teacher will take responsibility for the administration of one group and the other teacher will take the other;
- Teaching will alternate – if you have group A on day 1 you will have group B on day 2 etc;
- The two groups are brought together for Computer sessions and for films or other educational activities.

### 2.3 Class Start-up

The following morning, the students assemble together. The directors outline the rules, procedures and code of behaviour for students. Then they are given their student packs and timetables.

The student Pack includes

- A backpack;
- The Student Book of New Cutting Edge;
- A pad of paper;
- Pen;
- Copy of timetable;
- Copy of safety and other regulations;
- A plan of College Street Campus.

Students who feel they are in an inappropriate group can consult with their group leader. Their teacher will be consulted about their class performance at the end of day 1 and if the directors deem it appropriate the students can be moved. It is at the discretion of a teacher to recommend a change of level for a student. If any student is not satisfied, they have the opportunity to be re-tested.

Each teacher takes a group of students to their classroom. *En route* the teacher points out landmarks and places they need to know about such as the computing room, canteen, toilets, first aid room, library etc

At break time, the teacher brings all the students to the canteen area; after break he/she collects them there and brings them back to the classroom. By this time, the students should be familiar with the location of their classroom and other facilities they will use.

In the first class, the teacher will use some icebreakers to get started and will go over the school and classroom rules in detail. Insofar as possible, the teacher will negotiate and agree classroom rules with the students as an English learning exercise. Examples are given in the attached document entitled "Discipline in the EFL Classroom".

#### **2.4 The role of Group Leaders**

Group Leaders will have travelled with the students from their country of origin. They are involved in supervision and the pastoral care of the students. They also help us to communicate with the students in their first language when necessary and to address the student's questions and needs.

Group leaders may not enter classrooms unless this is agreed in advance with the teachers and directors of the academy.

Our agents and Group Leaders inform WIT Campus Services about any special needs (allergies, medical conditions, etc) of the students.

## Section 3: Learner Education

### 3.1 General approach

WAE promotes techniques of effective learning, stressing the importance of:

- Speaking English in the class room / school building and grounds with families and friends / on field trips;
- Active listening and speaking in the classroom;
- Use of on-line English learning resources and making blogs;
- Class speaking presentations.

### 3.2 Curriculum

- Each student is provided with a personal copy of the student's book of New Cutting Edge at a level deemed appropriate based on the placement test. This is the student's property and they are encouraged to write in it;
- The teacher is provided with the New Cutting Edge Student's book, Teachers' Book, Workbook and CD;
- The teacher bases the curriculum on this book, focusing on a different module each day;
- Each lesson must include one or more relevant grammar points and the following period may expand on these or concentrate on verbal communication;
- You are also required to provide some customized material each day relating to Irish culture and heritage;
- Classes are scheduled between 9am and 1pm, with a 30 minute break in the middle;
- Students are scheduled in a computing lab for 30-60 minutes each day. You can use this time for creating blogs based on the activity programme or you can use it for accessing on-line EFL resources with the students. A list of these is provided and you are encouraged to share "exciting discoveries" with fellow teachers.

### 3.3 Assessment and Evaluation of students

Teachers should give the students frequent on-going short class tests and feedback. This feedback will help you to adapt your delivery to the needs of the learners.

At the end of the programme the students sit for an exit test. In fact this is the same test as they sat for placement. This enables WAE to measure the improvement shown by the student during their stay in Ireland.

With regard to evaluation, teachers should encourage frequent informal feedback from students and group leaders by means of:

- Personal contact;
- Questionnaires;
- Focus groups;
- Classroom observations.

The information received will be used to amend and improve our programme (see Quality Assurance section)

A formal Evaluation Survey is undertaken on the last morning of the programme. Results are collated and reviewed by the directors. A copy of this report is sent to teachers and submitted to Campus Services and to the Agent.

### **3.4 Certification, Awards and Prizes**

At the end of the programme each student is given a Certificate of Attendance.

They are also given a Certificate of Improvement which states the number of marks difference between the placement test and the exit test.

In each student group, a prize is awarded for:-

- The student gaining the highest marks;
- The student showing the greatest improvement.

### **3.5 Best Teaching Practices**

WAE expects its teachers to conform to the standards set out below by:

- Designing and delivering lesson content that:
  - Reflects the aims, learning outcomes and syllabus of the curriculum;
  - Taps into and build upon the students' prior experience, knowledge and learning;
- Building an effective and efficient classroom environment by:
  - Ensuring that the classroom is well organized, visibly inviting, and stimulating;
  - Facilitating and encouraging high academic and behavioral expectations for every student in the classroom;
  - Ensuring that all students have opportunities to acquire an understanding and awareness of the classroom expectations;
  - Ensuring that the students remain fully attentive to and engaged in the lesson;
  - Treating all students in fair and equitable ways;

- Ensuring that all students demonstrate a respectful inquisitiveness toward other cultures and customs;
- Using the full instruction time available;
- Using teaching methodologies that:
  - Differentiate instruction to meet varied student needs, in particular by engaging them in “hands-on, minds-on” learning activities;
  - Enable students to interact positively with the teacher and other students, working collaboratively and cooperatively to solve problems and answer questions;
  - Encourage students to help each other learn;
  - Allow students to interact with a variety of culturally diverse resources;
  - Pace the content delivery appropriately;
  - Encourage students to use time, space, and materials efficiently;
- Ensuring that student assessment is effective and developmental by:
  - Using assessment methodologies that are ongoing and varied;
  - Encouraging students to demonstrate an understanding of how the content connects to their individual experiences;
  - Communicating to all students their progress;
  - Displaying student work and checking that it adheres to high standards unless identified as “work in progress.”
  - Encouraging students to communicate, demonstrate, and/or collaborate with teachers, peers and group leaders about the learning that has occurred.
  - Allowing students time to reflect upon and share their prior experience.
  - The teacher should re-teach when necessary.
- The teacher should keep accurate and tangible documentation of all students' learning.

## Section 4: Teachers Code of Conduct, Regulations and Duties

### 4.1 Teacher Induction

All teachers are required to attend a half day induction programme, the week before the programme commences.

The material in this handbook will be clarified.

The Teachers' kit bag will be distributed.

There will be a discussion about all aspects of the programme

### 4.2 Teachers Code of Conduct

A positive and professional attitude should be adopted at all times.

Appearance and dress should be neat and smart – not street casual.

Teachers are expected to be punctual for class and be ready to start on time for students. Teachers should be in class a couple of minutes before students in order to prepare materials and set up the first lesson. Students are also expected to be on time! If you experience persistent problems regarding punctuality with particular students please discuss with the directors.

Teachers are not permitted to leave the classroom during class hours – unless in an absolute emergency. Under no circumstances should photocopying be done during teaching periods.

Socialising with students after hours should be avoided, unless the occasion is part of our activity schedule.

Class rules should be agreed with students and be in agreement with school policy. Students should be encouraged at all times to speak English in class and their mobile phones should be switched off or confiscated if used and returned at the end of class.

Teachers must be aware of the safety of students and to exercise common sense and good judgment at all times. Any problems or accidents must be reported to a senior member of staff immediately and a written report submitted by the following morning to the ACO.

There are emergency plan instructions and routes in each class for fire drills. Please take time to review these details. There will be a practice fire drill.

### 4.3 Teachers Administrative duties

Teachers need to supply copies of their University Degree and TEFL certificate for our government accreditation inspectors.

You need to complete and submit the following documents:-

- A signed copy of your teaching contract;
- A Payroll set-up form.

A neat and accurate record is to be kept of students' attendance, progress and homework assignments. This should be kept and made available for inspection at all times.

There is a lesson plan pro-forma for each teacher at each level they teach, these must be completed in advance and filed at the end of class each day.

Any questions about your salary or payment must be addressed to the administrator. Payment takes place every two weeks on specific dates.

At the end of the programme WAE requires completion of a teacher feedback form. This is designed to assess your experience with us and enable us to improve our support for teachers next year.

### 4.4 Classroom Management

Breaks will be supervised by group leaders, not teachers. Teachers will use breaks to informally discuss issues and ideas. A teachers' room, with refreshments, is provided.

An incident report must be completed if anyone is injured.

Student discipline. If a student behaves inappropriately in class, this should be reported to the administrator at the next possible opportunity. The WAE student disciplinary policy (copy attached) will be invoked and appropriate penalties applied.

Teachers may be required to monitor occasional detentions whereby the student loses their afternoon activity or excursion privileges.

At the end of class please ensure desks replaced in the arrangement for next day, windows are closed and turn off all lights before leaving the classroom each day.

There is a strict no-smoking policy within WIT. A covered smoking area is provided outside at the back of the restaurant.

If you feel a student in your class is at the wrong level, please advise the academic director. The director may wish to discuss the level change with the student's group leader.

#### 4.5 Quality Assurance

Teachers work in pairs – each teaching two groups of students alternately. Each pair will agree a teaching plan for the week ahead.

Then each teacher prepares brief class outlines for each morning. These must be available to the directors at any time.

Teachers will have a half hour break together each morning. This time will be used to informally discuss issues, successes and concerns about classes and students.

There will also be a weekly lunch and meeting every Friday at 1:30 pm where teachers are encouraged to discuss the progress of their classes and individual students with their colleagues and exchange ideas. We want to encourage a creative and supportive process; thus, a weekly worksheet will be given to teachers to write down their thoughts on things like best lesson, most difficult vocabulary explanation, most effective teaching moment of the week, most effective new idea or method used, etc. This is also a time where teacher's input about the running of the course in general can be gathered. We will be actively seeking input from teachers about possible improvements.

Teachers can expect to have at least one observation over the course of the summer. It is our policy for the academic director to observe each teacher. We may also receive an inspection from ACELS during the summer course, during which your class may again be inspected

Students are asked during and at the end of their course about their satisfaction with all aspects of their course. We invite and encourage you to get informal feedback from students about the tuition you are providing.

At the end of the programme each teacher completes a programme evaluation form. This is used by the directors to identify areas where we could provide better support for teachers and learners.

#### 4.6 Teaching resources and materials

Each teacher is provided with a kit bag containing:-

- A copy of this handbook;
- Copies of the Students' Book, Teachers' Book, Workbook and CD for every level of class he/she will be teaching;
- Whiteboard markers;
- A supply of project paper and markers;

- Flip chart paper;
- A WIT Card to access WIT resources and facilities;
- Some pens;
- A packet of post-its;
- Scissors;
- Blu-Tack and Sellotape;
- A pack of Administrative Forms (hard copy and on a CD).
- A WIT card for ID and for accessing Library, photocopying and certain rooms.

All classrooms in WIT have a whiteboard, an overhead projector, a computer and data projector.

WAE Teachers may access WIT Library on both the College Street and Main Campuses. There is a good section of books and tapes on EFL teaching.

WAE also has a small library for teachers. A list of resources can be provided on request and the Directors will bring you the item for your use in preparing classes.

There are several photocopiers in WIT College Street Campus. They are operated by WIT card and each teacher has a photocopying allowance on the card.

Copyright rules are displayed beside each copier and we ask you to observe them.

Please keep photocopying to a minimum. Consider alternative sources of material such as items you can find in the Tourist Office and in shops.

All photocopying should be done in the afternoon before classes. Only in an emergency should photocopying be done in the morning and at break times.

If possible please do two-sided photocopying.

Computing: Your class, along with the partner class, will be scheduled in a computer lab for one hour per day. You and your partner teacher will plan this time carefully and supervise together. This time must be used for genuine language learning activities such as blogs and in-line language practice.

## Section 5: Staff Employment and Contractual Matters

### Staff qualifications, recruitment and selection

The basic qualifications required for EFL teaching is a Level 7 degree plus a recognised TEFL qualification. This should involve at least 120 hours intensive study and include teaching practice.

Experience of teaching Junior programmes is highly desirable.

### Staff Contracts

Each staff member is given a written contract. A copy is given in the Appendix.

### Staff payment procedure

It is your responsibility to send a copy of your tax form to Caroline Bannon at Breens Accountants, Maritana Gate.

Records of attendance also serve as your payment claim. Please keep accurate records of attendance and classes taught and submit these to the Administrator every Friday. Failure to do this may delay your payment.

Payroll is prepared by Breen's Accountants.

Your tax will be deducted at source.

An allowance of 8% is added in lieu of holiday pay.

### Staff feedback.

Waterford Academy relies on feedback from its teachers and students to implement improvements. At the end of the programme you are teaching, we will send you a Feedback Form and will welcome your comments and suggestions.

### Staff Development.

If there are any new methods or activities in the Junior Programmes, training will be provided.

As part of Induction, there is a training session on the use of Blogs in English teaching.

## Section 6: WAE Policies

### 6.1 Health and Safety

The WAE Safety statement and policy is provided in full. The most relevant parts will be discussed during induction, but you should read it all carefully and refer to it for procedures should accidents occur.

### 6.2 Respect and Dignity and Equality

The WAE Respect and Dignity at Work policy is also provided. The most relevant parts will be discussed during induction, but you should read it all carefully and refer to it for procedures should incidents occur or concerns arise.

### 6.3 Bullying and Harassment Policy

The WAE Bullying and Harassment policy is also provided. The most relevant parts will be discussed during induction, but you should read it all carefully and refer to it for procedures should incidents occur or concerns arise.

### 6.4 Grievance and Disputes.

If you have a grievance in respect of any aspect of your employment, you should raise the matter informally with either Dr Venie Martin or Mr Ken McCormick.

If you are not satisfied with the resolution proposed, the directors will consult an HR Expert, nominated by IBEC and agreed with you, with a view to setting up a mediation process.

If there are any concerns about your performance, the matter will be addressed with you by Dr Martin and Mr Ken McCormick. You will be informed clearly about the concerns and given an opportunity to explain your position. A plan will be agreed to address the concerns. If there is no improvement, you may be asked to leave.

There will be no notice required in the case of any serious breach of the law or of Institute codes.

### 6.5 Student Discipline.

The WAE Student Disciplinary Guidelines are provided in full. This small document is made up of helpful advice obtained from web sites and experience. Each teacher is expected to be able to manage most minor disciplinary matters, with a light touch, but in cases where the student's behaviour threatens the welfare of others or disrupts the teaching and learning for everyone, the student should be referred to the WAE management.

Attendance is mandatory for Junior Programmes and any absences should be reported to the Administrator as soon as possible so that the cause can be investigated and action taken.

## 6.6 Data Protection.

All employees of WAE have certain key responsibilities in relation to the information which you keep on computer or in a structured manual file about individuals. These may be summarised in terms of eight “Rules” which you must follow, and which are listed below.

You must :-

- Obtain and process the information fairly;
- Keep it only for one or more specified lawful purposes;
- Process it only in ways compatible with the purposes for which it was given to you initially;
- Keep it safe and secure;
- Keep it accurate and up-to-date;
- Ensure that it is adequate, relevant and not excessive;
- Retain it no longer than is necessary for the specified purpose;
- Give a copy of his/her personal data to any individual, on request.

WAE adds that, in general, teachers should not give personal or academic information about students to a third party unless there is a medical or legal cause. If in doubt, consult the directors.

## 6.7 Computer Usage Policy

Since Hello Ireland is hosted by WIT and uses WIT Computer facilities, all users must comply with the WIT Computer Users' Policy. A copy of this is provided.