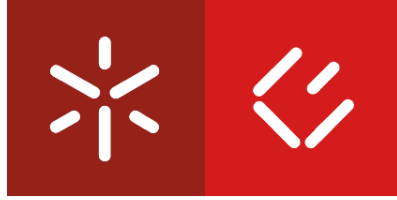




Universidade do Minho
Escola de Economia e Gestão

Ludovica Piccinini

**Managing International Interns in the
Context of an Intermediary Organisation
– a Case Study**



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Projeto de Mestrado
Mestrado em Gestão de Recursos Humanos

Trabalho efetuado sob a orientação da
**Professora Doutora Carolina Feliciano Sá
Cunha Machado**

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A mia nonna.

RESUMO: A gestão dos Estagiários Internacionais no Contexto das Organizações Intermediárias – Estudo de Caso

Na situação económica atual, o assunto dos estágios e da mobilidade é extremamente pertinente e crítico: hoje em dia, uma alta percentagem de jovens participa em programas de estágios curriculares ou não curriculares, assim como em períodos de aprendizagens ligados a cursos do ensino vocacional.

A maioria dos estágios são financiados por fundos públicos e não diretamente pelas empresas de acolhimento: por exemplo, a nível comunitário a Comissão Europeia promove desde 2014 estágios *Traineeship* ao abrigo do programa Erasmus+.

Estágios e aprendizagens são uma maneira para os jovens entrarem no mercado de trabalho e melhorarem o seu *CV*, e podem ser oportunidades para obterem uma experiência internacional e aperfeiçoar o conhecimento de uma língua estrangeira

Não obstante estas claras tendências, a literatura da GRH ainda não oferece muitos estudos na área e, ao mesmo tempo, a legislação nacional e europeia até agora não conseguiu tratar da matéria de forma satisfatória.

É neste contexto que se desenvolve o presente Projeto, a atenção do qual é dirigida aos estagiários internacionais, os quais encontram uma série de problemáticas específicas, como o choque cultural, a barreira linguística e a vida longe da família e do País de origem, entre outros.

A organização objeto de estudo foi a Intern Europe Ltd, uma *intermediary placement organisation* que ajuda jovens estrangeiros a encontrar estágios e aprendizagens em organizações locais e os acompanha ao longo da experiência.

O trabalho conjuga uma revisão da literatura da área, o estudo observacional da organização de acolhimento, e uma parte prática, que consta da criação e implementação de novas técnicas e ferramentas de suporte a estagiários internacionais.

A questão de pesquisa que orienta este estágio foi: como melhorar a preparação, gestão e o suporte aos estagiários e aprendizes em contexto de mobilidade internacional, no âmbito de uma organização intermediária?

Palavras chave: GRH, estágios, aprendizagens, mobilidade internacional

ABSTRACT: Managing International Interns in the Context of an Intermediary Organisation – a Case Study

In the current economic situation, that of interns and internships is a pertinent and critical issue worldwide: today, a high percentage of young people take part in compulsory and non-compulsory internship programmes, as well as in apprenticeship programmes linked to specific VET courses.

The majority of such internships and apprenticeships are financed through public funding and not directly by the host companies involved: for example, the European Commission has been promoting Erasmus+ Traineeship placements since 2014.

Internships and apprenticeships allow young people to access the labour market and improve their CVs at a time of high youth unemployment rates, and can also be an opportunity to make an international experience and improve their language skills.

Despite such clear national and international trends in the area, there aren't many related studies in the field of HRM, and both the national and European law has yet to deal with the issue in a satisfactory manner: there is still a need for better quality criteria and monitoring and auditing practices.

It is from this need that the present Project was born, with an additional focus on international interns, who during their placement experience encounter very specific challenges, such as culture shock, language barriers, and life away from their families and native countries.

The organisation at the centre of the study was Intern Europe Ltd, an intermediary placement organisation which helps foreign students find a work placement in local companies and then supports them during the whole experience.

The research question orienting the present project work is: how is it possible for an intermediary organisation to improve the preparation and management of, and support to, foreign interns and apprentices who are involved in an international mobility placement programme?

Keywords: HRM, internships, apprenticeships, international mobility

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ABBREVIATIONS

A&E – Accidents & Emergencies

ACAS - Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service

CEFRL - Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

CELTA - Certificate of English Language Teaching to Adults

CEO – Chief Executive Officer

CIRO – Context, Inputs, Results, Outputs

CRM – Customer Relations Management

CSR - Corporate Social Responsibility

CSW – Culture Shock Workshop

CV – Curriculum Vitae

EACEA – Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency

EC – European Commission

ECTS - European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System

ECVET - European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training

EHIC – European Health Insurance Card

ENQA - European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education

EPALE – Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe

EQAR - European Quality Assurance Register

EQAVET - European Quality Assurance Reference Framework

EQCIA – European Quality Chapter for Internships and Apprenticeships

EQF - European Qualifications Framework

ESPA UK – European Student Placement Agency UK

ETUC – European Trade Union Confederation

EU – European Union

HC – Host Company

HRM – Human Resources Management

IEFP - Instituto do Emprego e Formação Profissional

ILO – International Labour Organisation

KA – Key Action

LCC – Language Crash Course

LRA – Labour Relations Agency

LT(S) – Language Tutoring Sessions

MOB G.A.E. - MOBility as a source of personal and professional Growth, Autonomy and Employability

N/A – not applicable

NACE – National Association of Colleges and Employers

NARIC – National Recognition Information Centre

NGO – Non-governmental Organisation

OLS – Online Linguistic Support

PLACET - Supporting PLAcement Companies in European Training

SEG – School Education Gateway

SME – Small or Medium Enterprise

SWOT Analysis – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats Analysis

UK – United Kingdom

US – United States

VET – Vocational Education and Training

1. INTRODUCTION

The following final project work was developed within the Master's Degree in Human Resources Management offered by the School of Economics and Management of the University of Minho. It is the result of the independent project work carried out by the author during the academic year 2016/2017, as part of her internship at Intern Europe Ltd.

The project focuses on the issues related with managing and supporting international interns in the context of an intermediary placement organisation: the topic was chosen based on the personal interest of the author as well as the needs of the host organization, but also because it is a still relatively unexplored field of human resources management (HRM), both at a national and international level.

The first chapter explores at first the external context of the project, giving an overview of the interaction between youth unemployment and mobility in the European Union, with particular attention given to the Erasmus+ Mobility Programme, implemented by the EU Commission between 2014 and 2020.

The second half of the chapter focuses on the company object of the case study instead: Intern Europe Ltd is presented and analysed in both its structure and processes, with the goal of identifying the issues to be tackled during the project and provide a clear backdrop to the rest of the work.

Building on this initial analysis, the second chapter presents the target issue of the project and lays out the "action plan" followed by the author, which will later be better explained in the "Methodology" section.

Thirdly, a literature review is presented, organised into four subsections, one being an overview of the definitions of core concepts such as "work" and "worker" – amongst others; another focusing on the definition and legislation related to internships and apprenticeships both worldwide and at a EU level; a third referencing relevant studies in the field of culture shock and socialisation management; and a last subsection dedicated to the academic materials revolving around evaluation methods and methodologies.

Following the literature review, chapter four lays out the methodology followed by the author, the chosen paradigm and main research methods implemented during the project, as well as a general timeline.

The core of the work is presented in the fifth chapter, which is dedicated to the new measures and tools created, tested and implemented during the project, structured into three subsection defined based on the different stages and challenges of the Intern Support Process: that is, the preparation before the internship, the support to be given during the internship, and the support to integration and socialisation. The chapter also references an Intern Management Process Manual which is being compiled by the author for the company - although it is still a work in process, for reasons which are explained therein.

Finally, the last chapter is dedicated to presenting the conclusions reached by the author at the end of the 6-month project, including a brief evaluation of the success of the new measures, a recap of the internal and external challenges encountered, and suggestions for future avenues of development, research, and experimentation within the company as well as in similar contexts, especially in the light of the current political situation in the UK and Europe.

1.1 THE CONTEXT

Before beginning to lay down the work done during the Project, it is necessary to analyse the wider socio-economical context in which it was carried out – that is, to explore the concept of internship, its connection with geographical mobility, and the way these two issues are tackled at the EU level -, as well as introducing the company itself.

1.1.1 Internships, Youth Unemployment & Mobility

When analysing the current economic situation, it is clear that both internships and mobility are two extremely pertinent and critical issues: as an example, today, a high number of young Portuguese are involved in curricular and extracurricular internships while enrolled in higher education programmes, as well as in apprenticeships linked with their vocational course, both in Portugal and abroad.

Among the most well-known internships and mobility schemes, there are:

- In Portugal, the paid internships financed through the *Garantia Jovem* programme (Youth Guarantee) run by the IEFP – Instituto de Emprego e Formação Profissional (Institute for Employment and Vocational Training);
- The internships funded by the European Commission through the Erasmus+ scholarship scheme, which focuses on students coming from a higher education or vocational education background who are willing to relocate to another EU country for a work placement experience. Some of these internships fall under the “VET – vocational education and training” umbrella, and can be considered traineeships or apprenticeships (the language in this field is still unclear, an issue which will be discussed later).

Indeed, most internships and internships schemes available in Portugal and the EU are financed either through public funding, or through EU grants - not directly by the host company which benefit from hosting the interns and trainees; according to Portuguese newspaper *Público*, “in 2014 and 2015 Portugal spent more than 70,000,000€ per year in paid professional internships” (Pereira, 2016).

The aforementioned internships and apprenticeships are either integrated in a university degree or vocational course, or again be a personal choice of the individual. Regardless, they are a way to enter the labour market and improve one’s *curriculum vitae* (CV) at a time of economic crisis, when youth unemployment rates are high, as shown by the following infographic focusing on the situation in Portugal (*Jornal de Negócios* online, “O retrato do desemprego jovem em Portugal”, 2016):



Table 1. Unemployment in Portugal

“Unemployment: 14% of unemployed have at least an undergraduate degree. The phenomenon of youth unemployed gained momentum since the debt crisis, and affects Portuguese society transversally. Even so, women under 24 years old are more likely to be unemployed than men (39% vs. 36%). The majority of unemployed young people has completed their A-level, and 14% has a least an undergraduate degree. Almost half of them has been looking for a job for more than 12 months [...]”

The Portuguese unemployment rate is 12.6%, and according to the 2015 Eurostat statistical data similar or higher numbers can be observed in many other EU countries, such as Spain, Greece or Italy (respectively at 22.1%, 24.9% and 11.9%).

Apart from their role in increasing a person's employability, internships can also become opportunities to gain international experience and improve one's foreign language skills; it is with this goal in mind that the Erasmus+ scholarship programme allows university and vocational education students from any EU country to receive the funds necessary to be able to do an internship in another country within the Union and beyond (Erasmus+ programme Guide 2017).

The prominence that internships and other similar placement arrangements have recently gained worldwide is staggering; for example, according to a study by NACE (the US National Association of Colleges and Employers), in America as of 2015, more than 90% of the organizations offered a formal internship program, and 70% of employers used said programmes as a way to source new employees. According to the same study, approximately two-thirds of college students had participated in at least one internship, with students who completed an internship also being significantly more likely to receive at least one job offer.

However, not many resources have been invested in this field of HRM research yet, and the number of studies published on the topics is still relatively low. It is as if interns, trainees and apprentices weren't yet considered an important and influential element in the HR "system" of any company and, at a more macro level, country.

To give a recent example, the many investigative articles published this year on the topic of professional abuse of interns on the workplace are a clear sign of the need for better quality requirements and assessment and monitoring tools for internships, at a national and international level (Pereira, 2016; SIC Notícias, 2016; Diário de Notícias, 2016; Abril Abril, 2016).

For the purposes of the project, the author's attention was mainly directed towards the issues revolving around international interns, who happen to face a series of specific problems, such as culture shock, language barrier, adjusting to a life away from one's family and country of origin, and so on and so forth.

Additionally, the project was carried out within a peculiar context, namely that of an intermediary international placement organisation, which means that the interns observed during the project are not directly hosted by the company, but are instead helped by it to find an appropriate placement in the UK and then supported continually during the experience abroad.

In conclusion, the research question orienting the present project work is:

“How is it possible for an intermediary organisation to improve the preparation and management of, and support to, foreign interns, trainees and apprentices who are involved in an international mobility placement programme?”

1.1.2 The Erasmus+ Programme

Erasmus+ is a programme promoted by the European Union, which aims at supporting education, training, youth and sport in Europe, and was established on the 11th of December 2013 by Regulation (EU) No 1288/2013 of the EU Parliament and of the Council by repealing Decision 1719/2006/EC, 1720/2006/EC and 1298/2008/EC.

With an allocated budget of €14.7 billion, Erasmus+ was conceived with the goal to compile all the pre-existing funding sources and programmes in the fields of youth, sports, and education active between 2007 and 2013, namely, according to the Erasmus+ Programme Guide 2017:

- The Lifelong Learning Programme and its sub-programmes Jean Monnet, Comenius, Grundtvig, Erasmus and Leonardo;
- The Youth in Action Programme;
- The Erasmus Mundus Programme and the other international programmes, Tempus, Alfa, Edulink and the Programmes of cooperation with industrialised countries in the field of higher education.

Overall, 2/3 of budget will go towards providing learning opportunities abroad for individuals, while the remaining 1/3 is allocated to partnership-building projects and policy reform (Erasmus+ Factsheet, 2015), under the supervision of the budgetary Authority.

Between the Programme's launch in 2014 and its closing in 2020, over 4 million Europeans will have the chance to study, train, gain life and work experience, and volunteer in another

programme country, with a focus on tackling unemployment, social integration, and the participation of people with a fewer opportunities background – for example, as of 2015 1 out of every 3 youth mobility participants comes from a fewer opportunities background.

Erasmus+ includes a series of general objectives, like the recognition and validation of skills and qualification at a European level, thanks to:

- Tools - Europass, Youthpass, the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET), the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework (EQAVET), the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR), the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA);
- EU-wide networks - the National Academic Recognition Information Centre (NARIC), Euroguidance networks, the National Europass Centres and the EQF National Coordination Points.

Other objectives are the dissemination and exploitation of project results; open access to all documents, materials, and media developed through Erasmus+ projects; achievement of a strong international dimension; strengthening of multilingualism within the Union; equity and inclusion (The Erasmus+ Inclusion and Diversity Strategy in the Field of Youth, 2014a); protection and safety of participants

In order to achieve the aforementioned objectives, Erasmus+ is structured into 3 Key Actions and 2 additional sections, outlined in the Programme Guide, each of which is geared towards certain areas and types of projects:

1. *Key Action 1 (KA1) for the mobility of individuals* covers the mobility of learners and staff, Erasmus Mundus Joint Master's degree programmes, and Erasmus+ Master's loans;
2. *Key Action 2 (KA2) for the cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices*, covering strategic partnerships, Knowledge Alliances, Sector Skills Alliances, capacity-building projects and various platforms (eTwinning, SEG, EPALE, etc.);

3. *Key Action 3 (KA3) for the support to policy reform*, which covers knowledge in the fields of education, training and youth; initiatives for policy innovation; support to European policy tools; cooperation with international organisations; stakeholder dialogue, policy and Programme promotion.
4. *Jean Monnet activities*: Academic Modules, Chairs, Centres of Excellence; policy debate with academic world; support to associations.
5. *Sport*: collaborative partnerships, not-for-profit European sports events; strengthening of the evidence base for policymaking; dialogue with relevant European stakeholders.

As a whole, Erasmus+ is managed by the European Commission (the EU's executive body) and the Education, Audiovisual, and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA).

On the one hand, the Commission deals with managing the budget, setting priorities, identifying targets and criteria; monitoring and guiding Programme implementation; supervising the follow-up and evaluation process so that it is thorough and timely ("About", ec.europa.eu).

On the other, the EACEA is in charge of managing the "centralised" elements of the programme, including promoting it and all related funding and mobility opportunities, launching calls for proposals, reviewing grant requests, contracting and monitoring projects, and communicating on results through various online and offline channels ("About", ec.europa.eu).

Moreover, in each Programme country Erasmus+ is managed by a National Agency, which is tasked with providing information on and promoting the Erasmus+ Programme, selecting projects to be funded, dealing with the monitoring and evaluation process, supporting applicants and participants, working with other National Agencies and the EU, and sharing success stories and best practices.

However, Programme countries are not the only ones to benefit from Erasmus+: some non-EU countries are defined "Partner countries" and can take part in a limited range of activities financed by the programme, under specific conditions and requirements.

In some of the aforementioned Partner Countries the Programme is managed by a National Office with tasks similar to those of a National Agency (although reduced), but it is not always the case – those Partner Countries which do not have a related National Office usually have their grant requests analysed directly by the EACEA in Brussels

It is to be noted that it is not the country, per se, to apply for or use Erasmus+ funding: for example, individuals can take part in many of the opportunities funded by the Programme, either directly or through a registered organisation, school, public body, etc. (“About”, ec.europa.eu)

According to official data (Erasmus+ Factsheet, 2015), mobility-wise, individual grants are available for:

- Up to 2 million higher education students (including 450.000 trainees and Erasmus Mundus Joint Master’s degree participants) to study or train abroad;
- Up to 650.000 vocational training students and apprentices again to study or train abroad;
- Up to 600.000 young people willing to participate in an European Voluntary Service experience abroad;
- Up to 800.000 teachers, lecturers, trainers, education staff and youth workers to gain new skills abroad.

In terms of cooperation, official information (“Erasmus+: What’s in it for education, training, youth and sports?”, 2014b) suggests that more than 25.000 partnerships across 125.000 education, training and youth organisations and enterprises will benefit from Erasmus+ funding, including support to at least 300 large partnerships among education institutions and enterprises to tackle skills gaps and foster start-ups

Finally, Erasmus+ will also fund up to 1.200 transnational projects in the field of sports, including large-scale events and other types of cooperation and addressing issues such as match-fixing and doping.

1.2 OBJECT OF THE CASE STUDY: THE ORGANIZATION

Intern Europe Ltd was founded more than 15 years ago, in Belfast, Northern Ireland (UK), and as of 2016 employs 7 permanent staff members:

- 1 *CEO*, who is also in charge of managing Intern Europe’s sister company ESPA UK – European Student Placement Agency in Bath (UK);
- 1 *Project Manager*, in charge of managing day-to-day operations and liaising with international partners;

- 1 *HR Team* in charge of selecting and supporting programme participants. It includes 1 full-time HR team member and 1 intern;
- 1 *Placement Team*, in charge of dealing with potential host companies. It includes 2 full-time team members and 1 part-time collaborator;
- 1 *Accommodation Manager*, in charge of managing Intern Europe's own and rented housing;
- 1 *Marketing Manager*, in charge of communication.

Intern Europe is active in the field of international mobility and works in collaboration with partner organisations from all over Europe to bring to Belfast students, apprentices, graduates and young professionals for a work placement experience in a local company, usually under EU-funded mobility programmes such as Erasmus+.

In 2014, after the acquisition and rebranding of International Services Belfast, Intern Europe hosted and placed around 300 exchange participants coming from Austria, Germany, Spain, Italy, and Portugal; in 2015 the number grew to 360, and has kept on increasing ever since.

Programme participants aim not only at acquiring additional professional experience, but also at improving their English language skills and having the chance to live independently in a foreign country – often for the first time.

Potentially, placements may last between 2 weeks (for job shadowing experiences) and 12 months, but most last between 4 and 20 weeks.

The work placement programmes offered by Intern Europe are unpaid; however, as previously stated, most interns receive a scholarship through the Erasmus+ or other similar EU- and government-funded mobility schemes, which is enough to cover at least partially the cost of travel, food, lodging and transportation during the placement period.

Occasionally, Intern Europe also opens their placement services to candidates who find out about their programmes through independent research or after being redirected by sister company ESPA UK.

These participants may or may not receive some form of financial support, but since are not included in any placement agreement, they must pay a service fee, as well as cover their own transportation, food and lodging in Belfast.

However, this category being but a very small minority, individual participants were not the focus of the Project.

1.2.1 Host Companies

Intern Europe works with a network of around 700 potential host companies based in the greater Belfast area, across all sectors and industries, and is thusly able to provide a very wide breadth of placements; host companies benefit from the presence of an international intern, while on the other hand providing them with mentorship and training, which makes collaborating with Intern Europe very interesting for any company, especially in terms of CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility).

Even though detailed job descriptions are shared with participants before their arrival in Belfast, host companies are required to provide interns with a preparatory Induction Meeting on their first day, including information about working times, tasks, health and safety issues, dress codes, etc.

Regardless of their background, participants usually have a satisfactory level of theoretical knowledge and/or practical skills, thus being able to bring a new perspective and international dimension to the host company, despite the language and culture barrier: as a matter of fact, cases of interns being offered a salaried position are not infrequent.

Host companies must assign interns tasks that are commensurate to their competences and qualifications; even though they might have to perform some more basic tasks, these ought not to be prominent in their workload.

Finally, all work placements are closely monitored and evaluated through regular meetings, company visits, and assessment documents (which thing is a requirement of any EU-funded internship or traineeship), namely:

- Before the placement:

- Preparation of a detailed job spec and task list (filled in by the host company), to be included in the Potential and Final Placement documents.
- Mid-placement:
 - 1 company visit by the member of Intern Europe's Placements Team;
 - 1 work placement questionnaire (filled in by the intern during a mid-placement meeting).
- At the end of the placement:
 - 1 Trainee's Skills Assessment document (filled in by the intern's supervisor);
 - 1 Supervisor's Comments document (filled in by the intern's supervisor);
 - 1 Final Evaluation document (filled in by the intern during a final meeting).

1.2.2 International Partners

For the most part, Intern Europe works with sending or intermediary organisations operating in other countries of the EU; these are usually either the direct recipients of mobility grants or act on behalf of them (e.g. schools, non-profits...), selecting groups of participants for a work placement period in Northern Ireland.

The size of the groups, selection criteria, financial support offered, and length of the placement depend on various factors, such as the type and amount of funding received (if any).

1.2.3 Health & Safety

Intern Europe's international partners are in charge of arranging insurance for their participants, if needed, and the same criterion is applied to individual participants.

The process is usually fairly straightforward: participants are for the most part EU citizens, which means that they are covered by the European Health Insurance and own a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC).

The EHIC entitles the holder to receive medical treatment within the public healthcare system in any EU country at a reduced cost or free of charge: in fact, the European Commission website states that it is *"a free card that gives (...) access to medically necessary, state-provided*

healthcare during a temporary stay in any of the 28 EU countries, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland, under the same conditions and at the same cost (free in some countries) as people insured in that country." ("European Health Insurance Card", ec.europa.eu).

1.2.4 Additional Services

Aside from arranging the placements, Intern Europe also provide directly and indirectly a wide range of additional services, either for free or at discounted rates:

- *Accommodation.* Participants can request Intern Europe to arrange their accommodation during the mobility. Interns are placed either in single rooms in shared apartments or with a host family. Apartments are either property of Intern Europe or rented;
- *Transfer.* Once the group or individual participants arrive, they can require to be greeted at one of Belfast airports or at the main bus hub, as well as directly at their house. The transfer arrangements are made in advance based on the budget and preferences of the international partner or individual, and assigned to Intern Europe employees according to their availability and location;
- *Welcome Pack.* After a brief tour of the house by an Intern Europe employee, participants are given a welcome bag with food, maps and other useful information. The content of the welcome bags is defined and prepared by the Accommodation Manager;
- *Induction Meeting* (at the Intern Europe offices on the first day of the mobility). Participants are briefed about any necessary information regarding the placement, accommodation and general life in Belfast, and are taken on a quick tour of the city centre (which is also an opportunity to help them buy travel passes, if necessary);
- *Mid-Placement Meeting, documents and Company Visit.* In case of internships longer than 1 month, a member of the Intern Europe team will drop by the host company around the mid-placement mark, to have a quick chat with the intern and their supervisor. Additionally, the intern will be invited to come to the Intern Europe office to fill in some evaluation documents; should any issue arise, the meeting allows the intern to talk to a member of the Placements Team and receive the support they need.

- *Final Meeting and documents* (at the Intern Europe offices at the end of the mobility). Interns fill in a final evaluation of their placement experience and deal with any mobility-related paperwork;
- *24/7 support*. Participants have access to a 24/7 email and phone helpline for any emergencies;
- *English courses and other types of language support*. Intern Europe's participants can enrol in English courses at International House Belfast language school at a discounted price. Moreover, during this project work the author has developed other forms of linguistic and cultural support, which will be discussed at a later time;
- *Discounted cultural activities*. Thanks to Intern Europe's local partners (e.g. tours and visits), participants can join in various trips and cultural activities at a discounted price;
- *Free monthly social events*. Once a month, Intern Europe's Marketing Manager organises with the help of the HR Team a free social event for all interns in Belfast (e.g. treasure hunt, bingo night, and quiz night).

1.2.5 The Placement Process

Most of the participants are recruited and preselected by Intern Europe's international partners within an international mobility project or, more rarely, are spontaneous, "unaffiliated" individual applicants who have found out about the company's services either on their own, or through Intern Europe's sister company ESPA UK.

The placement process that follows, illustrated below (tables 2 and 3), is slightly different for groups and individual participants, but in both cases is a joint responsibility of the Project Manager, HR Team and Placements Team.

All mobility-related documents are stored both on the company's internal cloud storage system and on the CRM platform Zoho, which Intern Europe started to implement in June 2016; the same platform is also used to send emails to participants, and contains a series of email templates (each corresponding to a different phase of the placement process) which have been updated during the Project.

Table 2. Groups' Placement Process¹

GROUPS' PLACEMENT PROCESS (6-12 WEEKS BEFORE THE MOBILITY)
1. <i>Approval and booking of the mobility project</i> (by the Sending Organization).
2. <i>CV Screening.</i> Interns send a detailed Europass CV in English, as well as cover letters and any other relevant documentation, depending on the circumstances. All materials are reviewed by the HR Team, who might suggest changes and updates at a later time.
3. <i>Skype Interview Setup.</i> Interns are sent an email or text to arrange a Skype interview with a member of the HR Team.
4. <i>Skype Interview.</i> The intern is invited to a 15' conversation with a member of the HR Team, to get a better picture of their background and expectations. The Skype interview is a semi-structured conversation following the structure outlined in the "Skype Questionnaire" document, which has been updated during the project. All the information gathered during the interview as well as any other documentation sent in by the participant is then shared with the Placements Team.
5. <i>Finding a company.</i> The Placements Team reaches out to potential host companies within and outside of Intern Europe's network, sharing the intern's profile and CV with them. Interested companies are then invited to fill in a job specification document.
6. <i>Potential Placement Info.</i> As soon as a suitable work placement is found, interns are sent a "Potential Placement" document, including the detailed job spec and additional useful information added by the HR Team, for approval. It has been updated during the project.
7. <i>Second Skype Interview.</i> The intern is invited to a second Skype interview directly with the future Host Company, as a way to get to know their supervisor in advance and clarify any doubts.

¹ Table 2, as well as all tables not otherwise labelled, were developed by the author for the purposes of the project.

8. <i>Placement Confirmation.</i> The intern and the company agree to work together.
9. <i>Final Placement Info.</i> The intern is sent a “Final Placement” document, prepared by the HR Team, which includes all the Potential Placement document information, plus details regarding local transportation times and prices. It has been updated during the project.
10. <i>Pre-arrival and Welcome Info.</i> Approximately 2 weeks before the mobility interns receive a “Pre-Arrival” document with information about accommodation, arrivals, useful contacts, health, and any other detail relevant to their mobility programme. It has been updated during the project.
11. <i>Arrival.</i>

Table 3. Individuals’ Placement Process

<p>INDIVIDUALS’ PLACEMENT PROCESS</p> <p>(6-12 WEEKS BEFORE THE MOBILITY)</p>
1. <i>Initial Contact.</i> Potential interns are referred to Intern Europe by sister company ESPA UK or find out about it independently.
2. <i>CV Screening.</i> Candidates submit their CV in English, as well as cover letters and any other relevant documentation, depending on the circumstances. All materials are reviewed by the HR Team, who might suggest changes and updates at a later time.
3. <i>Skype Interview Setup.</i> The HR Team arranges a Skype interview date and time with the candidate.
4. <i>Skype Interview.</i> Informal 15' conversation with a member of the HR Team, to get a better picture of the candidate’s background and expectations. The Skype interview is a semi-structured conversation following the structure outlined in the “Skype Questionnaire” document, which has been updated during this project. All the information gathered during the interview as well as any other documentation sent in by the participant is then shared with the Placements Team. It is an occasion for them to explain in detail their field of interest and clarify any doubts regarding the financial or logistic aspects of the company’s services.

5. *Confirmation and Payment.* Candidates confirm their interest and pay part of the service fee as deposit. This phase is handled by the Project Manager.

6. *Finding a host company.* The Placements Team reaches out to potential host companies within and outside of Intern Europe's network, sharing the intern's profile and CV with them. Interested companies are then invited to fill in a job specification document.

7. *Potential Placement Info.* As soon as a suitable work placement is found, interns are sent a "Potential Placement" document, including the detailed job spec and additional useful information added by the HR Team, for approval. It has been updated during the project,

8. *Second Skype Interview.* Occasionally, the intern is invited to a second Skype interview directly with the future Host Company, as a way to get to know their supervisor in advance and clarify any doubts.

9. *Placement Confirmation.* The intern and the company agree to work together.

10. *Full payment of the service fee.*

11. *Final Placement Info.* The intern is sent a "Final Placement" document, prepared by the HR Team, which includes all the Potential Placement document information, plus details regarding local transportation times and prices. It has been updated during the project;

12. *Arrangements.* At this stage, interns may arrange their accommodation, transfer, and/or language course either through Inter Europe or independently.

13. *Pre-arrival and Welcome Info.* Approximately 2 weeks before the mobility interns receive a "Pre-Arrival" document with information about accommodation, arrivals, useful contacts, health, and any other detail relevant for the mobility. It has been updated during the project.

14. *Arrival.*

1.2.6 Follow-Up and Intern Support

After the interns have arrived in Belfast and settled in their accommodation (following the arrival and transfer arrangements agreed upon before the mobility), it is necessary to provide them with appropriate support during the whole placement period.

The intern management and support process described below in Table 4 is the same for participants pertaining to an exchange programme group and for individuals; not included in the list below is the 24/7 email and phone Helpline, which is at the interns' disposal for any health- or house-related emergencies.

Variations might depend on the placement length or the specific requirements of the mobility project (e.g. absence of mid-placement meeting for shorter mobility periods, additional cultural activities for groups coming from specific international partners, additional language support, etc.).

Table 4. Intern Support

<p><i>Induction Meeting</i> (at the Intern Europe offices on the first weekday of the mobility).</p> <p>Participants are briefed about any necessary information regarding the placement, accommodation and general life in Belfast, and are taken on a quick tour of the city centre (which is also an opportunity to help them buy travel passes, if necessary);</p>
<p><i>Company Induction</i> (in the Host Company on the first day of work).</p> <p>This meeting is not organised directly by Intern Europe, but host companies are encouraged to implement it. Within this project work a proposal has been made in relation to this element of the support process, which will be discussed at a later stage;</p>
<p><i>Language Course</i> in-house or at International House Belfast (if required).</p> <p>All language support measures have been reviewed and/or updated during this project work;</p>
<p><i>Mid-Placement Meeting</i> (for placements longer than 1 month).</p> <p>The intern is invited to come to the Intern Europe office and fill in a "Work Placement</p>

Evaluation” questionnaire. Should any issue arise, the meeting allows the intern to talk to a member of the Placements Team and receive the support they need.

Social Events and Cultural activities (throughout the mobility).

This element of the support process has been reviewed and updated during this project work;

Mid-Placement Check in (by the Placements Team).

It consists of a call to the HC for shorter placements or a drop in visit for longer placements. As a rule, the drop-in is preferred to the simple phone call, as it is deemed more effective;

Final Meeting Preparation (last 10 days).

Participants are invited to pick up and fill in with the help of their supervisors a series of placement documents, namely “Trainee’s Skills Assessment”, “Supervisor’s Comments”, “Host Company Certificate” and “Intern Europe Placement Certificate”;

Final Meeting (last week).

Final assessment and finalization of admin requirements. Interns the filled-in “Supervisor’s comments” and “Trainee’s skills assessment” documents to the Intern Europe offices, and fill in a “Final evaluation” form, too, as well as any other documentation related to their scholarship;

Departure.

Intern Europe might help arrange the transfers if requested. A House check-in is made the day before departure, to verify that the accommodation is being left in good conditions.

2. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

2.1 THE TARGET ISSUE

The present project work was aimed at the development of new strategies and tools to optimise the management of Intern Europe's international placement programme participants, with special attention to their preparation, socialisation, and overall support, before and during the experience in Northern Ireland.

Even though Intern Europe try to adhere to high internal quality criteria, their range of clients and stakeholders is so varied that each case requires heavy adjustments, depending on factors such as the participant's preferences and necessities; the sending or intermediary organisation's requirements; the specific features of the placement company, industry, or sector; the funding programme requirements (e.g. Erasmus+) -among others.

Additionally, the company ought to make sure that individual interns who pay for their own service fee, transport, food and lodging are able to have as much of a fulfilling and satisfactory experience as participants coming with a full or partial scholarship.

Overall, Intern Europe's main goal is to guarantee high placement quality standards in terms of intern management and support; the author's objective, in this context, was to develop a series of strategies and tools geared at achieving the company's goal, and to make sure that they could be organically combined in an effective and sustainable intern management strategy, and were potentially replicable in any other similar intermediary organization.

It is fair to say that the core issue of the present project work emerged since the beginnings of Intern Europe's operations, and became increasingly critical the more the company grew, especially because at the same time the funds allocated by the EU and other financing organisations have decreased (e.g. Erasmus+ grants do not cover any in-person language course anymore).

The choice of which strategies and tool to update or developed was partially made by Intern Europe before the beginning of the project, but was finalised more during its first 6 weeks, thanks to the analysis of existing internal documents and reports; regular meetings between the author, the Project Manager and the CEO; and more informal interactions with the HR Team, Placements

Team, Marketing Manager, Accommodation Manager, and even some of the participants themselves.

From these exploratory activities, within the main issue – that is, the management of international interns in the context of an intermediary organisation – it was possible to identify a series of more specific sub-issues, namely:

- *Lack of financial resources* to be destined for non-essential activities (e.g. everything that is not directly linked with the placement, food, and lodging arrangements);
- *Reduced number of staff members involved* in intern management tasks;
- *Discrepancies in each group's and participant's preferences and requirements* in terms of dates, type and length of internship, sector, additional perks (e.g. local transport tickets) and activities (e.g. excursions, day trips, language courses), health- and age-related limitations, paperwork deadlines, and so on;
- *Language barrier*, which in some case is an issue so severe that it influences negatively all aspects of the mobility (e.g. socialisation, work performance, ability to deal with everyday situations and emergencies);
- *Communication issues* with Intern Europe's international partners and local host companies, as well as with the interns themselves (e.g. unanswered emails, lost parcels, dated contact information).

2.2 ACTION PLAN OVERVIEW

For the purposes of the project, after analysing all the materials and available information regarding Intern Europe's operations since the rebranding in 2014, the author decided to focus on optimising the preparation, integration, socialisation and language support aspects of the mobility.

Regarding the interns' preparation, the steps taken include:

- Update of all email and paperwork templates, to make sure that they were as clear and complete as possible (even for participants with a lower English level);
- Update of the Potential Placement and Final Placement documents' wording and formatting;
- Update of the Pre-Arrival document's content, wording and formatting;

- Creation of two versions, one being geared towards participants staying in a shared accommodation and the other for participants choosing a homestay solution;
- Creation of 5 additional documents to be attached to the Pre-Arrival one if needed, including information regarding:
 - Health,
 - Tourism in Northern Ireland,
 - Homestay rules,
 - Work placement rules and dress code,
 - Online and offline language resources;
- Update of the Skype Questionnaire, that is, the document used during the semi-structured Skype interviews, to make it easier to use for current and future employees and to ensure that it allows the collection of all necessary information;
- Update of the Skype Notes document, that is, the document used to compile the critical information about the participant that can be gathered from the interview notes and their CV and letter of motivation (when available). The document was simplified and made more efficient, according to the need of the Placements Team, who are the main users of such document;
- Creation of a document containing guidelines regarding the creation of Europass CV (“Europass CV Tips”, available both in a standard and a simplified version for interns with lower English level), to help interns put together a CV suitable for the placement search process. The document is sent to those participants whose CV is deemed unsatisfactory for the purposes of the placement process.

As for the integration and socialisation of participants, both in the workplace and more broadly speaking within the local community and with the other interns, the tools developed during the project were:

- Creation of an Intercultural Activity Handbook, listing a series of possible activities geared towards promoting socialisation, cultural understanding and sharing, and integration (e.g. World Café, International picnic, intercultural quiz night). The activities included in the Handbook can substitute or be added to the standard

monthly social events organised by Intern Europe, in order to make them more effective;

- Development of a Culture Shock Workshop, aimed at familiarising interns with the concept of culture shock and giving them the tools to overcome it;
- Creation of a document including guidelines on how to organise an induction meeting in collaboration with the Placements Team, to provide host companies with useful suggestions in this field (especially for those companies which are collaborating with Intern Europe for the first time). It is to be noted that, even though the document has already been created, it has not been implemented yet, and it is being reviewed by the Placements Team, who are in charge of dealing directly with the companies;
- Review and update of all the documents used in the mid-placement and final meeting, mostly for overall clarity.

With respect to the language support, special attention was dedicated to trying to provide a 360° support structure to interns at all language proficiency levels:

- Creation of a 90-minute Language Crash Course, to provide groups with extremely low English with basic, everyday language competences, with a focus on dealing with emergencies and basic life necessities;
- Implementation of a 2-hour weekly Language Tutoring session, during which participants whose scholarship scheme requires completing an online language course (such as the OLS for Erasmus+) can come into the Intern Europe office and use the company's facilities under the supervision of a member of the staff. The session is also open to all interns who might want to either do any other type of independent language practice, as well as to those who would like to report any issue or borrow a book from the Intern Europe library;
- Availability to work with the international partners for the development of additional language activities targeting the specific professional needs of certain exchange groups, to be included in the induction activities.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 GENERAL OVERVIEW: WORK AND WORKERS

To give a definitive definition of concepts such as “internship”, “apprenticeship”, “work”, and “worker”, which are critical to the project, can be complex. If we reference the *Review of the International Classification of Status in Employment ICSE-93* (Hunter, 2015), for example, workers can be categorised as:

- In paid employed jobs
 - Employees;
- In self-employment jobs
 - Employers;
 - Own-account workers;
 - Members of producers’ cooperatives;
 - Contributing family workers;
- Not pertaining to any of the aforementioned categories.

The last group include those workers regarding whom there is still not enough data available and/or who cannot be classified in any of the aforementioned categories; the group includes interns, apprentices, and trainees, too.

In the context of this categorisation, the ICS-93 highlighted a series of types of workers who are considered “*relevant for analysis of the changes that are taking place in the labour market and could potentially satisfy some of the unmet needs for statistics*” (Hunter, 2015, p.8), that is:

- *Owner-managers of incorporated enterprises;*
- *Regular employees with fixed-term contracts;*
- *Regular employees with contracts without limits of time;*
- *Workers in precarious employment;*
- *Casual workers;*
- *Workers in short-term employment;*
- *Workers in seasonal employment;*
- *Outworkers;*
- *Contractors;*
- *Workers who hold explicit or implicit contracts of 'paid employment' from one organization, but who work at the site of and/or under instructions*

- from a second organization which pays the first organization a fee for their services;*
- *Work gang (crew) members;*
 - *Employment promotion employees;*
 - *Apprentices or trainees;*
 - *Employers of regular employees;*
 - *Core own-account workers;*
 - *Franchisees;*
 - *Sharecroppers;*
 - *Communal resource exploiters;*
 - *Subsistence workers;*

It is interesting to note that in this document apprentices and trainees are considered relevant elements to understand the current changes in the labour market.

On the other hand, as far as the concept of “work” is concerned, from the analysis of the available literature the validity of any comparative work done at an international level in the field of work classification and work compensation is compromised by the inconsistencies between policies, laws and customs of each country, which in turn reflects on the lack of a recognised definition of “intern”, “trainee”, “apprentice”, etc.

The ILO Member Countries agree on the definition of “work” presented in the *Report for discussion at the 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians*, which states that (ILO Department of Statistics, 2013, p.22):

“Work is defined in terms of activities performed by persons in order to produce goods or services for use by others or for own final use (...). Accordingly:

(a) The reference concept work excludes activities that cannot be performed on one's behalf by another person, including all self-care activities, learning and activities for one's own recreation, as well as all other activities that do not involve producing goods or services for one's own or for other units' consumption, such as begging and stealing.

(b) Work can be performed in all kinds of economic units that comprise:

(i) market units producing goods and services mostly for sale at prices that are economically significant;

(ii) non-market units producing goods and services mostly for supply to other units without charge or at prices that are not economically significant; and

(iii) households producing goods and services for own final use or fixed capital formation by the producers.”

In addition, again according to the ICS-93 (Hunter, 2015, p. 10), work can also be classified based on two other criteria, namely the final user (for own final use or for use by others) and the nature of the related transaction (monetary or non-monetary):

- *Own-use production work comprising production of goods and services for own final use;*
- *Employment work comprising work performed for others in exchange for pay or profit;*
- *Unpaid trainee work comprising work performed for others without pay to acquire workplace experience or skills;*
- *Volunteer work comprising non-compulsory work performed for others without pay;*
- *Other work activities.*

Finally, it is useful to remind here the ILO’s definition of “job” as *“a set of tasks and duties performed, or meant to be performed, by one person for a single economic unit”* (Hunter, 2015, p. 11): in the case of volunteers, trainees, and apprentices, who do not receive any financial compensation, we may then talk about *work activity*, rather than work in its literal definition.

3.2 INTERNSHIPS AND APPRENTICESHIPS

For the purposes of this Project, the most relevant concept is that of “apprenticeship”, as most of Intern Europe’s participants are loosely defined as such in their countries of origin.

However, it must be noted that internally, the organisation refers to them with the word “intern”, and defines their main service offering as “(work) placements” or “internships”, these being commonplace and simple terms that are easily understood by local companies.

In most English-speaking countries, the accepted definition of “internship” is that presented by Taylor (1988), who categorises as internships any structured work experience which is performed by a student for professional development purposes before concluding their studies, especially in the context of higher education.

As for apprenticeships, the *Overview of apprenticeship systems and issues - ILO contribution to the G20 Task Force on Employment 2015*, by the International Labour Organization), states that an apprenticeship (Overview of apprenticeship systems and issues, 2015, p. 2):

- *is based in the work place supervised by an employer;*
- *is intended for young people;*
- *has as its fundamental aim learning a trade/acquiring a skill;*
- *is 'systematic' i.e. follows a predefined plan;*
- *is governed by a contract between apprentice and employer.*

Recently, the *ILO Recommendation R195 concerning Human Resources Development, Education, Training and Lifelong Learning* added to the basic definition the concepts of lifelong learning and competence upgrade for those who are already in the workforce.

Moreover, this second document focuses not only on youth (even though they are still considered as a social group with specific, additional needs), but also on the vulnerability of the less-qualified and less-skilled portion of the workforce, who is currently having a hard time with keeping up with the rapid technological and technical development that characterises today's world.

In the light of the world economic crisis which began in 2007/2008, the high general and youth unemployed rates have increased most Countries' interest in the implementation of new apprenticeship schemes, as a tool to combat such a preoccupying phenomenon, which thing in turn has made it necessary for academics to reach an updated consensus regarding what an apprenticeship is.

For example, in Ryan, Wagner, Teuber and Backes-Gellner (2010), apprenticeships are defined as educational initiatives or programmes which integrate in-school vocational education and on-the-job training, having as their final goal the achievement of an intermediate competence and skill level (that is, higher than what would be achieved by the work experience alone); such programmes must adhere to standards and rules defined by an external entity, be it the State, school, or host company.

Consequently, the contemporary apprenticeship must include a theoretical, off-the-job vocational training element, as well as be structured and regulated.

3.3 QUALITY OF INTERNSHIPS AND APPRENTICESHIPS IN THE EU

As stated since the beginning, most of Intern Europe's international partners and participants receive funds through the Erasmus+ programme, as well as from other governmental or EU programmes, which means that the company must ensure certain quality standards in the internships they offer.

The influence of EU regulations, advice, and guidelines however, extends far beyond the quality requirements of the Erasmus+ programme and of its predecessors.

3.3.1 The Framework Agreement on Inclusive Labour Markets (FAILM)

On the 25th of March 2010, all EU countries undersigned the *Framework Agreement on Inclusive Labour Markets*, a document having as its objectives (2010, p. 4):

- *“Consider the issues of access, return, retention and development with a view to achieving the full integration of individuals in the labour market;*
- *Increase the awareness, understanding and knowledge of employers, workers and their representatives of the benefits of inclusive labour markets;*
- *Provide workers, employers and their representatives at all levels with an action-oriented framework to identify obstacles to inclusive labour markets and solutions to overcome them.”*

At the same time, those same Countries recognised a series of obstacles to the achievement of the aforementioned objectives, which we can here summarise as (*ibid.*, p.5):

1. *“Obstacles regarding information availability;*
2. *Obstacles regarding recruitment;*
3. *Obstacles regarding training, skills, and capabilities;*
4. *Obstacles regarding responsibilities and attitudes of employers, workers, their representatives, and job seekers;*
5. *Obstacles to working life;*
6. *Other factors impacting labour market inclusion.”*

In particular, it can be inferred from this same document that the lack of homogeneity and coherence in each EU Country's evaluation and training and education recognition systems also impact the issue of internship and apprenticeship recognition.

Thusly, it is not surprising that, among the measures proposed within the FAILM, great attention has been paid to vocational training quality and to all "pre-work" experiences, such as internships and apprenticeships.

Some of the proposed action points in this area have to do with increasing cooperation with the school system (i.e. by guaranteeing that all basic skills such numeracy and literacy are fully covered and that there are measures in place to ease the transition to the labour market); promoting skill development and recognition systems; improving qualification transferability; disseminating information about available training schemes, and so on.

3.3.2 The European Quality Charter for Internships and Apprenticeships (EQCIA)

The attention which has lately been dedicated to vocational training and apprenticeship programmes made itself evident at the time of the conception and implementation of the EU Commission-managed Erasmus+ Programme 2014-2010, leading to the creation of a *European Quality Charter for Internships and Apprenticeships (EQCIA)*.

The Charter, compiled by the Youth Section of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), mostly focuses on the recent proliferation of non-structured and unpaid internship, apprenticeship, and traineeship schemes.

The original document is available in English but, for the purposes of this work, the author has translated it and made a Portuguese version available (Appendix 1).

To ensure fair treatment and support to all young people participating in such schemes, ETUC proposed that they be subject to the same principles, standards, policies, and rules which regulate other formal apprenticeship and internship schemes available in their country of origin.

The document recognises that accessing the labour market has become much more difficult for today's youth, and that internship and apprenticeships may be a tool to facilitate the transition; however, not everyone has the financial means to take advantage of such opportunities.

Moreover, ETUC highlight the risk of low-pay or unpaid internships and apprenticeships substituting standard job contracts, and the lack of clear regulations and quality standards in the field, for which reason they put forward a series of guidelines to address the aforementioned issues.

In Article 1, it is stated that internships and apprenticeships must primarily be a learning experience, and not a job replacement: thusly, they ought to be carried out under appropriate supervision and mentorship in the participant's field of study (be it higher education or vocational), so that he or she can gain relevant professional experience and widen their horizons; an efficient evaluation system must be in place, and participants must be informed of their social and labour rights, workers representatives, their responsibilities to the organisation, any health and safety risks posed to them through the position, if any.

Article 2 focuses on those internships which are part of an higher education path, as well as those apprenticeships which are included in a vocational training programme: it states that there must be a clear agreement in place between the student/apprentice, the company, and the educational institution; its field, length, and tasks must correspond to specific, recognised learning objectives and tasks must be carried out under appropriate supervision and be clearly evaluated at the end of the experience; participants should be reimbursed of any costs, and possibly benefit from additional financial benefits (such as food and lodging, local transport, compensation for overtime, etc.)

Article 3 sets specific requirements for internships and apprenticeships which take place outside an higher or vocational education context: their length, remuneration, learning objectives and tasks should be outlined in a written and legally binding contract between the participant and the company; remuneration must not be below the EU average poverty line or the country's minimum wage, and should also be integrated by the reimbursement of any incurred costs and the inclusion of the participant in the social security system; these types of contracts should be of limited length and be limited to pupils, students or very recent graduates; advertising must be transparent, and the number of such interns or apprentices per internship provider should be limited; an appropriate mentorship and evaluation system should be in place.

Finally, in Article 4 the ETUC discuss the need of further developments in the fields of legal framework definition, skills recognition tools and requirements, monitoring tools and

requirements, statistical analysis and availability of relevant data, national partnerships between the government, educational institutions, and local companies; investment in career development and training; involvement of local trade unions.

In their service offering Intern Europe has been taking into consideration the content of the EQCIA and of the FAILM, as well as the internship quality recommendations put forward by the UK government and by other EU-funded projects, such as PLACET (“Supporting PLAcement Companies in European Training”, a project supported by the Lifelong Learning Programme, of which main objectives are the promotion of the potential of hosting a European trainee and the creation of support materials for the hosting companies) and MOB G.A.E. (“MOBility as a source of personal and professional Growth, Autonomy and Employability”, a project funded through the Lifelong Learning Programme aimed at encouraging good practices in mobility and training).

3.4 CULTURE SHOCK AND SOCIALISATION

3.4.1 Expatriates, International Students, Strangers and Sojourners

The young people who participate in Intern Europe’s placement programmes have the peculiar status of “international interns”, which means that for them, the standard socialisation issues encountered by a new employee when they join a new company are heightened by the cultural integration problems that characterise an expat’s life.

Additionally, many participants have very low language skills, never lived away from their families, and are at their very beginning of their careers – all obstacles to their socialisation and integration in Northern Ireland.

The most well-known and studied category of people who are working abroad is that of expatriates, that is those *“private or public sector employees who are sent to a branch located outside of their country of origin for a set period of time (usually between 6 months and 5 years), to work and pursue specific professional goals related to a certain project or task”* (Rego & Pinha e Cunha, 2009, p. 283) – in this sense, to define Intern Europe’s participants we could use the term “partial expats”,

Obviously, Intern Europe’s interns are not literal expats, as they are usually students or young people selected by a local sending organisation, but they too change countries for work (and study) reasons and for a limited length of time – usually under 6 months; they would fit in

Church's definition of "sojourners", a broad term used to define a person who is temporary residing abroad but is not a tourist. (Church, 1982).

It is to be noted that participants make the decision to go abroad independently, which makes them similar to "*self-initiated expatriates*", a specific sub-type of expats whose main features are (Cerdin & Selmer 2014):

- Self-initiated international relocation decision;
- Intention of regular employment (often, but not always);
- Intention of temporary stay;
- Status of skilled workers with good levels of qualifications.

Thusly, self-initiated expatriates can be broadly defined as free agents who cross national borders, regardless of any barriers that may restrict their careers (Inkson et al. 1997), sometimes seeking only a temporary professionally-enhancing experience (Richardson and McKenna 2003).

Another category under which Intern Europe's participants could be partially classified is that of "international students", that Coates (2004) sets aside from "strangers", those individuals who are member of the local social system but are not attached to it, and from "sojourners", who are specific strangers who are living in a foreign country without being assimilated by it: like international students, the company's participants are usually enrolled in a teaching institution or vocational programme in their country of origin, and come to the UK to improve their skills and grow as individuals (Anderson, Lawson, Rexeisen & Hubbard, 2006).

Like international students, work placement mobility participants make their choice of spending some time working abroad because of a series of "push" factors, which depend on the situation in their country of origin (e.g. available work and training opportunities, overall quality of life, course requirements), and by successive "pull" factors, which influence their choice of country of destination (e.g. available scholarships and training agreements, previous cultural interest in the country, appealing language learning opportunities) and host organization - even though this second choice is usually limited because of Intern Europe's intervention (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002).

3.4.2 Culture and Culture Shock

To give a complete definition of what “culture” is has always proven challenging, it being a very multifaceted and abstract concept to begin with, but it can safely be said that the model introduced by Geert Hofstede in the 70s and 80s has laid the foundations of all future research in the field of intercultural studies (Rego & Pina e Cunha, 2009).

With a series of surveys and data analysis that were repeated periodically, starting in 1967-73 on IBM employees, Hofstede developed a tetra-dimensional model, which classifies countries based on 4 cultural aspects (all text quoted from www.geert-hofstede.com):

1. Hierarchical distance, or Power distance. *“the degree to which the less powerful members of a society accept and expect that power is distributed unequally. [...] how a society handles inequalities among people”;*
2. Individualism vs Collectivism. *‘The high side of this dimension, called individualism, can be defined as a preference for a loosely-knit social framework in which individuals are expected to take care of only themselves and their immediate families. Its opposite, collectivism, represents a preference for a tightly-knit framework in society in which individuals can expect their relatives or members of a particular in-group to look after them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty’;*
3. Masculinity vs Femininity. *‘The Masculinity side of this dimension represents a preference in society for achievement, heroism, assertiveness and material rewards for success. Society at large is more competitive. Its opposite, femininity, stands for a preference for cooperation, modesty, caring for the weak and quality of life. Society at large is more consensus-oriented’;*
4. Uncertainty Avoidance. *“The Uncertainty Avoidance dimension expresses the degree to which the members of a society feel uncomfortable with uncertainty and ambiguity. The fundamental issue here is how a society deals with the fact that the future can never be known: should we try to control the future or just let it happen?”.*

Recently, two new dimensions were added:

5. After specific research implemented on a group of Chinese study subjects by Harris Bond in 1991 with Hofstede’s support, the results of which were published in 2009

(Hofstede, 2009), the dimension called “Short Term Orientation vs Long Term Normative Orientation” was added: *“Societies who score low on this dimension, for example, prefer to maintain time-honoured traditions and norms while viewing societal change with suspicion. Those with a culture which scores high, on the other hand, take a more pragmatic approach: they encourage thrift and efforts in modern education as a way to prepare for the future”* (www.gert-hofstede.com);

6. New research by Michael Minkov confirmed the 5th dimension and generated a new one, that of “Indulgence vs Restraint”. *“Indulgence stands for a society that allows relatively free gratification of basic and natural human drives related to enjoying life and having fun. Restraint stands for a society that suppresses gratification of needs and regulates it by means of strict social norms”* (Hofstede & Minkov, 2010, p. 35)

Finally, in various papers Hofstede also touches upon the issues that come from a clash between different cultures (e.g. Hofstede, 2009) – a phenomenon which we call “culture shock”.

The concept of culture shock was introduced by Kalervo Oberg in the late 50s and early 60s, after his research on the adaptation and integration of missionaries in tropical countries (Oberg, 1960), even though in later years many other researchers integrated and criticised his work.

It was Oberg who introduced the idea of a “U-curve” model of cultural adjustment, composed of 4 phases:

1. *Honeymoon*. At the beginning of the stay abroad the person is excited about the novelty and change of cultures and language, so that any initial issues are pushed to the wayside for the first few days or weeks;
2. *Culture shock: crisis or frustration*. After the initial enthusiasm, the challenging reality of being a foreigner in a new country and culture sinks in, accompanied by feelings of frustration, depression, and loneliness. This phase is critical, because it is characterised by the development of more hostile, stereotyping-prone attitude on the part of the person. At this stage, the language barrier is a particularly critical obstacle, together with many everyday tasks (e.g. understanding local transportation systems, using the local currency, understanding the local’s manners and body language, etc.);
3. *Cultural adjustment*. The crisis is overcome thanks to the implementation of different coping mechanisms and a better understanding of the hosting country;

4. *Mastery or adaptation.* When the adjustment process is complete, the person can be considered completely adapted to their new culture, and is perfectly able to function in it.

Soon, Oberg's model – though very respected to this day – was improved upon and criticised: for example, Gullahorn and Gullahorn introduced the idea of the “reverse culture shock”, that is, a second necessary adjustment period that the expatriate goes through after going back to their country of origin, since both they and their once-familiar surroundings and social network have changed during the stay abroad (Gullahorn & Gullahorn, 1963); thusly, they speak about a “W” model of cultural adaptation.

As for Oberg's critics, his U model was simply criticised by some (like Church, who thought impossible the definition of an adaptation model valid for each and every expatriate – Church, 1982), and completely overturned by others (Ward, Okura, Kennedy & Kojima considered the U-curve non-existent, and actually found in their research that the highest stress and crisis levels were usually experienced at the very beginning of the stay abroad – Ward *et al.*, 1998), but it remains an unavoidable point of reference in the cultural adjustment literature.

Finally, as far as practical action points to implement to ease the burden of culture shock, it is interesting to note that a study by McKinlay, Pattison and Gross (1996) confirmed the necessity to support international students in practical, everyday matters (e.g. banking, shopping, accommodation arrangements...), while other researchers, like Andrade and Teixeira (2009) or Sherry, Thomas and Chui (2010), also added the necessity of additional cultural training during the induction or welcome process.

All pertinent literature considered, for the purposes of the Project it soon became evident that to guarantee to their participants a positive and enriching placement experience Intern Europe must provide appropriate emotional, linguistic, and logistics support, especially concerning socialisation and integration at the workplace, cultural adaptation, and overcoming the language barrier.

3.4.3 Socialisation and Cultural Adjustment

According to Black, Mendenhall and Oddou (1991) companies that rely on the work of expatriates must pay attention to their cultural adjustment, to avoid the failing of their mission

abroad and repatriation; however, although important, the socialisation and adjustment process has been relatively overlooked by researchers (Leuke & Svyantek, 2000).

A consequence to this is, interestingly, that for expats (and international interns like Intern Europe's) the organisational socialisation process and cultural adjustment go hand in hand.

Black *et al.* (1991) among other researchers, consider 5 dimensions of cultural adjustment, in many of which the sending organisation can have a positive impact, namely:

1. Before leaving the country:
 - a. *Appropriate intra-organisational selection process.* At the selection stage, according to Jassawalla, Truglia and Garvey (2004), HR managers should take into consideration characteristics such as self-awareness, empathy, self-motivation, social skills, and self-regulation;
 - b. *Previous experience abroad*, which usually makes the transition easier;
 - c. *Pre-departure training and general preparation.* This step may include actions such as language training, cultural training, advanced short visit to the new country (Jassawalla et al., 2004), preparation of the spouse and children (Camara, Baleira Guerra & Rodrigues, 2010)
2. Once abroad:
 - a. *The individual's knowledge and attitudes*;
 - b. *External (non-work) factors*, like interaction with the local community and overcoming of all day-to-day challenges. For example, support can be provided in making sure that the expatriates do not only interact with other expatriates, but also with the locals (Camara et al., 2010), as well as in practical matters such as finding an accommodation, schools for the children, a job for the spouse, dealing with banks and insurance companies, and so on (Black et al., 1991).

Regarding socialisation, which has mostly to do with how the intern or new employee integrates in the company, an effective process is characterised by the successful development of two elements, namely the socialisation tactics implemented by the host company and the proactivity of the employee themselves: together, these two factors guarantee that they learn

everything about the organisation and their roles and tasks within it, and make sure that the adjustment is successful (Asforth, Sluss & Harrison 2007).

When talking about international interns, which is the case examined in the present project, the success of an intern socialisation process can be measured based on 5 factors, namely:

1. Level of satisfaction with the internship;
2. On-the-job learning;
3. Likelihood of being offered a position at the end of the internship;
4. Likelihood of the intern accepting such offer;
5. Perception the internship as useful for their future career (Asforth et al. 2007).

As far as the job itself is concerned, autonomy and chances of interaction with others are both positive socialisation factors, while at a HRM level the most effective tactics are those which decrease uncertainty, such as information sharing, task-specific training, and implementation of activities aimed at supporting the intern in their adjustment process (Feldman, Folks & Turnley, 1998).

When talking about international interns and expats it is also useful to reference the 3-phase socialisation model presented by Gomes, Cunha, Rego, Cunha, Cabral-Cardoso and Marques (2008): according to it, the process begins with the *Social integration* of the individual to the organisation and country, continues with the *Achievement of Work Proficiency* - that is, the adjustment to their new tasks and work environment -, and ends with the full *Acculturation* of the individual, or their understanding of the host company's values, mission, vision, as well as superficial and deep cultural elements (e.g. its "legends, myths, heroes").

Obviously, both socialisation and adjustment are heavily influenced by many factors (Katz & Seifer, 1996), such as:

- the person's characteristics (e.g. attitude, skills, personality);
- the nature of the job (e.g. tasks, challenges, work environment);
- the host country (e.g. how different it is from the country of origin?).

3.4.4 The Language Barrier

As previously stated, expatriates, international students, and all sojourners encounter a series of practical and emotional obstacles once they find themselves in a new country, which hinder the cultural adjustment and socialisation process.

Among them, the language barrier is one of the most influential and critical (Church, 1982), with a great impact on the psychological well-being and the social integration of the person (Cigularova, 2006) – so much so that in 1963 Smalley introduced the expression “language shock” (Smalley 1963).

The importance of overcoming the language barrier once we find ourselves in a foreign country should not come as a surprise, if we consider that Language is our greatest mediator - a system of conceptual symbols that allows us to communicate with, relate to, and understand each other, providing a significant frame of reference and a relational context that sustains our identities (Imberti 2007).

For example, in a study on international students in the Philippines, Wa-Mbaleka and Ryszewski note that *“Sooner or later ESL learners are surrounded by the new English speaking culture and face the problem of lacking skills and knowledge, which may affect them in the culture shock. The experience of culture shock can have a strong influence on the students’ English learning performance, as culture shock comes along with negative feelings IAMURE International Journal of Education 18 towards the new culture”* (Wa-Mbaleka & Ryszewski, 2012, pp. 17-18)

In many cases, the previous knowledge or improvement of a *lingua franca* such as English (Cigulova, 2006) can be a successful strategy, especially when the local language is extremely complex or different from the person’s native tongue, thus bettering work and academic performance and avoiding feelings of isolation (Marx 2001).

However, we should also acknowledge the consistent and systematic cultural differences in the way in which people send and receive information (Gallois, Giles, Jones, Cargyle & Ota,1995): different cultures have different communication preferences, stemming from their fundamental social values, such as the “high context low context” dichotomy pointed out by Gudykunst and Matsumoto (1996), among others.

As a consequence, it is evident how such communication preference influence life at all levels, from everyday etiquette, to conflict management, to non-verbal communication, to overall behaviour and interpersonal relations (Ward, Bochner & Furnham 2005), and cannot be ignored.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 DEFINITION, PARADIGM AND CHOSEN APPROACH

With the word “methodology” it is indicated the way in which a research project is planned, structured, developed, and brought to completion: as such, the chosen methodology must always take into consideration the research project’s objectives, desired results, and type (Albarelo, Digneffe, Hiernaux, Marroy, Ruquoy & Saint 1997).

The present project was characterised by a deeply practical approach to the issues at hand; its structure and development were designed based on the company’s requests and requirements, leading to an applied, inductive type of research, the results of which were immediately implemented on the field.

Every research project is meant to abide by the rules of a specific paradigm, that is, a framework including a series of recognised theories, methods, and data analysis techniques; the methodological paradigm chose for the development of the project was the phenomenological one, which implies a subjective analysis focusing on a smaller sample – namely, the company itself (Hussey & Hussey, 1997).

Within this paradigm, the preferred approach is that of qualitative research, based mostly on descriptive data analysis, as opposed to quantitative research, which aims at collecting numerical data to prove relations and correlations between variables (Thompson & Walker, 1998).

The qualitative approach was chosen because since it allows to gather a larger amount of information on the phenomenon constituting the main object of the study, in order to achieve a deeper and more detailed level of analysis (Jackson, Drummond, Darlene & Camara, 2007), while also being more descriptive and contextualised in nature (Bogdan & Bilken, 1994); because of the aforementioned features, the qualitative approach suits well any research work that is carried out under the phenomenological paradigm.

As far as research techniques are concerned, that of the “case study” was implemented since the very beginning of the project, when it was necessary to get to know the company intimately, as well as its processes and needs: in fact, this technique is considered most appropriate in the case of descriptive, qualitative research (Jackson et al, 2007).

4.2 THE CASE STUDY

Case studies can be defined as extensive analyses of a phenomenon within a concrete unit (Yin, 2001), and because of their nature as a strategy they lend itself to various uses and interpretations (Kohlbacher, 2006). A case study has as its main objective achieving a description of the object of the study, but it can include multiple levels of analysis and data-collection methods (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 2001).

Moreover, the case study tends to be the approach which is the most suited to a project carried out by an individual researcher in a limited amount of time, as argued by Bell (1997) – as in the present case.

Based on Stake's (1995, 2005) classification, this case study can be categorised as “intrinsic”, as it focuses on a single study object in which the researcher has an intrinsic interest – as opposed to “collective case studies”, where there are multiple study objects, and “instrumental case studies”, in which the case at hand is used to understand other, different cases or phenomena.

Apart from the case study, many different strategies and methods were implemented, since in any research it is fundamental to utilise a variety of information sources and of points of view regarding the matter at hand (Brown, 2008).

4.3 OTHER RESEARCH METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

4.3.1 Interviews

For Bogdan and Biklen (1994) interviews are a way to collect descriptive, qualitative data on a subject orally, while using their native language. Interviews can be structured, semi-structured, or unstructured:

Semi-structured interview (with the company's Project Manager). The semi-structured interview was chosen as qualitative research tool because it applies well to those situations in which it is necessary to collect a wide breadth of information in one single occasion (Bernard 1988), and it is characterised by a formal context as well as the use of an interview guide, instead of a simple list of questions. It is often preceded by field observation and informal conversations with the subjects (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006).

The interview with Intern Europe's Project Manager Hannah Schmuck (the structure of which is available in Appendix 2) allowed the author to gather essential information about the company, its challenges, and goals.

The topics touched upon were:

1. The history of Intern Europe;
2. Basic information about the company;
3. The Intern Europe service offer;
4. The placement programme;
5. Reasoning behind agreeing to take part in the present project work.

While points 1, 2, 3 and 4 were already channelled in the introductory chapters about the organisation and its offer to partners and participants, some attention should also be dedicated to the last point, that is, why did the company feel the need to improve their intern management and support project, and thus agreed to host the author and be subjected to a case study evaluation and analysis?

In the Project Manager's words, having identified some generic improvement areas in the way the company handled its programme participants, there was the need to gain an external, fresh perspective on how to tackle and solve such issues.

There was not a clear set of expectations, as the first task of the author was to identify specific challenges and gaps in the process, and then proposing, testing, and implementing potential solutions: the result of this initial analysis led to the conclusions laid out in the chapter on the Project's objectives.

Under the umbrella definition of "semi-structured interview" we can also include a *SWOT Analysis session (with the company's Project Manager)*, the results of which cannot be divulged for confidentiality reason. The SWOT Analysis method was developed and then popularised by academics at the Harvard Business School and other American business schools in the 60s and 70s and, even though it has been criticised and improved upon (Hill & Westbrook, 1997), it is still a relevant research tool.

The analysis of Strengths and Weaknesses, and Opportunities and Threats is probably the most known and widely-implemented tool used in the context of company process auditing

(Piercy & Giles 1989), and it was chosen in order to gather more in-depth information regarding all aspects and improvement areas of the company.

The SWOT session structure is available in Appendix 3, and was defined based on the standard SWOT Analysis Matrix Model which can be easily found both in modern management manuals (e.g. Cadle, Paul & Turner, 2010) and online (e.g. the renowned management skills website MindTools).

Unstructured interviews, are informal conversations with other involved actors (e.g. members of the HR and Placements Departments, Marketing and Accommodation Managers, participants, including regular update meetings with the company's CEO and Project Manager) characterised by the absence of pre-defined questions, allowing for more spontaneity (Bailey 2008).

4.3.2 Documental Analysis

Documental analysis, as suggested by De Ketele and Roegiers (1999), was applied both to the company's internal documents and to the related academic literature, as a valid data collection and analysis method which focuses on all pertinent information sources, be they written or not.

Albarelo et al. (1997) state that documental analysis can present itself both as the analysis of all internal documents and paperwork of a company in the context of a case study (e.g. the documents used by Intern Europe in the selection process, the Placement documents, the Pre-Arrival document, and all other internal documents analysed by the author at the beginning of the project to understand the company's internal workings, current situation, and HR-related issues), and in the form of literature review, that is, the analysis of the most relevant research sources and documents available in relation to the project's subject matter (here compiled in the Literature Review section).

Under the umbrella of documental research, we can also include the *data collection and analysis about external factors* which are relevant for Intern Europe's clients and, indirectly, for the company itself (e.g. Erasmus+ programme and other grant schemes available, best intern management practices implemented by other intermediary organisations across Europe, useful online tools and events).

The use of a diverse range of sources allowed to cross-check, cross-reference, and analyse all the collected information, in a way that is requested by a qualitative research methodology, and eventually provided solid grounds for the development of new tools and intervention strategies.

4.3.3 Evaluation Techniques

It was necessary to apply different *evaluation* methods and tools (e.g. the Kirkpatrick and CIRO models, and evaluation questionnaires) to the materials and activities developed for the purpose of the project, as also referenced in the “Implemented New Measures and Tools” chapter of this work: more specifically, the Language Crash Course, Culture Shock Workshop, and Language Tutoring Sessions activities were all tested and evaluated before starting their stable implementation.

By evaluation we characterise those research methods that allow to gather information on a certain product, service, performance or event (among other things) in order to receive useful feedback for future improvements.

In the specific context of training, more and more authors have called for a shift of focus from the training activity itself to its results and impact on the organisation, which implies that contemporary evaluation techniques and methods are changing, too (Phillips & Phillips, 2016).

Since the scientific literature around the field of evaluation theory is exceedingly vast to be covered in this instance, our attention should be focused on the actual evaluation methods which were used in the project, that is, the aforementioned Kirkpatrick and CIRO models.

After implementing a new training or activity, it is advisable to evaluate it, to gather information regarding the learning process, the logistics involved (e.g. materials, location), its impact, content, and long-term sustainability – that is, “*to determine the effectiveness of a training program*” (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, 2009, p.3).

The most well-known evaluation method is probably the one developed by Kirkpatrick in the 60s and still updated periodically to this day; it is known as a 4-levels model, because it is composed of 4 evaluation dimensions (Kirkpatrick, 1967):

1. *Reaction*. The feelings and level of satisfaction of the training participant, to be assessed as soon as the training is over, usually with a questionnaire or evaluation form.

2. *Learning.* Which skills, competences or knowledge points were retained by participants?
3. *Behaviour.* How did the training influence the on-the-job behaviour of the training participants?
4. *Results.* What were the tangible results of the training in terms of increased productivity, reduced costs, or general training goals achievement?

For the most part, the type of evaluation which was implemented during the project was related to the satisfaction level of training participants (Kirkpatrick 1967; Meignant 1999) and was done immediately after the activities themselves, as a “Reaction Assessment” the main focus of which was on the participants’ reactions, opinions, and immediate suggestions.

The participants’ reactions were collected through an online questionnaire form the content of which were developed based not only on Kirkpatrick’s model, but also integrating a more recent method, CIRO, which has gained many supporters for its wider focus.

The CIRO framework was first developed by Warr, Bird and Rackham in the early 70s and is characterised by the attention it puts not only on what happens *during* and *after* the training, but also *before*.

Like Kirkpatrick’s model, CIRO is composed of 4 main dimensions, but they are more detailed in their structure and analysis (Topno 2012; Harris 2005):

1. *Context.* Each training is implemented after a training needs assessment, which allows the setting of a series of goals, namely:
 - a. *Immediate Objectives*, to be achieved immediately after the training;
 - b. *Intermediate Objectives*, to be achieved in the mid-term;
 - c. *Ultimate Objectives*, the final goals of the training action.
2. *Input.* This dimension refers to the organisational resources, planning, and management utilised in regards to the training.
3. *Reaction.* Corresponds to Kirkpatrick’s first level of evaluation.
4. *Outcomes.* Corresponds (broadly) to Kirkpatrick’s second, third, and fourth levels, as it includes:
 - a. *Individual Outcomes.* The learning outcomes of trainees (i.e. changes in their knowledge and skills),

- b. *Workplace Outcomes*. The outcomes in the workplace (i.e. changes in actual job performance),
- c. *Team Outcomes*. The outcomes for the relevant areas of the organization (i.e. departments or specialist units),
- d. *Organizational Outcomes*. The outcomes for the organization as a whole.

Based on these two models, the author developed two versions of an evaluation questionnaire, one to be applied to the Language Crash Course testing, and one to the Culture Shock Workshop testing: both forms were created on the Google Forms online platform, which was the most user-friendly resource available at the time to both the author and the participants.

Even though the number of test implementations for both activities was limited, due to the company's time constraints, the information and feedback collected during the testing rounds were sufficient to decide to implement them regularly, although with some minor modifications in terms of content and timing.

4.3.4 Additional Notes on Methodology

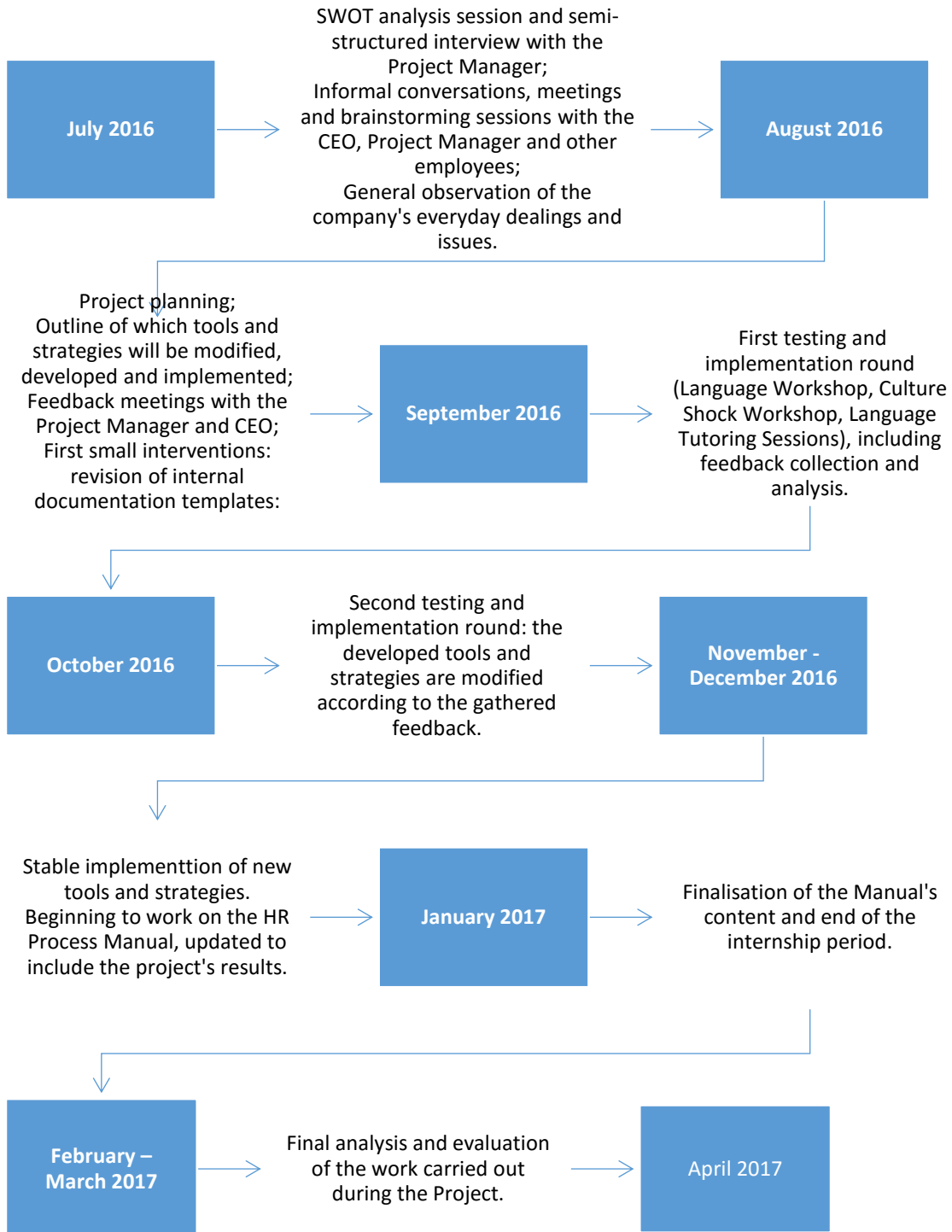
Even considering the many resources at play during its 6-month development (e.g. financial resources, physical tools used, time invested, documental sources reviewed, etc.) benefitted the most from the daily interaction with the company's employees and Board, without whom the project itself would not have been possible.

Finally, the language chosen for the final document was English, as Intern Europe is a Belfast-based company, which means that it operates in a country in which English is the official language; moreover, the company employees, international partners, host companies and participants exclusively communicate in English, even though they are not all native speakers, and all the tools developed in the context of the Project had to be in English, for practical purposes.

4.3.5 Project Timeline

As the organisation object of the study agreed upon an initial availability of six months, starting from mid-July 2016 and ending in mid-January 2017, the author developed the following timeline (Table 5) with positive feedback from Intern Europe's project manager:

Table 5. Timeline



5. IMPLEMENTED NEW MEASURES AND TOOLS

5.1 BEFORE THE INTERNSHIP

5.1.1 Email Templates Revision

As briefly stated in the Action Plan chapter, all the email templates used by Intern Europe employees in their communication with participants and saved in the CRM cloud system Zoho were reviewed, corrected and/or updated when needed.

Email templates are used by both the HR and Placements Team at all critical stages of the selection and placement process, from the very first contact with the participant to set up a Skype interview, to the sharing of the Pre-Arrival and Final Placement documents right before their arrival in Belfast, so it is fundamental that they be clear, correct, concise, and easy to understand for a young non-native speaker.

The author was supported in the operation by the Accommodation Manager, a native speaker with an English Literature degree and a certified CELTA English teacher, for issues related to form, as well as by the Project Manager and Marketing Manager, for what concerned the content and formatting guidelines.

For confidentiality, length, and relevance reasons the email templates are not made available in the appendices/attachments.

5.1.2 Skype Documents

Under the umbrella name “Skype documents” Intern Europe designates two documents which are used in relation with the Skype interview part of the Placement process, namely the Skype Questionnaire and the Skype Notes, the new versions of which are already being regularly used by the HR Team, after being revised by the Project Manager.

The Skype Questionnaire is a Word document used during the Skype call by the interviewer, including a series of questions and fields to fill in in order to have a complete picture of the qualifications, skills, work and life experience of the interviewee.

It is an informal, internal document which is printed and filled in by hand during the interview and then used together with the candidate’s CV to fill in the Skype Notes document;

both are then shared with the Placements Team together with the CV and any other relevant document, so that they are able to start looking for an appropriate Host Company for the person.

The version in use until July 2016 was quite basic, lengthy, and relatively difficult to use for the HR Team's new members and interns, so a few changes were implemented, keeping in mind the needs of both the HR and Placements Teams:

- A new font, font size, line spacing size and table structure were used;
- The bio section at the beginning was modified to specifically include the interviewee's group name and age, in addition to the already present name of the interviewer and interviewee, and date and time of the interview;
- Sample questions were added to the general questions section, which used to only contain simple section titles: this section is about the person's past international experience and living situation, and some of the most common answers are now already listed, so that it is quicker for the interviewer to simply tick them off when needed (e.g. "has visited the UK or Northern Ireland", "has only travelled for holidays", "has already lived alone")
- The two sections about the interviewee's current and past qualifications and work experiences were restructured into sub-sections, to make the information easier to collect during the interview as well as easier find afterwards. A "see CV" tick box was added, in case that piece of information is already thoroughly explained in the person's CV, again to save time;
- A line with preferred (for individuals) or set (for group participants) internships dates was added, so that it is not necessary to look it up separately on the CRM system anymore.
- A line about the candidate's motivations was added, including a sample question and a few tick boxes with the most common answers (e.g. "work experience", "life experience", "language improvement");
- The section about the internship preferences was expanded and made more detailed, also including tick boxes regarding the most common preferred sectors (e.g. "public", "private", "charity or NGO") and company sizes ("SME", "large"). Sample questions were added, to help inexperienced interviewers, and the section is repeated, to allow the interviewee to list two preferred internship options.

- A line labelled “Public Transport” was added, to make sure that the interviewer asks the interviewee if they have any issues with taking public transport (e.g. health issues);
- The section about language skills was expanded, adding a quick reference to the CEFRL language levels diagram, so that it is easier for the interviewer to assess the person’s language level, especially in the “English” field;
- Two skills sections were added, one being about IT skills (including a tick box list with the most common ones, e.g. “Office Suite”, “Photoshop”, “AutoCAD”, “Social Media”) and the other about other soft skills (again including a tick box-list with the most common ones, e.g. “Teamwork”, “Leadership”, “Time Management”). In both sections there is a tick box labelled “see CV”, in case the relevant skills are already properly listed and/or justified in the CV;
- A section labelled “Additional Information” was added, to gather information about “Volunteering & Associations”, “Hobbies”, “Music & Sports”, “Certificates”, and all other non-work and non-academic experiences;
- The section about “Skype Availability” was optimised, with a line about the person’s availability (including a tick box for the frequent answer “on request”) and one for their current Skype name (if unclear in the CV).

A simplified version of the document is available in Appendix 7.

The Skype Notes document is a Work document which is filled in electronically by the interviewer after the Skype, using both the information gathered during the interview and the content of the CV.

For the Project the document was optimised to adapt to the new Skype Questionnaire, and its purpose is to be a clear and concise point of reference for the Placements Team:

- The formatting and layout were modified;
- The bio section was expanded to add all contacts (e.g. Phone, email, Skype ID, as well as the person’s country of origin);
- Each section corresponds to a section in the Skype questionnaire, excluding the lines about motivation and public transport, as they are not strictly relevant for the next step of the placement process;

- A line labelled “General Impression” was added, so that the interviewer can take note of their overall impression of the candidate, be it positive or not;
- A line labelled “Communication” was added, to note if the candidate was easy to contact or if they prefer certain communication channel over others (e.g. WhatsApp messages instead of emails).

A simplified version of the document is available in Appendix 8.

As already stated above, after the interview the HR Team provides the Placement Teams with the person’s CV, handwritten Skype Questionnaire, filled-in and printed Skype Notes, and any other relevant paperwork (e.g. Cover Letters, Diplomas or Certificates, and description of their degree or school course, if relevant).

The filled-in Skype Notes document and participant’s CV are also uploaded on the CRM system Zoho for safekeeping.

5.1.3 Europass Curriculum Guidelines

An important part of Intern Europe’s placement service is the curriculum (CV) revision, which is done during and after the Skype interview stage, before the Placements Team send the participant’s information and documents to any potential Host Companies.

Given the fact that most participants are very young and inexperienced, and often have a very low English level, it is common for their CVs to be incomplete and grammatically incorrect, contain sentences written in their native language, be unclear about their work experience or qualifications, have inappropriate or hard-to-read formatting, and so on.

Usually, the HR Team member in charge of interviewing a specific candidate will use their CV information to pre-fill certain sections of the Skype Questionnaire, in order to make the interview easier and speed up the not-taking process: it is at this stage that the interviewer is able to start noting any mistakes or incomplete sections.

After the Skype interview, the interviewer will send an email to the candidate, encouraging them to update and correct their CV as soon as possible and listing all the main mistakes made and any useful recommendations that may apply to their case.

For this Project the author also created a Europass CV Guidelines document, including suggestions on how to create a good CV and a list of all the most common mistakes, as well as a CV example with useful annotations.

The choice of the Europass format was made because it is the one preferred and promoted by the Erasmus+ and the EU, and also because the process to fill it in online is very simple; however, for those participants whose CV is already in a clear and appropriate format it is specified that they can maintain their current CV and simply update it and correct it following the advice in the Guidelines.

The information included in the Guidelines mostly comes from the Europass CV official website and the official Europass Instructions document; the template was created by the author on the Europass website, while the section about Intern Europe's CV recommendations was compiled after analysing the most common issues in the company's participants' CVs (as listed at the beginning of this sub-chapter).

Finally, the document was created in 2 versions, one being shorter and simplified, for candidates with a lower level of English, and the other one more detailed, and is already being used regularly, after being revised by the Project Manager: both versions are appended (Appendices 19 and 20).

It was clear during the Project that the Guidelines were useful both for the HR Team members, who had some fixed quality criteria to refer to when revising the CVs, and for the participants themselves, when they had to review and correct their own, so they ended up being adopted as a permanent fixture.

5.1.4 Placement Documents

The Placement Documents are created through a collaboration between the HR and Placement Teams and uploaded on the CRM platform Zoho when finished.

The Potential Placement document is filled in by the HR Team with the candidate's name and a location map as soon as the Placements Team have found a potential host company for them and received a job spec (that is, a detailed internship task list and company description).

Its purpose is to show the candidate the internship opportunity and see if it matches their actual interests and requirements: if so, the candidate usually proceeds to a second Skype

interview with either the host company of the Placements Team (in rare cases the company might not deem it necessary); if not, the Placements Team will look for a different placement opportunity – one better suited to the candidate.

For the Project the opening message was corrected and modified, the formatting was aligned with the guidelines set by the Marketing Manager, and two versions were created: one for candidates whose potential host companies require a second interview (with a different opening message and a section with a proposed date and time for the interview), and one for candidates who will not have to go through a second selection.

The Final Placement document is similar to the Potential Placement one, but contains finalised information about the internship hours and dates, as well as a very detailed travel itinerary, including multiple transportation options if necessary (e.g. for when the start time or location on the first day is different from that of the rest of the internship).

It is created after the candidate has had their second Skype interview either with the Host Company or a member of the Placements Team, and sent it to them by the Placements Team.

Again, the opening message was corrected and modified and the formatting was aligned with the new formatting guidelines; a line about the internship dates was added (while it only used to contain the start date and time).

The three new Placement documents versions created for the Project could not be made available for length and confidentiality reasons.

5.1.5 Pre-Arrival Document and Attachments

At least 2 weeks before their arrival in Belfast, participants receive their Final Placement document, together with a Pre-Arrival document (or series of documents, depending on what is deemed necessary by the Project Manager or required by the sending partner).

For the Project the pre-existing Pre-Arrival document was updated, corrected and expanded, and integrated with 5 more documents, respectively about health, tourism in Northern Ireland, homestay rules, work placement rules and dress code, online and offline language learning resources.

First of all, the main document was reformatted and partially rewritten, starting from the opening message, both for clarity and to fulfil the new formatting guidelines established by the Marketing Manager.

New sections were added, such a table summarising all important deadlines and dates during the mobility (e.g. arrival, induction meeting, start of the language course if included, start of work placement, mid-placement meeting if needed, final meeting, end of work placement, departure), a paragraph about the free monthly social events, a paragraph about departure instructions (to be added to the already-existing paragraph about arrival instructions), and a paragraph about the Language Crash Course and any other relevant language and cultural activities planned.

The document also contains information about money in Northern Ireland, transportation (buses, trains, bicycles), useful websites and apps, electricity and adapters: all these sections were checked for mistakes and outdated details.

As for the other files:

- The “Health” information has been made available both as a separate file and as a section in the main Pre-Arrival document, as it is sometimes sent to the participants with health issues separately, for ease of printing. It contains details about what to do in case of illness and health emergencies, as well as information on the health system (pharmacies, health centres, hospitals, dentists, A&E, ambulance services and mental health support centres); for those interns with a low English level, a sample phone conversation to set up a doctor’s appointment was created by the author and added.
- The document labelled “Tourism in Northern Ireland” includes descriptions, opening times, contacts and prices of the main landmarks, monuments, museums and touristic attractions both in Belfast (e.g. the Botanic Gardens, Ulster Museum, Crumlin Gaol, Titanic Museum, City Hall) and in the rest of the region (e.g. Giant’s Causeway), as well as contact information of Intern Europe’s local travel guide services partners.
- Another document, the “Homestay Rules”, is dedicated to behaviour rules that interns who are accommodated in a Host Family should follow: the rules and suggestions were compiled based on a short list which was already being used in

the induction meeting and on the issues which have arisen in the past between interns and families.

- The “Work placement rules and dress code” document allowed the author to expand upon the few basic rules which were explained to the participants during the induction meeting on their first day at Intern Europe, and to add a section about how to dress appropriately for most placements. This document is necessary, as most interns do not have any work experience and are often unsure about how to behave and dress; it is also relevant because the workplace rules in the UK could potentially be different from what the interns have heard of or experienced in their countries of origin. The list of rules and dress code explanations were mostly taken from trusted international and UK online sources (the Society for Human Resources Management www.shrm.org; the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Services www.acas.org.uk, NI Business Info www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk, IOR Global Services www.iorworld.com), and a useful point of reference (though not situation-specific) were the 2010 “Guidelines on Unprofessional Behaviour in the Workplace and its Management” by the New Zealand Psychologists Board.
- Finally, as one of the main goals of all Intern Europe placement programme participants is improving their English level, the author created a document labelled “Learning English in Belfast”, containing links to trusted language learning apps (e.g. Duolingo), websites (e.g. the British Council’s) and YouTube channels (e.g. AnglopheniaTV), as well as information about local free English courses, weekly international meetings, language clubs, and the likes.

For length and confidentiality reasons the Pre-Arrival document cannot be made available, but the attachments pertaining to the Welcome Pack are appended (Appendices 13 to 18).

5.2 SUPPORT DURING THE INTERNSHIP

5.2.1 Placement Meetings

Clearly, every time that participants come to the Intern Europe office or in general meet with the company's staff for the Language Crash Course, Culture Shock Workshop, Intercultural activity, monthly social event or induction meeting it is an occasion to make sure that their placement experience is running smoothly and that they are happy.

Moreover, all participants have access to a 24/7 email and phone Helpline, in case of emergencies, and can drop by the Intern Europe headquarters during office hours, and email the Placements or HR team in case they need to discuss any pressing matter.

However, the programme also includes two formal meetings between the participant or group and Intern Europe: the mid-placement meeting (for placements longer than 4-6 weeks) and the final placement meeting (during the last week of any placement, regardless of the length).

The mid-placement meeting in particular has proven to be a good occasion to implement the Culture Shock Workshop (discussed below) as it often falls after around 2-4 weeks from the beginning of the placement, which is good timing: in fact, by this time most participant have already gone through the "honeymoon phase" of the culture shock cycle, and might be in need of advice and guidance to get through the "Frustration" and "Adjustment" phases, and it might also be a good opportunity to start introducing the concept of "Reverse Culture Shock".

The final placement meeting is run during the last week of mobility, and its main purpose is the completion of all mobility paperwork, as well as the collection of an overall feedback on the work placement and the stay abroad itself: during the final meeting participants fill in, receive the Intern Europe internship certificate, and bring in copies of the Trainee Skills Assessment document, the Supervisor's Comments document, and the Host Company internship certificate.

For the purposes of this project the structure, content and paperwork of these meetings were again reviewed, updated, and corrected or clarified when necessary, but the author found that they were already run in a satisfactory fashion, so no further interventions were needed.

5.2.2 The Language Crash Course

Among the initiatives taken during the project's development aimed at the overcoming of the language barrier and the improvement of the participants' English skills, the first to be developed was a Language Crash Course.

The Language Crash Course was created by combining the needs of the company and the advice contained in the relevant academic literature about training and training evaluation (Tamkin, Yarnall & Kerrin 2002; Mavin, Lee & Robson 2010; Warr, Bird & Rackham 1970) and language education in intercultural contexts (Furnham 1993, Furnham 2004), all applied within the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages offered by the European Council (2011); some online resources were also used, mostly taken from management tools websites (e.g. MindTools, The MBA Mentor).

As will be further explained below, the course was evaluated by using the CIRO and Kirkpatrick's approaches, appropriately modified and combined to adapt to the situation: in particular, the CIRO framework led to a deeper analysis of the course's context and input, which will be presented here.

Context-wise, the need for some sort of basic initial language preparation has always been critical for Intern Europe, as many of the exchange participants coming to have extremely low English skills (especially those participating in exchanges geared towards bettering their employability), and the language barrier makes their experience more difficult, both at work and in their daily life.

Until 2015, most participants coming through EU-funded programmes could benefit from an intensive language course at a local school, International House Belfast, which thing helped overcome the language barrier and ease culture shock.

Currently, after multiple grant cuts, the Erasmus+ programme does not cover such language training opportunities anymore, while requesting to participants the completion of an online language assessment and course, which has proven insufficient.

As a consequence, for all groups required to complete an Online Language Course (OLS) for the purposes of their Erasmus+ funding, the Language Crash Course will be accompanied by

Language Tutoring Sessions and Intercultural Activities focused on English interaction and socialization.

As far as the input is concerned, the course consists of a PowerPoint presentation, integrated with printed handouts and practical activities, games, and simulations: the actual content of the course cannot be disclosed for privacy and space reasons, but its purpose is to make sure that the participants have understood the information given during the Induction Meeting and can deal with everyday situations (an abridged version is available in Appendix 9).

The presentation, created by the author with the input of the Project Manager and CEO, is based on the structure of the Induction Meeting and touches on topics such as:

- Introductions;
- Talking about time, dates, etc.;
- Workplace dress code and what to do on the 1st day;
- Directions and dealing with public transportation;
- House: appliances, chores, dealing with different issues;
- Food: food allergies and tips on supermarket shopping;
- Health: illnesses, meds, dealing with emergencies;
- Safety: basic vocabulary and useful numbers.

The Power Point is enriched with visual aids such as pictures, as well as short activities and games, and is also distributed as a handout to those groups with a lower language level, so that it is easier for them to follow along.

Regarding the financial and HR input involved, a cost-effectiveness evaluation was done before the implementation, considering various factors, namely

- Salaries of involved staff (N/A, as it was only 1 hour and part of the employees' duties anyway);
- Accommodation and services (N/A, as it wasn't needed);
- Transportation of participants and staff (N/A, as it wasn't needed);
- Equipment and venue (N/A, as everything was done on-site with pre-existing equipment);
- General costs (N/A).

As it can be clearly inferred from the checklist above, the costs of the first testing of the Language Crash Course were basically non-existent, as no materials, equipment, special venues, external staff are needed, and all the involved staff would still have dedicated part of their working hours to the induction and preparation of participants.

However, it should be considered that the staff of Intern Europe (excluding the author) as it is now does not have any formal or non-formal preparation in the field of culture shock and training, which means that there would be an initial time investment in their internal training and “job shadowing”, should it be necessary in the future.

Finally, even though the CIRO model usually requires the definition of immediate, intermediate, and ultimate objectives at the Input analysis stage, considering the obstacles in place (e.g. short time allotted to training testing, lack of constant interaction with participants, reduced length of most placement mobility periods) it was only possible to set one single goal: the main objective of the Language Crash Course was and is to guarantee the understanding and retaining of the information introduced during the Induction Meeting or contained in the Pre-Arrival and Final Placement Documents.

As for the evaluation of the reaction of attendees, it was done based on what proposed in Kirkpatrick’s model (Kirkpatrick 1967), through the distribution of an online form the details of which will be laid out later.

The evaluation mostly focused on the training itself and its immediate effects on the participants, because:

- the evaluation of long-term results is not possible, given the standard length of the placements;
- the evaluation of learning outcomes in the short-to-mid-term has been simply done through an open question inserted in the form;
- the evaluation of behavioural outcomes in the mid-term was be done through informal observation of the participants during social events and other meeting opportunities.

Such limitations, on the other hand, did not affect the validity and usefulness of the evaluation at this stage, as the author was still mostly testing the content of the course and focusing on the short term/reaction dimension.

As suggested by Kirkpatrick, on the day after the test workshop all participants were presented with a questionnaire (one of the possible evaluation tools), consisting of a series of closed, Liker-scale questions (with answers on a scale from 0 to 5, in which 0 corresponds to a “completely negative” answer and 5 to a “fully positive” one).

The sections about the context and input of the training were taken from the CIRO approach, while those about the participants’ reactions, as well as their learning and behavioural outcomes, were inspired by Kirkpatrick’s 4-level model (Kirkpatrick 1967 in Craig & Bitte 1967; Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick 2009).

Participants were asked for feedback regarding the course’s topic, venue, materials, and trainer, and the form also included 3 open questions regarding what they thought could be removed, modified, or added.

For the testing of the course, its implementation, and the evaluation of its effects, a timeframe had to be established:

1. Testing and adapting, to be completed by the end of October 2016 (it was actually completed earlier, for reasons linked to the availability of test groups):
 - a. 1st test application: 16/09/2016
 - b. 2nd test application: 19/09/2016
2. Stable implementation calendar starting in late October-early November 2016: although the evaluation and troubleshooting process will never fully stop, it was expected for the tools to be mostly ready and only require small tweaking based on the needs of the involved groups and individual participants within that timeframe.

1ST TESTING ROUND. The first test application of the course took place on Friday, the 16th of September 2016, at 2.30 PM: it lasted around 90’ and was carried out in the Meeting Room of the Intern Europe offices, which is equipped with tables, chairs, a whiteboard and a laptop connected to a LCD screen; the 3 participants, all with A1 English level, were also provided with sheets of paper and pens.

The results of the evaluation questionnaires were the following (Table 6), available in full in appendix 5.1:

Table 6. Questionnaire results, Language Crash Course 1 (avg. figures)

Were you satisfied with the TOPIC/CONTENT of the workshop?	5
Were you satisfied with the VENUE/LOCATION of the workshop?	4.3
Were you satisfied with the MATERIALS of the workshop?	5
Were you satisfied with the TRAINER/"TEACHER" of the workshop?	5
What would you ADD to the workshop?	X
What would you REMOVE/ELIMINATE from the workshop?	X
What would you CHANGE/MODIFY in the workshop?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Longer - Incorporate music
Did you LEARN anything NEW ?	<p>YES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Useful vocabulary - Dealing with house issues - Asking for directions
Do you think it will be USEFUL for your future?	YES
Do you have any other SUGGESTION/ADVICE ?	X
Give an OVERALL mark to the workshop	10

The results, though positive, were possibly influenced by the low language level, which made it hard for them to give suggestions in written form; however, the informal conversations had with the participants confirmed them.

*** One of the participants answered twice by mistake.

2nd TESTING ROUND. The second test application of the Language Crash Course took place on Monday, the 19th of September 2016, at 2.30 PM: it lasted around 90' and was carried out in the Inventory Room of the Intern Europe offices, which is equipped with tables, chairs, a flip board and a PC with a larger screen. Participants were provided with sheets of paper and pens.

The session used the same PowerPoint presentation, to which some small modifications had been made (e.g. correcting typos, simplification of specific slides), and activities were adapted to the size and needs of the group, as it was a larger group than during the first test (6 instead of 3) and with a less homogeneous language level (1 advanced, 2 intermediate, 3 beginners).

On the day after the workshop, the 6 participants were presented with the same evaluation questionnaire used during the 1st testing round, with the following results, available in full in Appendix 5.2:

Table 7. Questionnaire results, Language Crash Course 2 (avg. figures)

Were you satisfied with the TOPIC/CONTENT of the workshop?	4.8
Were you satisfied with the VENUE/LOCATION of the workshop?	4.4
Were you satisfied with the MATERIALS of the workshop?	4.8
Were you satisfied with the TRAINER/"TEACHER" of the workshop?	4.8
What would you ADD to the workshop?	- More activities
What would you REMOVE/ELIMINATE from the workshop?	X
What would you CHANGE/MODIFY in the workshop?	X
Did you LEARN anything NEW?	YES - New words about health and house

	issues
Do you think you will BE USEFUL for the future?	YES
Do you have any other SUGGESTION/ADVICE?	- Have more sessions
Give an OVERALL mark to the workshop	9

It is to be noted that in this round the group was mixed (in that it had 1 participant with an excellent level, 1 with an upper intermediate level, 1 with an intermediate level, and 3 beginners) but could not be split up, which may have resulted in a slightly less enjoyable experience for the participants with a higher level.

Also, the course was held in a different, smaller location, as the usual one was occupied, which explains the lower location score.

FINAL OBSERVATIONS AND RESULTS. The course obtained very positive results in the short-term evaluation applied to its first 2 implementation rounds, and as observed in the following weeks through informal conversations with the participants it was considered useful, albeit short (which thing cannot be modified, for budget and time reasons).

Attendees showed to have understood the contents of the course, and when necessary were able to deal with everyday situations, as well as with small emergencies; in some occasions, they actually pointed out to the Intern Europe staff that they knew the information necessary in certain specific instances (e.g. illness, house issues) thanks to the course, as well as the Induction Meeting.

Having proven effective for the established objectives, it has been adopted by Intern Europe as language support measure for those groups whose English level is known to be below B1 on the CEFRL scale, also known as “lower intermediate”, and is currently being implemented at the beginning of the mobility, either during the Induction Day (like in this first test round) or a few days later.

5.2.3 The Language Tutoring Sessions

The Language Tutoring sessions are weekly 2-hour meetings during which participants can come to the Intern Europe offices to do any language-learning-related activities, most of which – as explained in the following paragraphs – are related to the online language course that is compulsory for those participants who receive an Erasmus+ scholarship (the majority, in Intern Europe’s case).

The references and source materials on the basis of which the idea of the Language Tutoring was conceived are the same at the root of the Language Crash Course and, although not a training session, the Language Tutoring was evaluated as if it were one (but with appropriate adaptations) by using the CIRO approach, with a focus on context and reaction.

The context of the Language Tutoring is the same as that of the Language Crash Course: since 2015, as the lack of funding for non-eLearning language courses makes it harder for participants whose English level is below average to gain good command of the language before starting their placement.

Today, participants have to complete an online language assessment and course provided by the Erasmus+ Programme, but as previously discussed, there are many factors which get in the way of completing the OLS (e.g. lack of time, motivation, appropriate devices, technical issues related to the fact that the OLS website is still basically a beta version).

Since for Intern Europe it is very important that participants are supported in their efforts to overcome the language barrier, the author thought of offering a weekly 2-hour “open office” space, during which participants can come and take advantage of Intern Europe’s facilities and equipment (PCs, headsets, Wi-Fi connection, desks) to complete their OLS, while an Intern Europe employee is available to answer any doubts and help in case of any technical issues.

Moreover, the Language Tutoring is also open to other participants who simply want to take advantage of the growing Intern Europe library (also an initiative of the author) to practice their reading skills, or simply want to drop by the office to talk about non-language-related issues, or again need to leave or pick up documents etc.: in this broader application, the Language Tutoring can ideally become a tool for bettering pastoral care.

As far as the input is concerned, a cost-effectiveness evaluation was done before the Language Tutoring implementation, considering:

- Salaries of involved staff (N/A, as it was only 1 hour and part of the employees' duties anyway);
- Accommodation and services (N/A, as it wasn't needed);
- Transportation of participants and staff (N/A, as it wasn't needed);
- Equipment and venue (N/A, as everything was done on-site with pre-existing equipment);
- General costs (N/A).

As it can be clearly inferred from the checklist above, the costs of the first testing of the Language Tutoring were basically non-existent.

Should the Language Tutoring be implemented regularly, it might imply either paying one of the employees for the 2 additional hours per week (if not possible to delegate to a future intern) or modifying the working hours of one of the employees (e.g. going from the usual 8.30 – 5.30 to 10.15 – 7.15).

However, even though the person in charge of the Language Tutoring is currently the author, the Language Tutoring implies very simple tasks and no additional training would be needed in case another employee is involved.

Again in the input analysis phase, it was noted that the tutoring did not call for the preparation of any specific training materials, aside from the collection of books for the Intern Europe Library, so the main investment made by the company was in terms of time dedicated to the activity and human resources (the staff member allocated to the activity).

Finally, even though the CIRO model usually requires the definition of immediate, intermediate, and ultimate objectives at the Input analysis stage, considering the obstacles in place (e.g. short time allotted to training testing, lack of constant interaction with participants, reduced length of most placement mobility periods) it was not possible to set long-term goals (which would approximately be as well the overall improvement in the person's language skills, but are outside of the company's control).

Thusly, the desired results would be:

- Short-term
 - regular attendance (“attendance”)
 - use of the Language Tutoring as an occasion to communicate with Intern Europe (“communication”)
- Mid-term
 - completion of the OLS.

On the other hand, however, the implementation and success of the Language Tutoring presented two obstacles, namely:

- The need of having the Language Tutoring run after the standard Intern Europe office hours, as well as the participants' working hours, made it so the chosen time is quite late in the day (17.15 – 19.15);
- Participation in the Language Tutoring is not (and can't be made) compulsory.

As already stated, the evaluation of long-term results will not be possible, considering the length of the work placements, while that of learning outcomes in the short-to-mid-term was done informally by Intern Europe over time, through informal observation of the participants during social events and other meeting occasions.

1st TESTING ROUND. The first test applications of the Language Tutoring took place on Tuesday 20/09/2016 and 27/09/2016, between 5.15 and 7.15 PM (its length was calculated based on the OLS estimated daily workload of 2 hours/week) and were carried out in:

- The Meeting Room of the Intern Europe offices, which is equipped with tables, chairs, a whiteboard and a laptop connected to a LCD screen (1st session);
- The PC Room, which is equipped with 3 desk PCs and 3 headsets and houses the Intern Europe Library (both sessions);
- The Meeting and Storage Room, equipped with tables and chairs (2nd session, as the Meeting Room was occupied).

The preparation required for the Language Tutoring was minimal; participants were reminded of the sessions via WhatsApp messages and emails.

The Language Tutoring is not a training session, which means that it was not really possible to evaluate the participants' immediate reactions in the usual ways (e.g. an evaluation form), especially considering the fact that turnout was very low (2 participants out of 9 eligible for the first session, and 3 out of 12 for the second session) and participants were quite dissatisfied with the OLS itself, because of its technical issues.

However, those participants who took advantage of the Language Tutoring said in informal conversations with the author that they really appreciated the initiative and the possibility to use Intern Europe's equipment, as well as the idea of having an allotted time for the OLS every week, which helped with focus and motivation.

Regarding the turnout issue, some of the participants were excused because of their health conditions, working time or host company location (e.g. they were sick and/or finish working at 6 and/or work really far from the Intern Europe offices): approximately 3-4 participants are in this position; other participants did not show up mostly for lack of interest (especially those still at the beginning of the mobility).

2ND TESTING ROUND. The 3rd iteration of the Language Tutoring took place on Tuesday 4/10/2016, between 5.15 and 7.15 pm, with very positive turnout:

- 9 participants out of 12;
- 2 justified absences (both working late and/or too far away).

All participants used Intern Europe's 3 desktop PCs or their personal laptops connected to the Intern Europe's Wi-Fi, and stayed in the rooms on the 3rd floor (Meeting Room and PC Room).

The author helped clarify some doubts related to the content of the online language course, as well as solve some technical issues; it was also an occasion to discuss their work placements and to update the group about upcoming social events (e.g. Halloween event).

Moreover, an Attendance List was created, to help keep track of participants, which thing might also be useful in the future to report to our Partners abroad.

Again, all Language Tutoring attendees eventually completed their OLS and expressed satisfaction with the initiative, but assessing how much they have improved their English skills was not possible for Intern Europe.

FINAL OBSERVATIONS AND RESULTS. As previously stated, the main goal of the Language Tutoring was achieved in all testing rounds: attendees eventually completed their OLS.

On the other hand, the main issue of the Language Tutoring was turnout: during the second testing round the focus was on communicating better and more clearly with the students, sending a reminder bot the day before the Language Tutoring and on the day of, and highlighting the convenience of the opportunity which is being offered by Intern Europe

However, some factors cannot be overcome (e.g. working hours, host companies' location, health issues), and the fact that the Language Tutoring is not compulsory is also an issue: had attendance not risen at the 3rd implementation round, the Language Tutoring might have been cancelled.

All things considered, even though the "regular attendance" goal was not achieved, the very positive feedback obtained from participants who had attended the Language Tutoring made it clear that it was a useful tool, as well as a way to keep in touch with the attendees (thus satisfying the "communication" goal), and its regular implementation started in late October 2016, with no further testing.

5.3 INTEGRATION AND SOCIALISATION

If we apply what has been inferred from the literature to the case at hand, we must note that the company socialisation process is outside of Intern Europe's control, as it is the responsibility of each host company: as a consequence, it is necessary to guarantee at least proper integration and cultural adjustment of the intern outside of the workplace, and try to encourage their socialisation indirectly (Ashfort, Sluss & Harrison, 2007).

In this respect, for example, Intern Europe have always implemented a series of interesting initiatives but, until the time of this project, they had never been compiled and systematised into a manual; the author was able to identify and list them only thanks to constant observation of the company's everyday activities, internal paperwork consultation, and formal and informal meetings with the CEO, Project Manager, and other colleagues:

- Preparatory actions, with the purposes of facilitating the participants' future integration and socialisation while at the same time reducing culture shock:

- Work-related and general information is provided to the interns before their arrival thanks to the *Potential* and *Final Placement documents*, as well as the *Pre-Arrival document*;
- Accommodation management and maintenance, to make sure that all accommodations are welcoming and of good quality;
- Support in any visa-related, grant-related, or other relevant administrative procedures (when necessary);
- Welcoming of the participants at the airport, central bus station, or house, according to the preliminary arrangements;
- *Check in* procedures at the accommodation, including the distribution of personal *Welcome Packs* containing food, a map, a list of house rules, and other useful information.
- Socialisation and general support while the intern is in Belfast:
 - *Induction Meeting* at Intern Europe on the first available weekday;
 - Monthly free social events;
 - *Mid and Final Placement Meetings*, aimed at monitoring the satisfaction levels of the interns and identifying any issues;
 - 24/7 email and phone *Helpline service*, for any emergency;
 - *Social events*;
 - General support in any sensitive dealings with the host company or with other participants.

These measures were improved upon, expanded, and integrated with further tools during the project, as outlined in the following chapters.

5.3.1 The Culture Shock Workshop

Like for the Language Crash Course and Language Tutoring, the Culture Shock Workshop was developed by combining Intern Europe's needs and the information derived from the academic literature about training and training evaluation (Tamkin, Yarnall & Kerrin 2002; Mavin, Lee & Robson 2010; Warr, Bird & Rackham 1970), culture shock and education in intercultural contexts (Furnham 1993, 2004 and 2012; Ward, Bochner, & Furnham 2005; Anderson 1994). Some online resources were also used, mostly from youth websites (e.g. Aiesec.at, CommunicAid).

Again, the evaluation process was similar to that used for the Language Crash Course: the sections about the context and input of the training were taken from the CIRO approach, while those about the participants' reactions, as well as their learning and behavioural outcomes, were inspired by Kirkpatrick's 4-level model.

The main objective of the Culture Shock Workshop was to give participants the "language" and tools to understand culture shock and overcome it in the most positive way possible, always taking into consideration that the Intern Europe staff does not have any access to them during their working hours or when they are at home: thusly, fostering independence was crucial.

Context-wise, the need for some sort of culture shock preparation emerged in the early days of Intern Europe (before the rebranding): many of the exchange participants coming to Belfast would be ill-prepared for the experience, and would experience the negative emotional consequences of moving to another country, especially when the language barrier was more problematic.

In 2015 a first version of the Culture Shock Workshop was developed and tested, but proved too complex and not sufficiently interactive: this first version has been used as a starting point for the development of the current Culture Shock Workshop, although modified in length, content, language, and approach, with the objective of being shorter, easier to follow, more interactive, and more practically useful.

As the culture shock is usually increased in the case of participants with a lower language level, the Culture Shock Workshop was designed to complement on the one hand the Language Crash Course and Language Tutoring Sessions, more focused on language learning, and on the other, by a series of Intercultural Social Activities (ISA) focused on interaction and socialization.

A cost-effectiveness evaluation was done before implementation, considering:

- Salaries of involved staff (N/A, as it was only 1 hour and part of the employees' duties anyway);
- Accommodation and services (N/A, as it wasn't needed);
- Transportation of participants and staff (N/A, as it wasn't needed);

- Equipment and venue (N/A, as everything was done on-site with pre-existing equipment);
- General costs (N/A).

As it can be clearly inferred from the checklist above, like in the case of the Language Tutoring sessions, the costs of the first testing of the Culture Shock Workshop were basically non-existent: no materials, equipment, special venues or external trainers are needed, and all the involved staff would still have dedicated part of their working hours to the induction and preparation of participants.

However, it should be considered that the staff of Intern Europe as it is now does not have any formal or non-formal preparation in the field of culture shock and training, which means that the HR team is currently receiving some session-specific training (from the author) on how to run such workshops.

The first test implementation of the Culture Shock Workshop took place on Wednesday, the 17th of August 2016, at 4.30 pm: it lasted around 45' and was carried out in the Meeting Room of the Intern Europe offices, which is equipped with tables, chairs, a whiteboard and a laptop connected to a LCD screen.

The Culture Shock Workshop consists of a mostly-visual Power Point presentation, touching on topics such as:

- the definition of culture;
- the concept of culture shock;
- the culture shock cycle's phases (the U-curve, Oberg 1960)
- reverse culture shock (the W-curve, Gullahorn & Gullahorn 1963)
- the symptoms of culture shock
- the tools and techniques to overcome it.

As Intern Europe is based in Belfast, NI, the workshop also covers the main local features in terms of housing (structure and characteristics of a typical house), behaviour and interaction (e.g. etiquette and personal space), local slang, and history, allowing for plenty of discussion time regarding the personal experience of each of the participants.

The Power Point is enriched with visual aids such as pictures and videos, as well as icebreaking and interactive short activities and games, and is appended (Appendix 10).

The workshop is to be implemented at the beginning of the mobility, either during the Induction Day or a few days later; however, for logistical reasons the group who participated in the 1st testing (6 people, aged 19-31, coming from Spain) had already been in Belfast for 1 month.

They were chosen because of the overall extremely low level of English showed by the group, which allowed the trainer to see how the workshop would fare when implemented with participants starting at an A1-A2 language level (basic user level, according to the CEFRL).

On the day after the workshop all participants were sent via email a Google Form adapted from the one created for the Language Crash Course:

- the evaluation of long-term results will not be possible and has been eliminated;
- the evaluation of learning outcomes in the short-to-mid-term has been simply done through an open question inserted in the form. All participants were asked about their knowledge level on the topic beforehand and confirmed that they had no familiarity with it;
- the evaluation of behavioural outcomes in the mid-term was done through informal observation of the participants during social events and other meeting occasions. The form includes a question about how they might consciously modify their behaviour in order to overcome culture shock in the future.

The questionnaire is available in the comments: it was sent to the 6 workshop participants but, because of some technical issues on the part of one of them, only 5 responses were recorded, showing overall positive or very positive results.

Results were calculated on a scale from 0 (extremely negative) to 5 (extremely positive): only the last question required an answer on a scale from (extremely negative/absolutely not sufficient) 1 to 10 (absolutely positive/excellent), in order to give more options to the participants.

All results summarised here (Table 8 and 9) are also available in Appendix 6.

Table 8. Questionnaire results, Culture Shock Workshop 1 (avg. figures)

Were you satisfied with the TOPIC/CONTENT of the workshop?	4.4
Were you satisfied with the VENUE/LOCATION of the workshop?	4.6
Were you satisfied with the MATERIALS of the workshop?	4.4
Were you satisfied with the TRAINER/"TEACHER" of the workshop?	5
What would you ADD to the workshop?	X
What would you REMOVE/ELIMINATE from the workshop?	X
What would you CHANGE/MODIFY in the workshop?	X
Did you LEARN anything NEW ?	<p>YES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New words - Info about Culture Shock and how to deal with it
Do you think you will CHANGE YOUR BEHAVIOUR in the future?	<p>YES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Becoming more mature and independent - Know how to deal with culture shock
Do you have any other SUGGESTION/ADVICE ?	X
Give an OVERALL mark to the workshop	9

FINAL OBSERVATIONS AND RESULTS: considering the low language level of the participants, some of the answers were partially discussed orally, during a second, informal meeting, and the results, though positive, were possibly influenced by:

- The fact that the participants already knew the trainer (e.g. the author);

- The low language level, which made it hard for them to give suggestions in written form.

However, upon indirect observation of their job performance and direct observation of their behaviour in the social events organised by Intern Europe, this first implementation of the Culture Shock Workshop was deemed successful.

CULTURE SHOCK WORKSHOP – 2ND IMPLEMENTATION. The second test implementation of the workshop took place on Friday, the 23rd of September 2016, at 2.30 pm; it lasted around 55' and was carried out in the Meeting Room of the Intern Europe offices, which is equipped with tables, chairs, a whiteboard and a laptop connected to a LCD screen.

In this case, the overall language level of the group was around B1, or lower intermediate, according to the CEFRL, which thing made interaction easier; the 6 participants were provided with sheets of paper and pens.

The same context, content, evaluation method, feasibility and cost analysis apply to this second round of testing, too, even though the PowerPoint presentation was slightly amended for added clarity.

The results of the evaluation (table 9) were quite similar to those of the first group, but it is to be noted that as questionnaires were distributed in paper form for practical reasons (the upcoming weekend would have made it hard to receive their answers immediately), the original response sheets could not be made available in the appendices.

Table 9. Questionnaire results, Culture Shock Workshop 2 (avg. figures)

Were you satisfied with the TOPIC/CONTENT of the workshop?	4.4
Were you satisfied with the VENUE/LOCATION of the workshop?	4
Were you satisfied with the MATERIALS of the workshop?	4.6
Were you satisfied with the TRAINER/"TEACHER" of the workshop?	5

What would you ADD to the workshop?	x
What would you REMOVE/ELIMINATE from the workshop?	x
What would you CHANGE/MODIFY in the workshop?	- It could be longer
Did you LEARN anything NEW?	YES - New words - Info about Culture Shock and how to deal with it
Do you think you will CHANGE YOUR BEHAVIOUR in the future?	YES - Becoming more mature and independent - Know how to deal with culture shock
Do you have any other SUGGESTION/ADVICE?	x
Give an OVERALL mark to the workshop	9.4

FINAL OBSERVATIONS AND RESULTS: once again, participants showed interest and enthusiasm in the subject matter, and their reaction was extremely positive; also, in the following months, while discussing their adaptation to life in Belfast, participants from this group were able to identify some behaviours and situation described during the workshops, such as which coping mechanisms seemed more effective to deal with culture shock.

5.3.2 Intercultural Social Activities – The Cultural Activities Handbook

As previously discussed, another issue which was tackled during the project was the necessity of improving cultural integration of the participants in the local environment, as well as increasing interaction and socialisation among themselves.

The idea of focusing on language learning and culture shock is connected to the issue of integration and socialisation, too, but cannot suffice unless some interaction opportunities are not

provided (especially considering that many of the participants are still very young and not fully socially independent).

In this respect, Intern Europe already implemented free monthly social events for all interns and encouraged mixing groups and individuals from different countries and mother tongue while arranging accommodations, however, management felt the need to have more targeted activities, also in response to requests from international partners.

Thanks to her previous experience as youth worker and animator, the author compiled a short Handbook of Intercultural Activities, including 5 examples of games or other activity types, adapted to Intern Europe's needs.

Although the text of the Handbook cannot be shared in full for confidentiality reasons (it is an internal document, an abridged version of which is in Appendix 11), the activities included were:

- *Intern Europe World Café*: the World Café is a recognised conflict-resolution and intercultural dialogue method, with relevant information available at www.theworldcafe.com;
- *International indoor picnic*: inspired by International Picnic Day, which is celebrated on the 18th of June every year, it is an occasion to share traditional food and beverages from one's country, to foster interaction and tolerance;
- *Intercultural quiz night*: this activity fuses a typically English and Northern Irish pub game with interesting facts from the countries of the participants, to encourage cultural understanding;
- *Speed meet*: a networking event designed to encourage one-on-one interaction and socialisation, especially for situations in which interns do not know each other at all and there is the need to break the ice among them;
- *Movie Night*: participants are invited to the Intern Europe's offices not only to watch a movie, but also to play related games and engage in a debate afterwards. The chosen movies are preferably to be linked with Belfast and the history of Northern Ireland, to encourage cultural understanding.

The aforementioned activities are now being used either in substitution of the standard Intern Europe social gatherings or as additional activities when necessary, in collaboration with the company's Marketing Manager.

They were not formally tested before implementation, as they are inspired from already-recognised intercultural dialogue and socialisation methods and were easily introduced in the standard Intern Europe social event calendar, which is very informal.

5.3.3 Company Induction Guidelines

On their first weekday in Belfast, Intern Europe's participant take part in an Induction Meeting, whose content and structure have been in use for more than one year and proved to be effective and successful.

A standard Intern Europe Induction Meeting focuses on welcoming participants to the city and the region, going through some practical and logistical issues such as behaviour in the accommodations and at the workplace, local transport system, touristic landmarks, and what to do in case of emergencies.

Often, groups are also taken on a walking tour from Intern Europe's office to the city centre, so that they can familiarise themselves with the area and also buy any train or bus tickets with an Intern Europe employee's supervision, if needed.

All interns must also participate in an induction meeting on their first day on the job; however, Intern Europe is not able to make sure that the length, content, and structure of such meeting are appropriate and sufficient in every case.

Since, as previously stated, the introduction of a new intern or employee in a company is critical, and especially for international interns fundamental for their integration and socialisation within the organisation, the author drafted a document containing useful induction guidelines, which potentially could be of help for those companies which are small or are hosting an intern or apprentice (local or international) for the first time.

The document contains an explanation of what an induction process is and what positive impact it could have on the company, followed by detailed content guidelines and a timeline for each stage of the induction process, starting from the Induction Meeting on the very first day of

the intern at the company, what to do during their first week, and how to deal with participants who are doing a longer placement period.

The guidelines took into consideration the recommendations given by relevant UK organisations, such as ACAS (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Services - www.acas.org.uk), LRA (Labour Relations Agency – www.lra.org.uk), NI Business Info (www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk), NI Direct Government Services (www.nidirect.gov.uk), and the renowned UK website SafeWorkers (www.safeworkers.co.uk): the choice fell on UK and Northern Irish sources because the placements all take place in Belfast and must abide to local legislation and regulations.

The final draft, although completed, is currently undergoing scrutiny and evaluation by the Placements Team (the department in charge of managing relations with local host companies), so it has not been tested nor implemented yet; however, it must be said that for the most part Intern Europe works with trusted companies with an history of successfully hosting interns and apprentices, so the guidelines are not an urgent necessity, at the moment.

The content of the draft is available in Appendix 6 for reference.

5.3.4 Additional Activities Required by Partners

In rare cases, Intern Europe international partners will ask the company to schedule a series of cultural and language-focused activities, whenever the funding is sufficient to cover them.

In the past, most of these additional activities were done through collaboration with local travel companies (e.g. to organise day trips to Northern Irish landmark Giant's Causeway), as well as by taking advantage of any cultural events organised by Belfast City Hall (e.g. the Christmas Markets)

As part of the project, Intern Europe has been more open to accept such requests and manage them internally, and has been able to utilise the activities proposed in the Cultural Activities Handbook to create interesting activity and events programmes for participant groups (e.g. the World Café and Movie Night activities were implemented with a German group in October and November 2016).

5.4 THE MANUAL

As an indirect management optimisation measure, the author worked on a HR Process Manual, an internal document outlining all the actions and documents related to the intern management and support process.

The manual will be extremely useful for guaranteeing consistency in the implementation of the new tools and strategies developed within the present project together with the pre-existing ones, as well as to make sure that future Intern Europe employee will have a concrete guide to consult upon their joining the company.

It shall include detailed descriptions of all phases of the intern placement and support process, with specific indications on which actions must be implemented at each stage, by whom, and in which manner: as a consequence, the manual will be mostly geared towards the necessities of the HR Team, with references on the roles of the Placements Team, Project Manager, Marketing Manager and Accommodation Manager in the process.

However, because of internal changes in the company, including the ongoing transition to the CRM platform Zoho and website redesign, modifications in the marketing and recruitment process, and a Board reshuffle, the HR Process Manual has not been completed yet: the author will keep on working on it during the spring and summer 2017.

The current Manual's Table of Contents is available in Appendix 12.

6. CONCLUSIONS, CHALLENGES, AND AVENUES OF FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

The project, originally meant to be completed between July 2016 and January 2017, proved itself to be a constantly-changing and evolving challenge, not only because of its very nature, but also because of the many changes undergone by the company and the European political context during that time.

What proved to be the easiest was surely the update of the company's paperwork templates, placement documents, pre-arrival materials, and email templates: although it is a process that continues to this day, it can be done with relative ease, as most administrative work.

On the other hand, all changes in the processes of the company and additional activities implied much greater preparation, planning, effort, and general level of uncertainty, because of a series of factors listed and analysed below.

Firstly, the lack of a defined pattern in the characteristics of the participant's groups (e.g. size, country of origin, level of English, preferred housing arrangements, age, field of internship, length of the stay abroad, budget, among other factors) made it difficult to create templates for tools and activities that would satisfy the needs of the majority.

It also got in the way of testing the aforementioned tools and activities, as it was difficult to set a calendar of testing rounds and select relatively homogeneous test groups, when participants were constantly arriving to and leaving the country.

Secondly, but equally importantly, although the existing scientific literature was extremely useful in laying the groundwork for the project, providing a theoretical foundation in terms of what concerns issues related to culture shock, cultural and linguistic adaptation, and internship and apprenticeship's best practices and challenges (just to cite a few), it often did not offer much in terms of practical solutions, which were what the company sought.

In this respect, the previous work and volunteering experience of the author with young people and non-formal education in the context of European mobility, language teaching, and charitable social work proved very useful, as can be seen in the positive results obtained with the implementation of the Language Crash Course, the Culture Shock Workshop, and the Intercultural and language

Thirdly, the fact of the author being alone not only in the development, but also in the actual implementation of most of the activities, because of lack of budget and staff (as it is bound to happen in a SME the clients of which operate on grants, charity funds and scholarships), often slowed down or limited the process, and continues to do so to this day.

Along the same lines, another resource that lacked was time: the bulk of the research, development, and testing work had to be done during the very early stages of the project, usually with tight deadlines dictated by the amount of HR work that needed to be done on the side, more than by the company itself.

Clearly, the challenges cited did not surprise the author, as they were already identified in the literature on non-profit organisations; for example, in her contribute to the symposium “Human Resources Management in Non-profit Organisations, scholar Dahlia B. Lynn defines the work environment of non-profits as constrained, being often understaffed, underfunded, and with service hours focused more on the needs of their clientele than on what would be more sustainable for the staff itself.

Truth to be told, Intern Europe is not legally a non-profit; however, it still mostly operates like one and interacts with largely non-profit international and local partners, which work under similar constraining factors themselves.

On a different note, it must be said that the author entered the company at a time of change, which on the one hand constituted a great occasion to try to implement new ideas, but on the other made every new addition and process modification potentially temporary, even after receiving approval from the Project Manager and CEO: as an example, the marketing and CRM strategy of Intern Europe is currently undergoing a deep restructuring (due to a greater focus on individual participants, a change in the recruitment and selection process thanks to the development of a new website, and the transfer of most of the Placements, Marketing and HR Teams’ activities on the online platform Zoho).

Moreover, the current Project Manager is due to leave the company soon, meaning that the leadership change will surely impact the company internal structure, processes, and overall workings (even though the culture and general attitude will most likely be maintained, as the new Project Manager comes from Intern Europe’s sister company, which shares a similar ethos).

Aside from the listed issues, it can't be stressed enough how working a full 40-hour week as HR Team Member, with additional evening and weekend work when necessary (e.g. for activities, events, trips, or arrival of groups in Belfast) deeply reduced the amount of time and energy that the author could invest in the project; however, the company was also extremely supportive throughout the process and believed in it, which made all efforts and work-related stress absolutely worth it.

All in all, the company judged the project to have been very successful, having received positive feedback from individual participants and international Partner organisations, and decided to give some continuity to its results by employing the author after the official end of her internship: as of March 2017, the main challenge is understanding how a salaried employee (which by definition is more expensive for a company and less flexible, time- and task-wise, than an intern) can continue the work started during the project in a sustainable manner, especially by working in synergy with colleagues from other teams.

To give some practical example of which newly-developed tools are currently in use, the Language Crash Course and other types of language workshops are being implemented regularly, whenever there is a need for it. Similarly, the Culture Shock Workshop is used for groups that stay in the country for longer periods, as an additional activity to integrated the Mid-Placement meeting, while on the other hand the Language Tutoring has not been needed for groups arrived after January 2017, because the manner in which Intern Europe's international partners have managed the OLS requirement has changed (now most groups complete their online language course before arriving in Belfast), but will be resumed should circumstances change.

All in all, the company's current internship offer is now even more coherent with the quality criteria suggested by the European Youth Forum in the European Quality Charter of Internships and Apprenticeships (2010), thanks to a greater focus on intern support and work placement quality; nonetheless, in terms of the future, there is still a lot that can be done to improve the management of and support to Intern Europe's international interns, but only time will tell what kind of impact the company's internal changes and "Brexit" will have.

In fact, the UK (and, thusly, Northern Ireland) leaving the EU will surely affect the visa legislation and restrict, if not completely block, access to Erasmus+ and European Social Fund grants and scholarships, which will surely impair Intern Europe's international partners' ability to

send exchange participants to Belfast and individual students and university graduates to choose the country for their mobility experiences.

In an official memo, titled “Current status of the Erasmus+ programme in the UK”, dated 23/03/2017, the UK Erasmus National Agency assured that all Erasmus+ funding will remain stable at least until the end of the programme’s run, in 2020, but only time will tell how events will unfold.

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8. APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 - EQCIA (European Quality Charter on Internships and Apprenticeships)

CARTA EUROPEA DE QUALIDADE DE ESTÁGIOS E APRENDIZAGENS

European Youth Forum, 2010 - Translation of the articles relevant to the project

Artigo 1

Acreditamos que os estágios e as aprendizagens devem ser primariamente experiências educacionais e que:

- Os estágios e as aprendizagens não substituem o emprego tradicional
- Os estágios e as aprendizagens se bem organizadas ajudam os jovens a adquirir experiência profissional e adicionar competências práticas aos conhecimentos e às habilitações obtidas anteriormente através da educação formal e não-formal;
- Os estágios e as aprendizagens ajudam no processo de orientação profissional e oferecem uma perspectiva mais ampla sobre um leque mais variado de setores profissionais;
- Os estágios e as aprendizagens proporcionam experiência profissional reconhecida, que desenvolve as suas competências e melhora as suas capacidades profissionais;
- Os estágios e as aprendizagens devem ser implementados sob supervisão de um mentor competente e proporcionar canais de avaliação e reclamação, para monitorar o progresso do estagiário e a qualidade da experiência de estágio ou aprendizagem
- Os estagiários e os aprendizes devem ser informados no início do seu estágio ou aprendizagem dos seus direitos sociais e de trabalhadores, de quem são os representantes sindicais, das suas responsabilidades para com a empresa e dos potenciais riscos de saúde e segurança relativos ao seu trabalho. Deve-se também proporcionar ao estagiário ou aprendiz a apropriada proteção social;

Artigo 2

Acreditamos que os estágios (como parte de um percurso de ensino superior) e as aprendizagens devem respeitar os critérios seguintes:

- Existência de um contrato escrito e legalmente vinculativo entre a instituição de ensino, o estagiário ou aprendiz e a organização de acolhimento, que inclui os princípios fundamentais do estágio ou aprendizagem, o número de créditos académicos que serão atribuídos após a conclusão da experiência e descrição dos

objetivos de aprendizagem e das tarefas que serão desempenhadas pelo estagiário ou aprendiz;

- Duração da experiência e tarefas previstas pelo estágio ou aprendizagem correspondentes aos objetivos de aprendizagem concordados com o estagiário ou aprendiz no início da experiência;
- Suporte constante ao longo de todo o estágio ou aprendizagem, por parte de um ou mais supervisores que tenham recebido formação específica na área;
- Direito de receber um reembolso para as despesas incorridas durante a experiência, ou alternativamente direito de ter alimentação, alojamento e transporte públicos pagos ou fornecidos pela organização;
- Remuneração digna para as tarefas desempenhadas fora dos requerimentos definidos no contrato de estágio ou aprendizagem, inclusive compensação para as horas extra.
- Critérios de avaliação do período de estágio ou aprendizagem claros.

Artigo 3

Acreditamos que os estágios e as aprendizagens que se desenrolam fora de ou após o período de educação formal idealmente não deveriam existir. Porém, quando existem, devem respeitar os critérios seguintes:

- Existência de um contrato escrito e legalmente vinculativo que inclui a duração do estágio ou aprendizagem, a remuneração prevista e a descrição dos objetivos de aprendizagem e das tarefas que serão desempenhadas pelo estagiário ou aprendiz;
- Remuneração digna e não inferior ao limiar da pobreza da UE (que corresponde ao 60% da média salarial do País) ou ao salário mínimo nacional, caso este seja mais favorável; coerente com as tarefas desempenhadas pelo estagiário ou aprendiz e com o horário de trabalho (as horas extras devem ser compensadas separadamente). A remuneração deve ser regulada por leis ou contratos coletivos, em conformidade com as práticas nacionais;
- A participação em estágios ou aprendizagens deveria ser limitada aos estudantes e recém-graduados. A duração da experiência deve ser limitada a um número de meses razoável e fixo;
- Reembolso das despesas incorridas durante o estágio ou aprendizagem;
- Inclusão do estagiário ou aprendiz no sistema de segurança social nacional, sobretudo no que diz respeito a saúde, o desemprego e a reforma;
- Avaliação de médio-prazo, consideração da possibilidade do estagiário ou aprendiz ser contratado como empregado com contrato de tempo integral durante a experiência e avaliação final;
- Limitação do número máximo de estagiários ou aprendizes para cada organização que proporcione este tipo de experiências;

- Promoção transparente da oportunidade de estágio ou aprendizagem, que inclui uma descrição detalhada das tarefas a desempenhas e das condições de trabalho.

Artigo 4

Exortamos todos os atores envolvidos a desenvolver progressivamente as seguintes políticas de suporte e monitorização, para uma melhor implementação de estágios e aprendizagens de elevada qualidade:

- Enquadramento legal e reconhecimento de competências
 - Os estágios e as aprendizagens devem ser incluídos na legislação nacional e os empregadores devem receber assistência em relação a qualquer dúvida legal ligada ao processo de implementação dos mesmos;
 - A nível europeu devem ser criados mecanismos de promoção da partilha de boas práticas nesta área, assim como dos critérios fundamentais que definem um estágio ou aprendizagem “de qualidade”;
 - A nível europeu e nacional devem ser criados sistemas de certificação e reconhecimento dos conhecimentos e das competências adquiridas através de estágios e aprendizagens, para oferecer suporte adicional à integração dos jovens no mercado de trabalho e à mobilidade profissional juvenil;
- Monitorização e estudos estatísticos
 - Disponibilização de estudos estatísticos sobre estágios e aprendizagens a nível nacional e europeu, focando-se sobretudo no número de experiências disponíveis, os benefícios sociais proporcionados aos estagiários e aprendizes, a duração média das experiências, os subsídios pagos aos estagiários e aprendizes e a idade dos participantes;
 - Disponibilização de uma panorâmica a nível nacional e europeu sobre os programas de estágio e aprendizagem existentes e do seu enquadramento nos respetivos sistemas jurídicos;
- Parcerias
 - Encorajamento e suporte de parcerias a nível nacional entre escolas, universidades e organizações da sociedade civil;
 - Incremento do número de empréstimos para o desenvolvimento profissional e encorajamento e suporte aos empregadores para investimento em ações de formação;
 - As escolas devem assistir os jovens na procura de oportunidades de estágio ou aprendizagem apropriadas;
 - As organizações estudantis e os sindicatos devem assistir os estagiários e os aprendizes ao longo de toda a experiência.

APPENDIX 2 – Interview with the Project Manager (Structure)

THE HISTORY OF INTERN EUROPE LTD

- When was it founded, and how?
- Where is it located?
- Is it connected to any other organization or entity?

BASIC INFORMATION

- What is its field of operations? Did it change through time?
- How many people work at IE? In which positions?

INTERN EUROPE SERVICES

- What is IE main service? Did it change through time?
- What are its main partners?
- What are its main clients?
- With which companies does it collaborate?
- What is IE connection with the Erasmus+ framework, as well as other funding frameworks?

THE INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME

- What do the internships you offer include?
- What is the HR process they follow?
- What are the costs for all the parties involved?
- What are the main issues with the interns?
- What are the main issues with the partners?
- What are the main issues with the companies?

THE PROJECT

- How did the need for a new Intern Support Process (working title) arise?
- What do you expect from this Project?

APPENDIX 3 - SWOT Analysis Meeting (Structure)

STRENGTHS

- What advantages does your organization have?
- What do you do better than anyone else?
- What unique or lowest-cost resources can you draw upon that others can't?
- What do people in your market see as your strengths?
- What is your organization's **Unique Selling Proposition**?

CORE COMPETENCES

- Relevance for your clients and partners.
- Difficulty of imitation
- Breadth of application. It applies to various new, non-niche markets. Allows for sustainable growth.

WEAKNESSES

- What could you improve?
- What should you avoid?
- What are people in your market likely to see as weaknesses?
- What factors lose you sales?

OPPORTUNITIES

- What good opportunities can you spot?
- What interesting trends are you aware of?
 - *Changes in technology and markets on both a broad and narrow scale.*
 - *Changes in government policy related to your field.*
 - *Changes in social patterns, population profiles, lifestyle changes...*
 - *Local events.*

THREATS

- What obstacles do you face?
- What are your competitors doing?
- Are quality standards or specifications for your job, products or services changing?
- Is changing technology threatening your position?
- Do you have bad debt or cash-flow problems?
- Could any of your weaknesses seriously threaten your business?

APPENDIX 4 - Evaluation Form/Language Crash Course



LANGUAGE CRASH COURSE 16/09

Hello!

This form is aimed at collecting your **FEEDBACK, SUGGESTIONS** and **OPINIONS** regarding the **LANGUAGE CRASH COURSE** held at the Intern Europe offices on Friday, the 16th of September 2016.

Please, read the questions carefully and use a dictionary or online translator if you do not understand them. Do the same if you have issues responding.

Thank you for your help!

Ludovica Piccinini
The Intern Europe Team

* Required

Were you satisfied with the TOPIC/CONTENT of the workshop? *

Did you like it? Was it interesting? Was it useful?

0 1 2 3 4 5

I really did NOT like it I really LIKED it

Were you satisfied with the TOPIC/CONTENT of the workshop? *

Did you like it? Was it interesting? Was it useful?

0 1 2 3 4 5

I really did NOT like it I really LIKED it

Were you satisfied with the VENUE/LOCATION of the workshop? *

Was it big enough? Did it have everything that was needed (chairs, tables, whiteboard, screen, audio devices...)?

0 1 2 3 4 5

It was really NOT appropriate/good It was really APPROPRIATE/GOOD

Were you satisfied with the MATERIALS of the workshop? *

The Power Point, videos, activity materials...

0 1 2 3 4 5

I really did NOT like them I really LIKED them

Were you satisfied with the TRAINER/"TEACHER" of the workshop? *

Was she prepared? Was she interesting? Was she easy to understand?...

0 1 2 3 4 5

I really did NOT like her I really LIKED her

What would you REMOVE/ELIMINATE from the workshop? *

From the content/activities/materials... If nothing, write N/A

What would you ADD to the workshop? *

To the content/activities/materials... If nothing, write N/A

What would you CHANGE/MODIFY in the workshop? *

In the content/activities/materials... If nothing, write N/A

Did you LEARN anything NEW? *

If yes, what did you learn? If nothing, write N/A

Do you think you will BE USEFUL for the future? *

Will you use the words and other things that you learned? If not, write N/A

Do you have any other SUGGESTION/ADVICE? *

Is it there anything else that you want to tell us? If not, write N/A

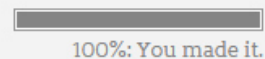
Give an OVERALL mark to the workshop *

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Extremely bad Extremely good

Submit

Never submit passwords through Google Forms.



APPENDIX 4.1 – Results 1

	D	E	F	G	H
1	Were you satisfied with the MATERIALS of the workshop?	Were you satisfied with the TRAINER/"TEACHER" of the workshop?	What would you REMOVE/ELIMINATE from the workshop?	What would you ADD to the workshop?	What would you CHANGE/MODIFY in the workshop?
2	5	5	N/A	More time.	N/A
3	5	5	Nathings, is all right	Nathings, is all right	More time
4	5	5	Nathings, is all right	Nathings, is all right	More time
5	5	5	nothing.	it is with music to sing	nothing

I	J	K	L
Did you LEARN anything NEW?	Do you think you will BE USEFUL for the future?	Do you have any other SUGGESTION/ADVICE ?	Give an OVERALL mark to the workshop
Yes, I have learned the names of the home problems, the pains ...	Yes, in the future, I will use this words.	N/A	10
Yes, i did	I have useful	No idon't. It's excellent	10
Yes, i did	I have useful	No idon't. It's excellent	10
if, as following a conversation, ask for directions.	yes, very useful	nothing	10

APPENDIX 4.2 – Results 2

F	G	H	I	J	K	L
What would you REMOVE/ELIMINATE from the workshop?	What would you ADD to the workshop?	What would you CHANGE/MODIFY in the workshop?	Did you LEARN anything NEW?	Do you think you will BE USEFUL for the future?	Do you have any other SUGGESTION/ADVICE?	Give an OVERALL mark to the workshop
I think i would remove nothing because i'm at this country at a couple at days and i really believe that the trainer have enough experiente to know what se should learn.	Nothing	I guess i dont chance nothing. The workshop is well organized	Yes, i havé remember the name of some siks that we could have ...	I'm sure it will be useful.	No. Maybe more of the end of this experience i could have.	9
N/A	N/A	N/A	Yes I did! I learned about alergies	Always	N/A	10
N/A	N/A	N/A	Yes, I have	Yes, it will be	N/A	10
N/A	More activities	N/A	Yes some vocabulary and some expressions	Yes, I think	N/A	9
N/A	N/A	N/A	yes, the words I learned was about the problems in the house	yes	I liked to have more.	10
A	B	C	D	E		
Timestamp	Were you satisfied with the TOPIC/CONTENT of the workshop?	Were you satisfied with the VENUE/LOCATION of the workshop?	Were you satisfied with the MATERIALS of the workshop?	Were you satisfied with the TRAINER/"TEACHER" of the workshop?		
9/20/2016 17:20:09		4		3	4	4
9/20/2016 18:10:32		5		5	5	5
9/21/2016 9:57:59		5		5	5	5
9/21/2016 10:16:34		5		4	5	5
9/21/2016 12:22:49		5		5	5	5

APPENDIX 5 - Evaluation Form/Culture Shock Workshop



WORKSHOP ON CULTURE SHOCK - TEST DRIVE

Hello!

This form is aimed at collecting your FEEDBACK, SUGGESTIONS and OPINIONS regarding the WORKSHOP ON CULTURE SHOCK held at the Intern Europe offices on Wednesday, the 17th of August 2016.

Please, read the questions carefully and use a dictionary or online translator if you do not understand them. Do the same if you have issues responding.

Thank you for your help!

Ludovica Piccinini
The Intern Europe Team

* Required

Were you satisfied with the TOPIC/CONTENT of the workshop? *

Did you like it? Was it interesting? Was it useful?

0 1 2 3 4 5

I really did NOT like it I really LIKED it

Were you satisfied with the VENUE/LOCATION of the workshop? *

Was it big enough? Did it have everything that was needed (chairs, tables, whiteboard, screen, audio devices...)?

0 1 2 3 4 5

It was really NOT appropriate/good It was really APPROPRIATE/GOOD

Were you satisfied with the MATERIALS of the workshop? *

The Power Point, videos, activity materials...

0 1 2 3 4 5

I really did NOT like them I really LIKED them

Were you satisfied with the TRAINER/"TEACHER" of the workshop? *

Was she prepared? Was she interesting? Was she easy to understand?...

0 1 2 3 4 5

I really did NOT like her I really LIKED her

What would you REMOVE/ELIMINATE from the workshop? *

From the content/activities/materials... If nothing, write N/A

What would you ADD to the workshop? *

To the content/activities/materials... If nothing, write N/A

What would you CHANGE/MODIFY in the workshop? *

In the content/activities/materials... If nothing, write N/A

Did you LEARN anything NEW? *

If yes, what did you learn? If nothing, write N/A

Do you think you will CHANGE YOUR BEHAVIOUR in the future? *

Will you act differently? Will you try any of the strategies to deal with/fight culture shock? If not, write N/A

Do you have any other SUGGESTION/ADVICE? *

Is it there anything else that you want to tell us? If not, write N/A

Give an OVERALL mark to the workshop *

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Extremely bad Extremely good

Submit

Never submit passwords through Google Forms.



100%: You made it.

APPENDIX 5.1 – Results

A	B	C	D	E	F
Timestamp	Were you satisfied with the TOPIC/CONTENT of the workshop?	Were you satisfied with the VENUE/LOCATION of the workshop?	Were you satisfied with the MATERIALS of the workshop?	Were you satisfied with the TRAINER/"TEACHER" of the workshop?	Were you satisfied with the TRAINER/"TEACHER" of the workshop?
8/18/2016 16:53:16	3	3	3	5	
8/18/2016 18:26:06	5	5	5	5	
8/18/2016 19:41:36	5	5	5	5	
8/19/2016 0:08:42	4	5	4	5	
8/19/2016 21:00:33	5	5	5	5	

G	H	I	J	K	L	M
What would you REMOVE/ELIMINATE from the workshop?	What would you ADD to the workshop?	What would you CHANGE/MODIFY in the workshop?	Did you LEARN anything NEW?	Do you think you will CHANGE?	Do you have any other SUGGESTION/ADVICE?	Give an OVERALL mark to the workshop
N/A	N/A	N/A	Yes, new words in Irish	N/A	N/A	8
N/A	N/A	N/A	Yes, I learned a new things about the Culture shock and I learned a new words in English	I think yes	N/A	9
N/A	N/A	N/A	yes, how hard it can be sometimes change of culture for a while	yes, if mature and independent	N/A	10
N/A	N/A	N/A	I learned about the words that people use to use here. Was so helpfull.	N/A	N/A	9
N/A	N/A	N/A	Yes	Yes	N/A	9

APPENDIX 6 – Induction Guidelines Draft

INDUCTION MEETINGS

WHAT IS AN INDUCTION MEETING?

Whenever you take on new interns, it is advisable to find a way to ensure a smooth transition into their new role and provide them with all the necessary information: induction meetings (or trainings, when something more in-depth is required) have this exact purpose.

Inductions can last any length of time, from hours to weeks, and even though they are not compulsory nor a legal requirement, they usually have a highly-positive impact on the work placement period, as they help the intern settle in quickly and be productive from the very beginning.

Additionally, it is also the perfect occasion to deal with any required paperwork, as well as to get to know the company's premises and other employees.

PREPARATION

Intern Europe will provide interns with a detailed job spec and a first Welcome/Induction Meeting upon arrival.

Companies should get the workspace and equipment ready and plan the induction programme, including who will meet the intern on their first day, who will mentor them during the placement, and what topics will be covered during the meeting.

Fellow employees should be made aware of the arrival of a new team member and make any necessary adjustments.

If you reckon that there are any other preparation actions to be implemented, they should be completed before the new interns arrives, e.g. preparing new safety equipment, setting up a new internal email address, and so on.

DAY 1

Usually, induction procedures for interns do not last more than one full day (if not less, depending on the type of placement).

A standard induction meeting will cover:

- Details of all the facilities in your new workplace;
- An overview of the company;
- Work hours, venues and duties;

- Project timeline outline and goals, when relevant²;
- Health and safety policy;
- Fire and safety procedures (e.g. fire exits, first aid kits);
- The intern’s duties and how they fit into the overall structure of the company³;
- An introduction to the company’s team, with a special focus on who their mentor, supervisor and colleagues will be;
- Equipment, tools, and machinery briefing;
- Rules and regulations;
- Q&A

Moreover, inductions are a great occasion to provide the intern with:

- a copy of any procedures, checklists and handbooks;
- any necessary uniforms and standard equipment.

Bear in mind that some of the interns may have a lower level of English, and that for many of them it is their first real work experience: make sure that everything is as clear and simple as possible.

It might be a good idea to provide a written copy of any critical piece of information (e.g. safety procedures), as well as visual aids (e.g. pictures, maps).

Get day one right...	
Avoid - bombarding a new employee with too much new information, paperwork and too many new people.	Instead – work out what is essential for day one and spread the rest of the information and introductions across the induction.
Avoid – leaving a new employee to a lonely break or extended periods of time with nothing to do.	Instead – make sure there’s company available at breaks if it’s wanted, and plan so any downtime can be used productively.
Avoid – throwing a new employee straight into the job without the confidence and understanding an induction will give them.	Instead – gradually introduce the job through the induction, making time for the new employee to try tasks in a supportive environment.
Avoid – delaying the induction for even a few days, as new employees may start to pick up bits of information –possibly mis-information – but then not listen properly to the knowledge they should be retaining at the induction.	Instead – see if other less time-sensitive tasks can be shuffled around. Or, see if the induction day’s start and finish times can be adjusted.
Avoid – skipping any type of induction altogether.	Instead – find the type of induction that fits in best for the business and the new employee; it’s important to begin promptly, but it might then be split into manageable portions.

² Assigning a personal project or task to the intern will make their placement period more interesting, productive and challenging. It is also a way to track and assess work more easily.

³ Assigning a varied range of tasks will guarantee the intern’s learning and growth, avoiding boredom and stagnation.

DAY 2 AND FIRST WEEK

Even though the induction procedures will likely be completed on day one, the first work week is still very much an introductory and training period, during which you should:

- *Clarify who's who*: remind the new employee of who does what, why and how they need to work with different staff, and the preferred methods for communicating;
- *Focus on the job role*: explain the new employee's role fully, how it fits in with their team and the organisation as a whole, the expected performance, how it will be assessed, etc.;
- *Start doing the job*, by assigning basic tasks and providing practical examples when needed;
- *Explain the rules*: make sure the employee knows about key work practices and policies, as well as expected/unacceptable behaviour and procedures if rules are broken.
- *Provide further health and safety information* if needed;
- *Troubleshoot and address any doubts or issues which may arise*.

LONGER PLACEMENTS – FOLLOWING THE INTERN'S JOURNEY

For placements longer than 1-2 months it will be necessary to keep on monitoring the intern and follow their learning path, as they will likely take on more and more tasks and responsibilities once their grasp of the fundamentals is more solid.

To do so, the mentor and/or supervisor should:

- *Arrange more specific support*: the need for support is common with the majority of new recruits and interns.
- *Update their task list*: at this stage, shadowing a more experienced colleague performing the role will help. The intern can at this point be assigned a wider variety of less basic tasks;
- *Keep giving regular feedback*: depending on the need, a new employee or intern should be getting daily or weekly on-the-job feedback. Feedback should always be kept positive and constructive: where there is a performance concern, be clear where the issues are and how they can handle things differently.
- *Arrange another meeting with the manager or supervisor*: The meeting should give the new employee realistic feedback on how they are doing and be relaxed and informal, gauging how they feel about:
 - how they are settling in, and adjusting to the role and organisation,
 - aspects of the role where they feel they need training or coaching,
 - any other concerns which may arise.

LONGER PLACEMENTS – OUR ROLE

In case of internships longer than 1 month, a member of the Intern Europe team will either phone you or drop by (depending on the situation) around the mid-placement mark, simply to have a quick chat with you and the intern.

We want to make sure that everything is running smoothly and that all parties involved are satisfied with the placement.

Around this same time the intern will likely be invited to a mid-placement meeting with Intern Europe, in order to deal with some admin and documentation requirements.

We kindly request you to allow them to either come to work later in the morning or leave earlier in the afternoon on that day, in order for them to be able to participate in the meeting.

You will receive a reminder via email a few days in advance.

Intern Europe remains at your complete disposal every step of the way.

Thank you for your precious collaboration!

APPENDIX 7 – Skype Questionnaire (Simplified)

SKYPE QUESTIONNAIRE

Date/Time _____	Interviewer _____
Name/Project _____	DOB _____

OPENING QUESTIONS: INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE / LIVING SITUATION

“Have you ever travelled or lived abroad? Have you ever been to the UK or to Ireland?”	Only holidays <input type="checkbox"/> - Has visited the UK/Ireland <input type="checkbox"/> - Other: _____
--	---

“Would it be the 1 st time that you live alone?”	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> - Other: _____
---	---

EDUCATION

Current or most recent course (name & main subjects)	_____
--	-------

Relevant previous degrees and qualifications	See CV <input type="checkbox"/> - Other: _____
---	--

WORK EXPERIENCE

Current or most recent job (company, role & tasks)	_____
---	-------

Previous work experience	See CV <input type="checkbox"/> - Other: _____
---------------------------------	--

MOTIVATION “Why did you apply for our internship programme?”

Work experience <input type="checkbox"/> - Life experience <input type="checkbox"/> - Language <input type="checkbox"/> - Other: _____
--

Dates: _____

PLACEMENT INFORMATION

1st placement preference “What would an ideal work placement be for you? What type of tasks do you want to perform?”	Role & Tasks: Company sector: FLEXIBLE <input type="checkbox"/> / Prefers _____ Company size/type: SME <input type="checkbox"/> - LARGE <input type="checkbox"/> - PRIVATE <input type="checkbox"/> - CHARITY/NGO <input type="checkbox"/>
--	--

2nd placement preference <i>“If your ideal placement wasn’t available, what would the best alternative be? Are you flexible?”</i>	Alternative Role & Tasks:												
Public Transport	<i>*Let the participant know that they might be required to buy a monthly transportation card, but that their commute to work will always be under 1h.</i>												
SKILLS AND QUALIFICATIONS													
Language Skills — absolute beginner A0-A1 — beginner A2 — intermediate B1-B2 — advanced C1-C2 — native	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>LANGUAGE</th> <th>LEVEL</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td>Native</td> </tr> <tr> <td>English</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	LANGUAGE	LEVEL		Native	English							
LANGUAGE	LEVEL												
	Native												
English													
IT Skills	Office Suite <input type="checkbox"/> Social Media <input type="checkbox"/> Photoshop <input type="checkbox"/>	SAP <input type="checkbox"/> ERP <input type="checkbox"/> AutoCAD <input type="checkbox"/>	Other:										
Other Skills	Team management <input type="checkbox"/> Time management <input type="checkbox"/> Project management <input type="checkbox"/> Event management <input type="checkbox"/> Public Speaking <input type="checkbox"/>		Other:										
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION													
<i>Volunteering & Associations, Hobbies, Music & Sports, Certificates, Other</i>													
SKYPE AVAILABILITY													
— On request <input type="checkbox"/> / Prefers _____ — Skype ID _____													
QUESTIONS/REQUESTS/INTERVIEWER’S NOTES													

APPENDIX 8 – Skype Notes (Simplified) Document

SKYPE NOTES by _____

NAME		COUNTRY	
PROJECT	Individual / Project:	SKYPE	
EMAIL		PHONE	

INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE	Holidays / Other:
LIVING SITUATION	Has lived alone before / Has not lived alone before
EDUCATION	
CURRENT/MOST RECENT COURSE	
PREVIOUS COURSES	See CV / Other:
WORK EXPERIENCE	
CURRENT/MOST RECENT JOB	
PREVIOUS WORK EXPERIENCE	See CV / Other:
PLACEMENT INFORMATION	
DATES	
COMPANY SIZE/SECTOR	Flexible / Prefers:
PLACEMENT PREFERENCE (field, role & tasks)	
PLACEMENT ALTERNATIVE	

(field, role & tasks)	
SKILLS AND QUALIFICATIONS	
LANGUAGE SKILLS	Mother tongue: English: Other(s):
IT SKILLS	See CV / Other:
OTHER SKILLS, ASSOCIATIONS, HOBBIES, SPORTS, VOLUNTEERING...	
GENERAL IMPRESSION	Positive/Other:
COMMUNICATION	Quick to answer emails and Skype request / Other:
SKYPE AVAILABILITY	On request / Prefers:
NOTES	

APPENDIX 9 - Language Crash Course/First Page and Contents



CONTENT – STANDARD VERSION

1. Introduction
2. On your first day at work/1
3. On your first day at work/2
4. What will you wear at work?
5. Dress code and uniforms
6. Talking about the time
7. How to get to work – transport
8. How to get to work – asking for directions
9. Getting around – examples
10. In the house – the kitchen
11. In the house – chores
12. In the house – house issues
13. Food - allergies and preferences
14. Food – at the supermarket
15. Health – I feel sick!
16. Health – meds/at the pharmacy
17. Health – useful sentences
18. Safety – useful sentences
19. Thank you

CONTENT – HOMESTAY VERSION

20. Introduction
21. On your first day at work/1
22. On your first day at work/2
23. What will you wear at work?
24. Dress code and uniforms
25. Talking about the time
26. How to get to work – transport
27. How to get to work – asking for directions
28. Getting around – examples
29. In the house – chores
30. Problems?
31. Food - allergies and preferences
32. Food – at the supermarket
33. Health – I feel sick!
34. Health – meds/at the pharmacy
35. Health – useful sentences
36. Safety – useful sentences
37. Thank you

APPENDIX 10 - Culture Shock Workshop/First Page and Contents



CONTENT

1. Introduction
2. What is culture?
3. Culture: a definition
4. The iceberg of culture
5. Let's see some NI examples!
6. Language differences quiz
7. Visible cultural differences: houses in the UK and NI (video)
8. Interpersonal cultural differences: personal space/1
9. Interpersonal cultural differences: personal space/1
10. Invisible cultural differences: Irish "etiquette" (video)
11. Culture shock
12. The 4 stages of culture shock
13. "Not feeling your best? It might be culture shock!" – the symptoms
14. Overcoming culture shock
15. First tip: do some research
16. Which piece(s) of advice do you think would be the most EFFECTIVE for you?
17. The adjustment process: reverse culture shock
18. Why culture shock is good for you (brainstorming)
19. The "side effects" of culture shock
20. Thank you

APPENDIX 11 - Intercultural Activities Handbook/First Page and Contents



IE INTERCULTURAL ACTIVITIES HANDBOOK

Intercultural activities can be used to socialize interns, allow them to share their culture with others, and interact with them in English. The following activities are not focused on the local culture (like our other social events), but on multiculturalism and language.

CONTENT

1. Indoor International Picnic
 - a. Dates, Times & Venue
 - b. Materials & Prep
 - c. Picnic Day facts & quotes
2. Speed Meet
 - a. Dates, Times & Venue
 - b. Rules
 - c. Materials & Prep
 - d. Topic Flashcards Examples
3. Babel Café (World Café)
 - a. Dates, Times & Venue
 - b. Process
 - c. Babel Café Menu Template
4. Country Quiz
 - a. Dates, Times & Venue
 - b. Battle style
 - c. Brainiac Style
 - d. Materials & Prep
5. Movie Night
 - a. Dates, Times & Venue
 - b. Good Vibrations (2013)
 - c. Trivia Questions
 - d. Discussion Topics

HR TEAM
Intern Management, Admin & Care
Process Handbook



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HEALTH



...WHAT IF YOU GET SICK?!

Remember that if you are a EU citizen your European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) is valid in the UK and you must take it with you at all times.

Whether you go to a clinic or the hospital, please bring with you a proof of identification, e.g. your passport or national ID card, as well as your European Health Insurance Card or private health insurance medical card.

Should you become ill or feel unwell, follow these 3 steps:

1. Call your work supervisor first, and then Intern Europe

If you are so unwell that you cannot go to work, please ensure that you **phone your host company** on the morning of your absence **before the time you are supposed to start work**.

Make sure that you have the contacts of your supervisor: they are written on the Final Placement Document which Intern Europe has sent you minimum 2 weeks before your arrival.

Please ensure that you **send an email to the Intern Europe Helpline**:

help@nterneurope.org

If you came in a group accompanied by a teacher or supervisor, get in touch with them, too.

2. Go to a pharmacy

If you **do not** have any urgent issue, the best solution is to go to a **pharmacy** – pharmacists can diagnose the most common illnesses and either give you the correct treatments, or tell you to get an appointment with the doctor.

If you are sick for more than 3 to 5 days, go to a **pharmacy again**: explain what medication you used and they will give you further advice.

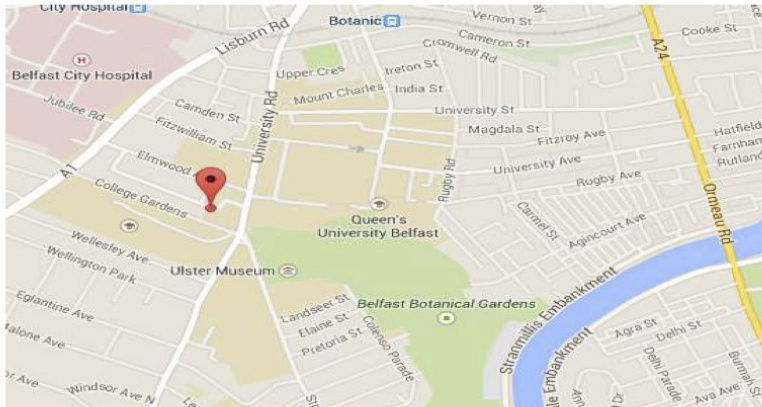
3. Go to a doctor

If you still feel not well and the pharmacist tells you that a doctor appointment is needed go to University Health Centre at Queens.

As a European citizen you have the right to see a doctor; the best place to do so would be the **University Health Centre at Queens**.

Be aware that it will take up to 48/72h (2-3 days) to get an appointment.

To see a doctor

**Address:**

Elmwood
Manse, 7
University
Terrace
Belfast,
BT7 1NP
Tel. +44 (0) 28
90 664634

Reception and telephone service is from Monday to Friday 8.30am - 5.30pm.

The standard Health Centre number is **+44 (0)28 9066 4634**.

If you need to call the Health Centre outside of the service hours, you should contact the number: **+44 (0)28 9079 6220**.

1. Take your documents with you: ID/passport; European Health Insurance Card and/or private health insurance medical card! Also, write down your address in Belfast.
2. Phone the Health Centre on +44 (0)28 9066 4634 or go to the reception!
3. Explain that you are a student and that you are participating in an internship programme with Intern Europe. Name your address in Belfast.
4. Explain your problem clearly. If you are not sure about the words to use, check a dictionary or online translator before calling

General appointments are available between 9.00am - 11.00am and 1.30 - 4.50pm, Monday to Friday.

After your call it can take up to **2-3 days** until you can see a doctor for a general appointment.

Ambulance and Emergency services

Emergency services in Northern Ireland can be reached by calling 999 or 112, free of charge; however, **you should only dial these numbers in an extreme emergency!**

The emergency services can organise your transport to the hospital if you are not able to arrive there on your own.

<http://www.nias.hscni.net/calling-999/when-to-call/>

<http://www.nias.hscni.net/calling-999/what-happens-when-you-call/>

Dental Health

Dental care in the UK and NI is quite expensive and not provided directly by the National Health System (NHS).

A **Relief of Dental Pain Service (RODP)** is available to anyone who requires emergency dental care. It operates at the Dental Out-patients Department Wing F, Outpatients Department on the Ground Floor of the Belfast City Hospital.

No appointment is required, but remember to **bring your documents**: ID/passport; European Health Insurance Card and/or private health insurance medical card!

Also, write down your address in Belfast if you can.

Opening Hours

Monday to Friday (1 session per day):

7.00pm to 9.15pm

Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays (2 Sessions per day):

10.00am to 12.15pm / 7.00pm to 9.15pm.

Telephone: +44 (0)289063 8486.

The patients who require treatment urgently are seen as a priority, while the remaining patients will be seen in order of the time of arrival at the clinic.

Mental Health

If you have an urgent concern about the mental health of yourself or someone you know, contact the **Mental Health Single Point of Referral Service**:

During Office Hours (9am – 5pm)

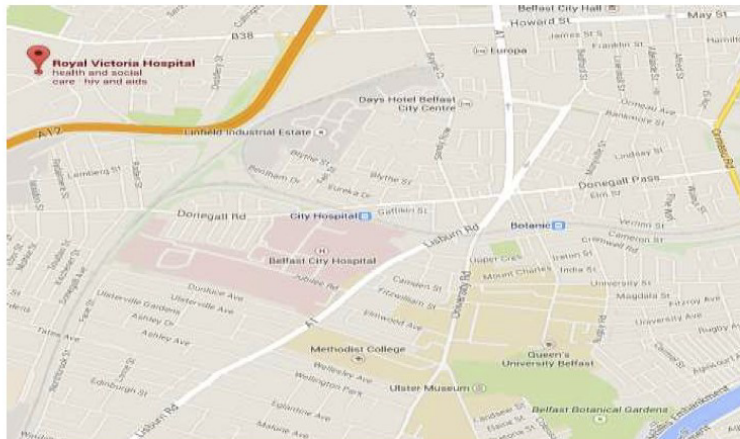
+44 (0)2890 737547

Out of hours, weekends and public holidays

+44 (0)28 9056 5444

Accident and Emergency Services

In case of an accident or health emergency you will need to attend Accident and Emergency ('A & E') at **Royal Victoria Hospital**.



Address:

274 Grosvenor Road, Belfast, BT12 6BA.

The number for the **hospital** is **+44 (0)28 9024 0503**
The **Accident and Emergency (A&E)** number is **+44 (0)28 9063 2250**.

Take your documents with you: ID/passport; European Health Insurance Card and/or private health insurance medical card! Also, write down your address in Belfast if you can.

For your transport to the hospital, you can call a taxi (check the numbers under "Useful Information") or go by **bus**.

Metro buses run regular services, leaving from Queen's Street, near the City Hall.

- Route 10 and 82 stop at the Falls Road Entrance
- Route 81 stops at the Grosvenor Road Entrance
- A special Royal Hospitals bus (route 95) leaves from Donegall Square East at the side of the City Hall at 7.10am, 7.30am and every 30 minutes after that, stopping at Howard Street and at the Europa Bus centre, in Great Victoria Street.

Ambulance and Emergency services

Emergency services in Northern Ireland can be reached by calling 999 or 112, free of charge; however, **you should only dial these numbers in an extreme emergency!**

The emergency services can organise your transport to the hospital if you are not able to arrive there on your own.

<http://www.nias.hscni.net/calling-999/when-to-call/>

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No appointment is required, but remember to **bring your documents**: ID/passport; European Health Insurance Card and/or private health insurance medical card!

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The patients who require treatment urgently are seen as a priority, while the remaining patients will be seen in order of the time of arrival at the clinic.

Mental Health

If you have an urgent concern about the mental health of yourself or someone you know, contact the **Mental Health Single Point of Referral Service**:

During Office Hours (9am – 5pm)

+44 (0)2890 737547

Out of hours, weekends and public holidays

+44 (0)28 9056 5444

Phone Call Example

- Good morning, Health Centre/RODP, how can I help you?
 - o *Good morning, my name is Jorge Martins. I am sick and I would like to book a general appointment/an urgent appointment/a dentist appointment.*
- What kind of issues are you experiencing?
 - o *I have a fever, a cough, and headaches /I think my leg is broken/ I have deep tooth pain on the (upper/lower left/right) side of my mouth...*
- Are you a tourist or a student?
 - o *I am Spanish and I am doing an internship at (company name) through Intern Europe.*
- Do you have health insurance?
 - o *Yes, I have the European Health Insurance Card. (*if you came with a group and/or have any other sort of private insurance, tell them)*
- Where do you live?
 - o *I live at (address).*
- *Ok, you can come on Tuesday at 10 am: is that ok?*
 - o *Yes, thank you. Goodbye!*
- *Goodbye.*

Intern Europe Support & Contacts

Should you have any doubts regarding what to do in case you are sick, or issues of any other sort, remember that Intern Europe is always available to help you!

Call us during office hours (9am – 5pm) - +44 (0) 28 9562 2080.

Drop by the Office - Monday to Friday, 9am - 5pm.

Contact the 24/7 Helpline - +44 (0) 28 9562 2084 help@interneurope.org.

APPENDIX 14 - Welcome Pack/Learning English in Belfast

LEARNING ENGLISH



FREE ONLINE COURSES, APPS AND MATERIALS

There are many free online language learning resources available to those who want to better their English. The following list contains a few examples:

DUOLINGO

Interactive app and website

<https://www.duolingo.com/m/>

BUSUU

Interactive app and website

<https://www.busuu.com/en/>

BABEL

Interactive app and website

<https://uk.babbel.com/>

ALISON

“ALISON is a global social enterprise dedicated to providing free certified education and workplace training skills to any individual, anywhere, anytime, on any subject over the web”.

<https://alison.com/subjects/11/English-Language-Skills>

ESOL

Free English course, available at various levels.

<http://www.esolcourses.com/uk-english/beginners-course/free-english-lessons.html>

MEMRISE

“Memrise is an online learning community where one can learn almost anything in the world, entirely for free”. It focuses on learning new words.

<http://www.memrise.com/courses/english-uk/english-uk/>

<http://www.memrise.com/course/115396/essential-english-with-context/>

<http://www.memrise.com/course/20968/english-is-fun/>

YOUTUBE

- **Anglophenia**

<https://www.youtube.com/user/AnglopheniaTV>

Very well-done videos on a series of different topics, all made for English learners and focused on UK culture.

- **Speak English with Misterduncan**

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8pPDhxSn1nee70LRKJ0p3g>

This is one of the most popular YouTube channels for learning English. Misterduncan teaches English to the world for free and has had a channel on YouTube since 2006.

- **Real English**

<https://www.youtube.com/user/realenglish1>

Real English is one of the best channels for English language beginners and has a large library of free access lessons. Each one includes two videos, one with subtitles and one without and a handful of exercises.

- **BBC Learn English**

<https://www.youtube.com/user/bbclearningenglish>

From one of the world's most famous broadcasting companies (the British Broadcasting Corporation). Lessons are in a variety of formats such as real life situations, cartoons and interviews.

- **Business English Pod**

<https://www.youtube.com/user/bizpod>

Business English Pod offers clear and thorough lessons on topics such as supply chain management, finance and economics, and contract law.

- **VOA Learning English**

<https://www.youtube.com/user/VOALearningEnglish>

VOA offers subtitled news reports that are read out at slower speeds than normal. VOA also posts its Google+ Hangouts where callers from around the world discuss in English the stories that have been making the news.

- **Jennifer ESL**

<https://www.youtube.com/user/JenniferESL>

English with Jennifer is a rich collection of more than 400 videos that are grouped into easy to use playlists. There are lessons for beginners, lessons to improve your writing in English, lessons on grammar and many more, with a special focus on pronunciation.

- **Linguaspectrum Interesting English**

<https://www.youtube.com/user/Linguaspectrum>

Linguaspectrum concentrates learning around interesting things that you may encounter. The narration is accompanied by subtitles and all the lessons all link to follow-up interactive elements on Linguaspectrum's website, which are also free.

- **EF podEnglish**

<https://www.youtube.com/user/podEnglish>

Short 5-minute English lessons that are aimed at English language learners at every level, from absolute beginners to advanced students. They are well structured with a three-part lesson plan: watch, learn and try.

LEARNING ENGLISH



Intern Europe have partnered with International House Belfast to offer high-quality English language courses at a discounted price.

Course levels range from absolute beginner to advanced, and must be booked in advance through Intern Europe.


The price per week is 195€ for a 20h-course, instead of £195, saving you around 15% (depending on the exchange rate).

You can find more information here: <http://www.ihbelfast.com/en/courses/adult-courses/general-english/>

TUITION:	20 lessons per week
TIMETABLE:	09.00 – 13.00
DURATION:	Minimum 1 week
AGE:	16 years +
LEVELS:	from A2 elementary to C2 proficiency
MAXIMUM STUDENTS PER CLASS:	12
START DATES:	Any Monday except holidays

***** Always check in with your Host Company and with Intern Europe to make sure that you could participate in one of the International House Belfast courses.**

CONTACTS:

-  109 - 111 University Street, Belfast BT7 1HP
-  ihbelfast.com
-  028 9033 0700
-  Open now: 9am–5pm 

LEARNING ENGLISH



FREE ENGLISH CLASSES AROUND BELFAST

Listed below you will find a few recommended English courses, classes and conversation meetings which can be attended for free.

The Embrace NI organization has created a longer list, which can be found at this link

<https://www.embraceni.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/English-Language-Classes-May-2016-FINAL.pdf>

Check which courses, classes or activities are closest to your accommodation and always verify:

- If you need to register for it;
- If there is a compulsory starting date;
- What language level is required;
- If the course is still active.

***** Always check your timetable before enrolling. You will not be able to take hours off of your work day to attend!**

Donegall Pass Community Centre

A language course designed for beginners and intermediate and organized by the Donegall Pass Community Centre, which also offers other free or very cheap courses and activities. Get in touch with them to check which day could be better for you and if it's still possible to enrol.

Address:

25 Apsley Street,

Belfast,
BT7 1BL

Phone:

+44 (0)28 9032 7661

Email:

community@belfastcity.gov.uk

Website:

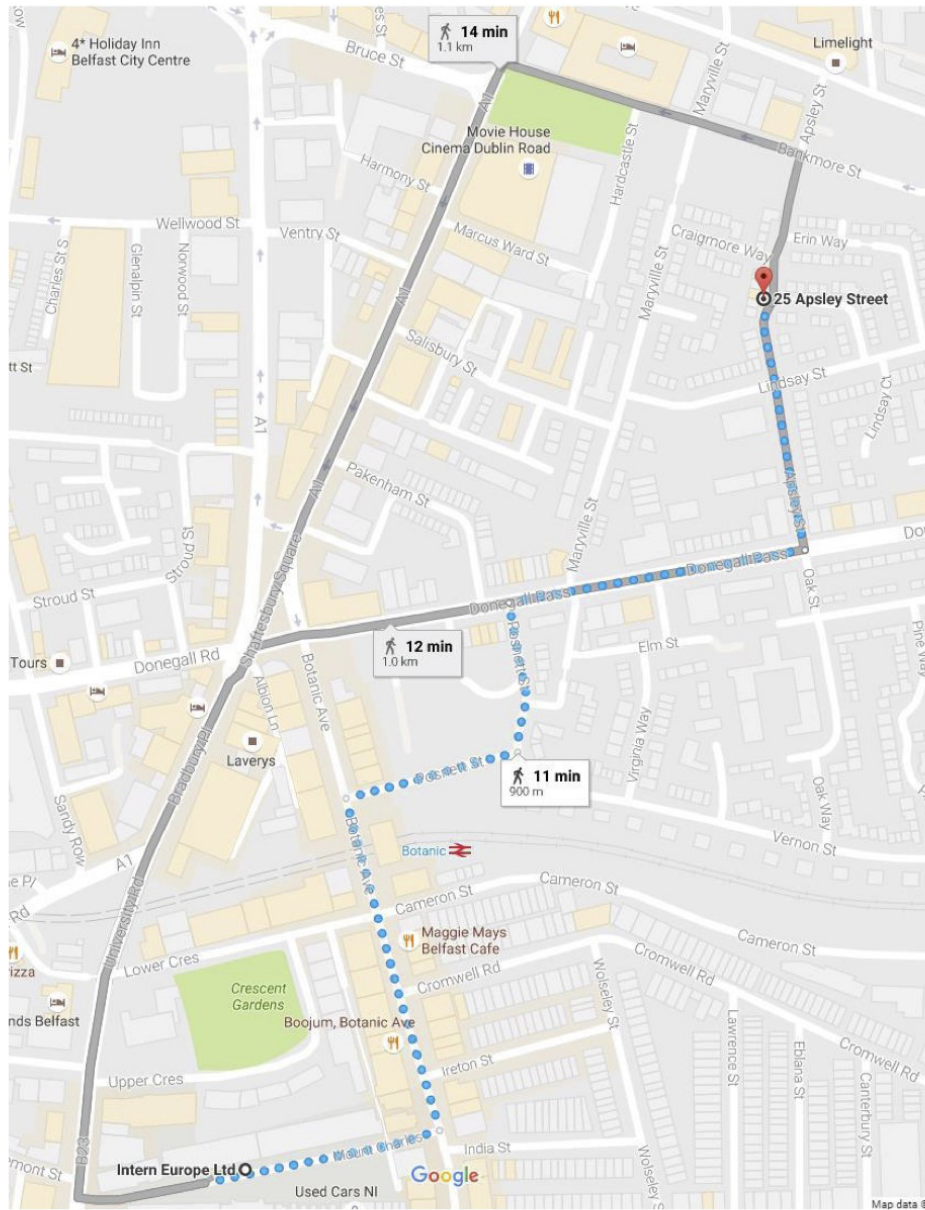
<http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/community/communitycentres/CommunityCentre-6267.aspx>

Course hours:

Wednesdays 6pm-9pm

Tuesday 10am-12pm

LEARNING ENGLISH



Friends International NI

<http://www.fintni.com/>

"Friends International is here to help you feel welcome during your time in Belfast. We understand that being an international student can be an exciting and useful time, but that it can also be frustrating and lonely. We are an organisation made up of Christians from local churches and Queens University Belfast Christian Union, who wish to offer friendship to international students. Although our volunteers are Christians, our services are offered to international students of all faiths or none."



1. iTalk in Belfast English Conversation Club

"Would you like to:

- improve your English?*
- make new friends & exchange ideas / opinions?*
- get to know local people & learn about their lives?"*

Address:

Great Victoria Street Baptist Church Halls
1 Hope St, Belfast BT2 5EE

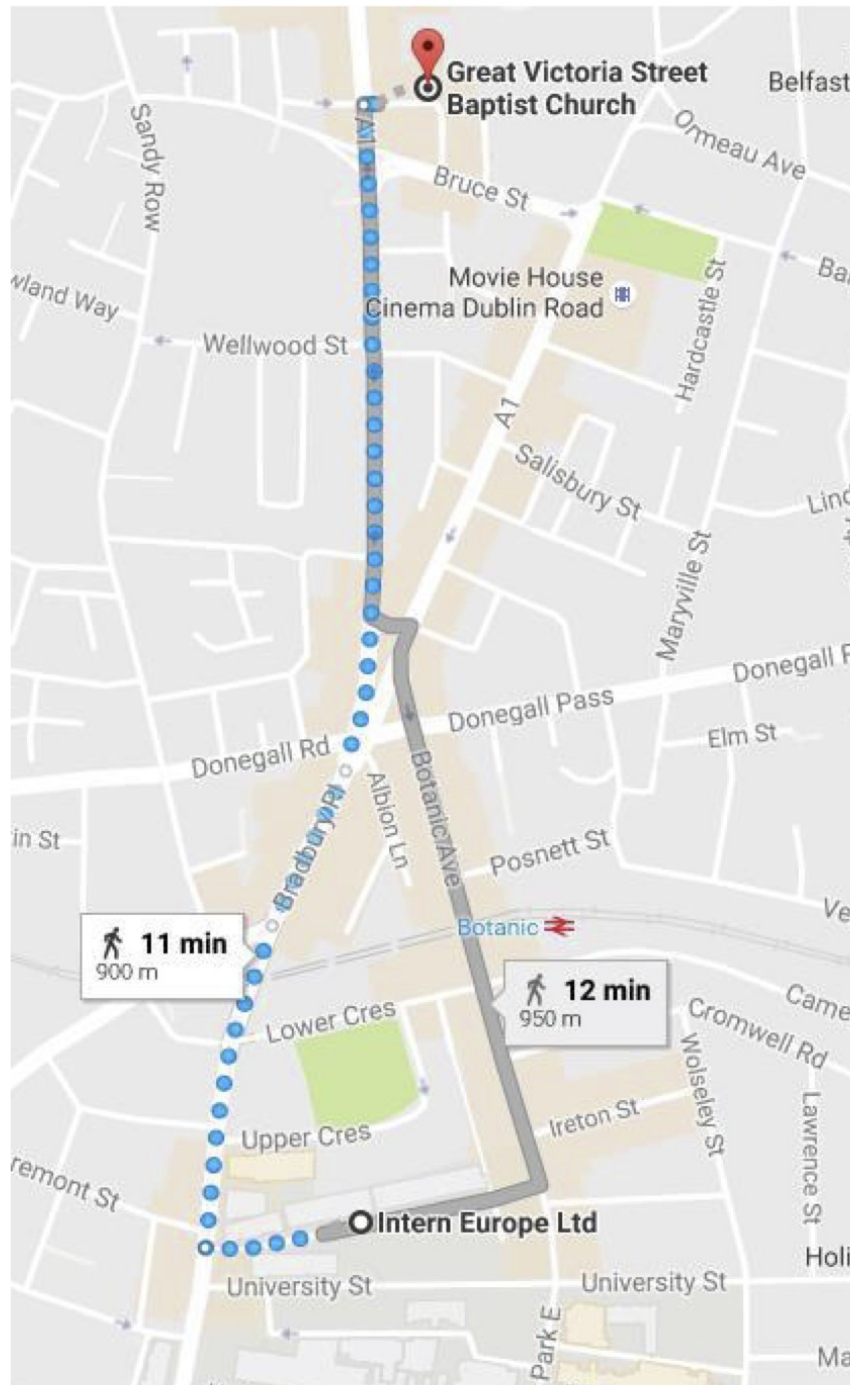
Email:

barbarabrock@ntlworld.com

Website:

<http://www.fintni.com/welcome/2012/09/italk-english-conversation-club/>

Course hours: The English Conversation Club starts at 7.30pm and continues until 9pm every Thursday. You can simply drop by and join the group.



2. English Class

"It's an opportunity to learn English, meet local people and develop friendships. Monthly we go on various outings to see and learn some more of local culture. If you do not have English as your first language or know of someone who doesn't, you are very welcome to come along."

Address:

Shaftesbury Square Reformed Presbyterian Church
72 Dublin Road,
Belfast,
BT2 7HP (near Tesco Express)

Email:

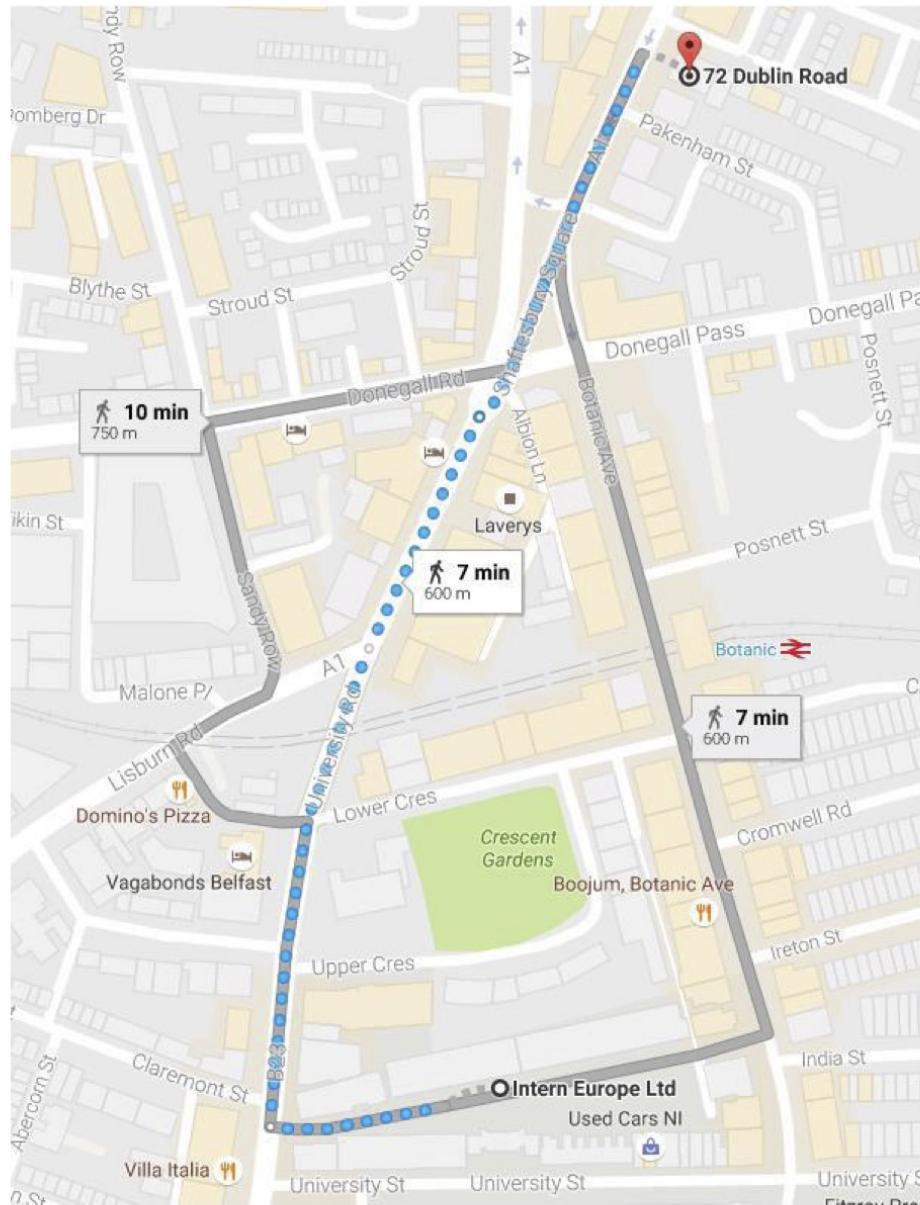
psmccollum@gmail.com

Website:

<http://www.fintni.com/welcome/2013/09/1638/>

Course hours:

Thursdays 2pm - 4pm Fridays 7pm – 8.30pm



English Language Course - English for Employability

“Do you want to improve your English? Do you want to improve your chances of getting a job - or a better job? Do you want to meet new people? - This programme can help you.

To find out more come to an Information Event at the Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre (45/47 Donegall Street, Belfast BT1 2FG) on the 11th September at 4:00. At this event you will be able to sit an initial test to see if this is the best programme for you.

For more information and to attend the Information Event, please email [Tim](mailto:tim@burc.org) with your name and contact details.”

***Anyone interested needs to register first. The course is suitable for participants who will already be in Belfast at the beginning of September. If you are coming later than Sept. 11th you can try to get in touch with them to see if enrolling is still possible.

Address:

Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre
45/47 Donegall Street
Belfast
BT1 2FG

Contact:

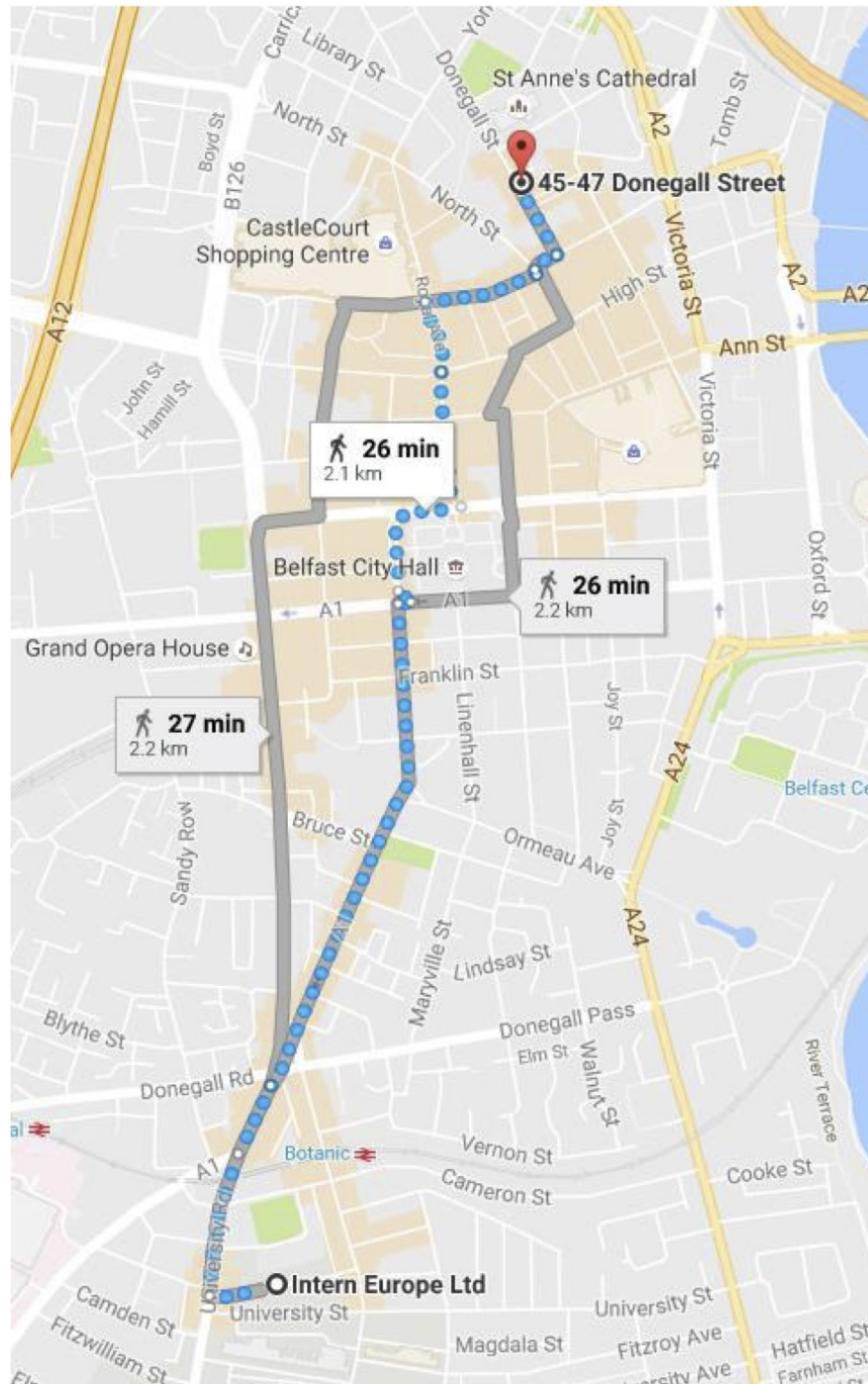
Aisling +44 (0)780347662

Email:

tim.omalley@burc.org
aisling.cartmill@burc.org

Course hours:

Thursdays 5.30pm – 7.30pm



Belfast Friendship Club

"Belfast Friendship Club is a space for people from all over the world and for Belfast residents, to:

- *meet in a diverse, supportive and relaxed environment,*
- *get information,*
- *get involved in activities and events,*
- *make new friends and help each other."*

"Pop in for coffee and a chat or just sit and relax. You will be:

- *welcomed and given a name badge when you arrive*
- *introduced to others from all backgrounds and nationalities*
- *amazed by the warm and happy atmosphere"*

Address:

Common Grounds Café,
12-24 University Avenue,
Belfast
BT7 1GY

Contact:

Stephanie Mitchell 07548 938 508

Email:

stephanie.mitchell@sbrtr.org.uk

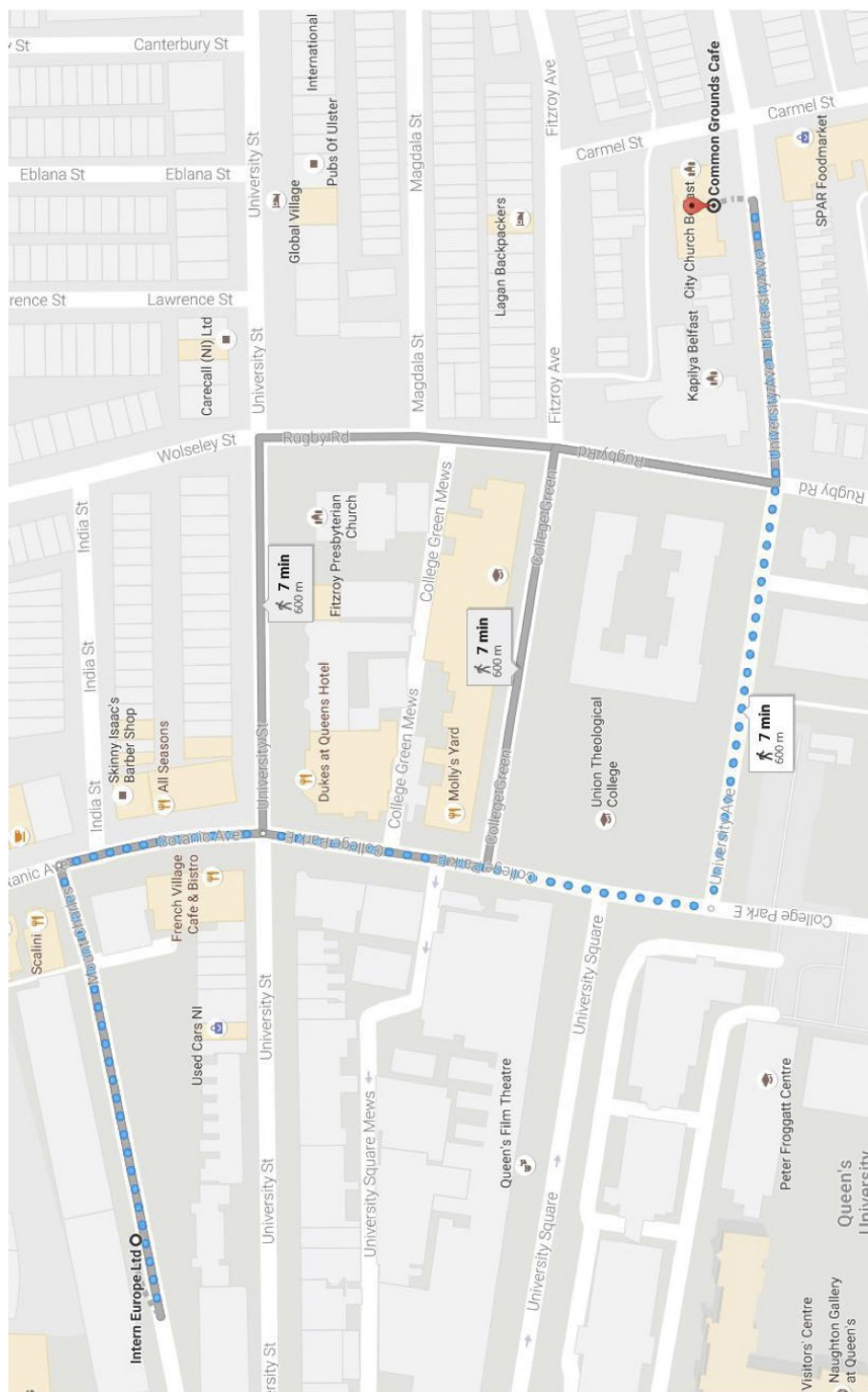
Website:

<http://www.belfastfriendshipclub.org/>

Course hours:

Thursday 7pm - 9pm

LEARNING ENGLISH



APPENDIX 15 - Welcome Pack/Tourism Information

VISITING BELFAST



A QUICK VIDEO TOUR OF NORTHERN IRELAND

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-SWF8gnWARE>

BOTANIC GARDENS

<http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/leisure/parks-openspaces/Park-6614.aspx>



College Park, Botanic Ave, Belfast BT7 1LP		+44 (0)28 9031 4762
Open all week from 7.30 am to 9 pm.		
Entrance	Duration of the visit	
Free	45'	

Botanic Gardens was established in 1828 by the Belfast Botanic and Horticultural Society, in response to public interest in horticulture and botany. Originally known as the Belfast Botanic Garden, the site contains exotic tree species and impressive plant collections from the southern hemisphere.

Today, the park is popular with residents, students and tourists and is an important venue for concerts, festivals and other events.

At the Botanic Gardens you can visit the Palm House, a glasshouse, and the Tropical Ravine, which contains some of the oldest seed plants around today, as well as banana, cinnamon, bromeliad and orchid plants.



QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/>

University Road, Belfast, BT7 1NN	+44 (0)28 9044 0000
Monday - Friday: 9.30 am - 4.30 pm	
Entrance	
Free	

Queen's University Belfast was founded as Queen's College in 1845. Today, it is an international centre of research and education rooted at the heart of Northern Ireland.

With more than 17,000 students and 3,500 staff, it is a dynamic and diverse institution, a magnet for inward investment, a patron of the arts and a global player in many fields.

You can enjoy the sun on the grass on the university grounds and take pictures of its beautiful



architectural details.

ULSTER MUSEUM

<http://nmni.com/um>

Botanic Gardens, Belfast BT9 5AB	+44 (0)28 9044 0000
Open from Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to 5 PM.	

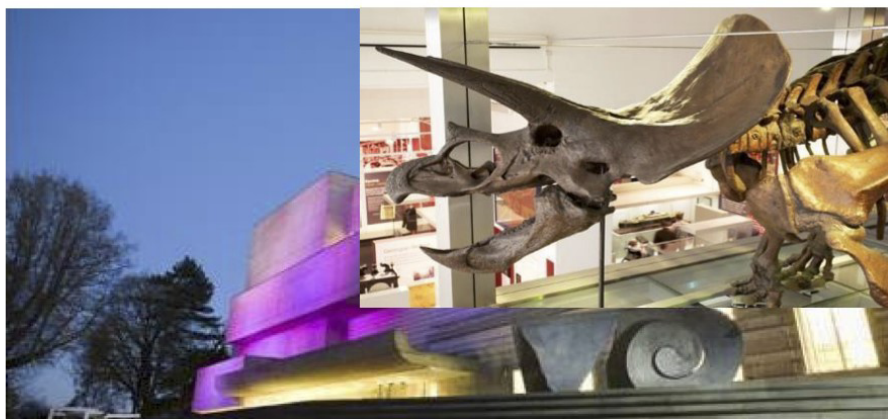
VISITING BELFAST



Entrance	Duration of the visit
Free	2 h

The Ulster Museum is located next to the Botanic Gardens and is home to a rich collection of art, history and natural sciences and free to all visitors.

The revitalised museum tells the story of the people of the north of Ireland from earliest times to the present day and its impressive galleries and interactive discovery zones bring history, science and art collections to life for visitors of all ages.



The Ulster Museum is part of National Museums Northern Ireland, which also includes the Ulster Folk & Transport Museum, Ulster American Folk Park, the W5 Science Centre and Armagh County Museum.

ST GEORGE'S MARKET

<http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/tourism-venues/stgeorgesmarket/stgeorgesmarket-index.aspx>

Donegall Quay, Belfast BT1 3LA	+44 (0)28 9032 0202
Open Friday from 6 am to 2 pm, Saturday from 9 am to 3 pm, Sunday from 10 am to 4 pm.	
Entrance	Duration of the visit
Free	1.30 h

VISITING BELFAST



St George's Market is one of Belfast's oldest attractions: it was built between 1890 and 1896 and is one of the best markets in the UK and Ireland.



It is open only 3 days a week and it holds a weekly Friday Variety Market, the City Food and Craft Market on Saturdays and the Sunday Market, as well as a range of events throughout the year.

CRUMLIN ROAD GAOL

<http://www.crumlinroadgaol.com/>

53-55 Crumlin Road, Belfast, BT14 6ST	+44 (0)28 9074 1500
Open 7 days a week, with tours from 10am to 4.30 pm.	
Entrance	Duration of the visit
£9	1h30'

VISITING BELFAST



Crumlin Road Gaol first opened its gates to prisoners in 1846 and for 150 years was a fully operational prison, until March 31, 1996

During those 150 years the Gaol has housed murderers, suffragettes and loyalist and republican prisoners. It has witnessed births, deaths and marriages and has been the home to executions, escapes, hunger-strikes and riots.

The guided tour you will be taken through the years and experience what life was like for those imprisoned in 'The Crum', visit the tunnels, the C-Wing and the Condemned Man's Cell, as well as the gravesite.



TITANIC MUSEUM

<http://titanicbelfast.com/>

Queens Rd, Belfast BT3 9EP	+44 (0)28 9076 6386
Open from Monday to Sunday 9 am – 6 pm.	
Entrance:	Duration of the visit
£14	2-3 h



The Titanic Belfast Museum is the world's largest Titanic visitor experience and a "must see" visit in any tour of Belfast and Northern Ireland.

It is located in Titanic Quarter, right beside the historic site of this world famous ship's construction.

Housed in an iconic 6-floor building, this state-of-the-art visitor experience tells the story of the Titanic, from her conception in Belfast in the early 1900s, through her construction and launch, to her famous maiden voyage and tragic end.



CITY HALL

<http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/tourism-venues/cityhall/cityhall-about.aspx>

Donegall Square, Belfast BT5GS

+44 (0)28 9032 0202

Free public tours are available at the following times:

Monday to Friday: 10am, 11am, 2pm, 3pm and 4pm

Saturday and Sunday: 12noon, 2pm, 3pm and 4pm

The front doors of City Hall will also be open on Saturday and Sunday from 10am – 4pm.

VISITING BELFAST



Entrance	Duration of the visit
Free	45'



Belfast City Hall is Belfast City Council's civic building.

It is located in Donegall Square, in the heart of the city centre, and it first opened its doors on 1 August 1906. Free guided public tours of City Hall are available every day.

BELFAST CASTLE

ESTATE & CAVE HILL

<http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/tourism-venues/belfastcastle/bcabout.aspx>

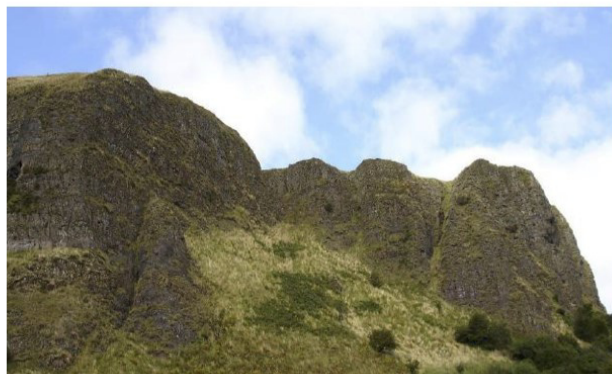
Antrim Road, Belfast BT15 5GR	+44 (0)28 9077 6925
Tuesday to Sunday: 9am - 10pm, Sunday: 9am - 5.30pm Monday: 9am to 5.30pm.	
Entrance:	Duration of the visit
Free	1 h (castle and gardens)

VISITING BELFAST



Belfast Castle Estate is adjacent to one of the highest spots in Belfast, Cave Hill, offering great views over Belfast Lough and the city.

Belfast Castle Estate is adjacent to one of the highest spots in Belfast, Cave Hill, offering great views over Belfast Lough and the city: a great place for hiking!



At the castle, the Cellar Restaurant offers snacks, cold and hot drinks and light meals, as well as a traditional Sunday lunch, afternoon tea and dinners on selected weekdays.

STORMONT

PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

<http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/visit-and-learning/stormont-estate/>

Upper Newtownards Road, Belfast, BT4
3XX

+44 (0)28 9052 1802

While the Assembly is in session, free public tours are available Monday - Friday at 11am and 2pm.

VISITING BELFAST



During Easter, July, August and Halloween, free tours starting on the hour are available between 11am and 3pm. Check the www.niassembly.gov.uk for tour times.

Entrance	Duration of the visit
Free	45'

Parliament Buildings is home to the Northern Ireland Assembly, the legislative body for Northern Ireland. There are several ways you can visit it (check the website to find out more), but you can always go for a free walk in the beautiful estate and enjoy a day outdoors.



ST ANNE'S CATHEDRAL

<http://www.belfastcathedral.org/>

Donegall Street, Belfast, BT1 2HB	+44 (0)28 9032 8332
Open to visitors 9am to 5.15pm Monday to Saturday, (last audio tour at 4.45pm), and 1pm to 3pm on a Sunday.	

Entrance	Duration of the visit
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VISITING BELFAST



Adults £5 (guide book); £6 (audio guide) Students (on production of Student ID) £3 (guide book); £4 (audio guide)	15'-45' (depending on the type of visit)
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St Anne's Cathedral has stood for over 100 years as a place of Christian worship in the heart of the City of Belfast, and is characterised by its Romanesque style.

Probably, the most important visual art in the Cathedral are the carved stonework, the many fine stained glass windows, the carefully sourced marble tiles on floor and walls and the delicate wood carving, not to mention the lovely needlework in both cushions and kneelers, most of which was done by members of the Cathedral community.



GIANT'S CAUSEWAY

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/giants-causeway>

44 Causeway Road, Bushmills, BT57 8SU	+44 (0)28 2073 1855
Visitor Centre open daily. Last admission one hour before closing. 1 Jan - 29 Feb, 9am - 5pm; 1 Mar - 31 Mar, 9am - 6pm; 1 Apr - 30 Sep, 9am - 7pm; 1 Oct - 31 Oct, 9am - 6pm; 1 Nov - 31 Dec, 9am - 5pm;	

VISITING BELFAST



Closed 24 to 26 December. Stones and coastal path open all year.

Entrance	Duration of the visit
Visitor Experience Museum Adult: £8.50 Local shuttle bus £1	2-3 h *we suggest you take a guided tour through our Partners at Alles Tours

A UNESCO World Heritage site, the Giant's Causeway is a magnificent, mysterious geological formation on the North East coast of Co Antrim steeped in myth and legend.

The setting is a spectacular dynamic coastal landscape of Atlantic waves, rugged cliffs, fascinating geographical antiquity, secluded bays and magnificent views.

The Causeway forms a jagged headland of neatly packed columns which point towards Scotland, and visitors can walk along the basalt columns which are at the edge of the sea, just over 1km from the entrance to the site.



Don't miss the beautiful coastal path, which extends 11 miles to Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge; the geology, flora and fauna of international importance; the spectacular two-mile walk to Runkerry Head, and some of Europe's finest cliff scenery, with fantastic birdwatching.

VISITING BELFAST



For Intern Europe interns guided tours are available at a discounted price of £14, thanks to our Partners at Allens Tours (29 Donegall Road, Belfast BT12 5JJ, +44(0)28 9091 5613).

Most tours also stop at Carrickfergus Castle. Find more info at:

<http://www.allensbelfastbustours.com>

GAME OF THRONES FILMING LOCATIONS

<http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/gameofthrones/>



VISITING BELFAST



The production was based in the area, with the show filming in various locations across Northern Ireland, including Titanic Studios in Belfast.

Immerse yourself in all things Westeros by joining in on one of the fantastic experiences or tours. Visit the locations of Winterfell Castle and the King's Road, or enjoy a themed afternoon tea or medieval banquet: ask our Partners at Allens Tour to book a guided tour!

The map here <http://gotnimap.northernirelandscreen.co.uk/> introduces you to key scenes from seasons 1-5 of the show and their filming locations.



BELFAST FAMOUS BLACK CAB TOURS

VISITING BELFAST



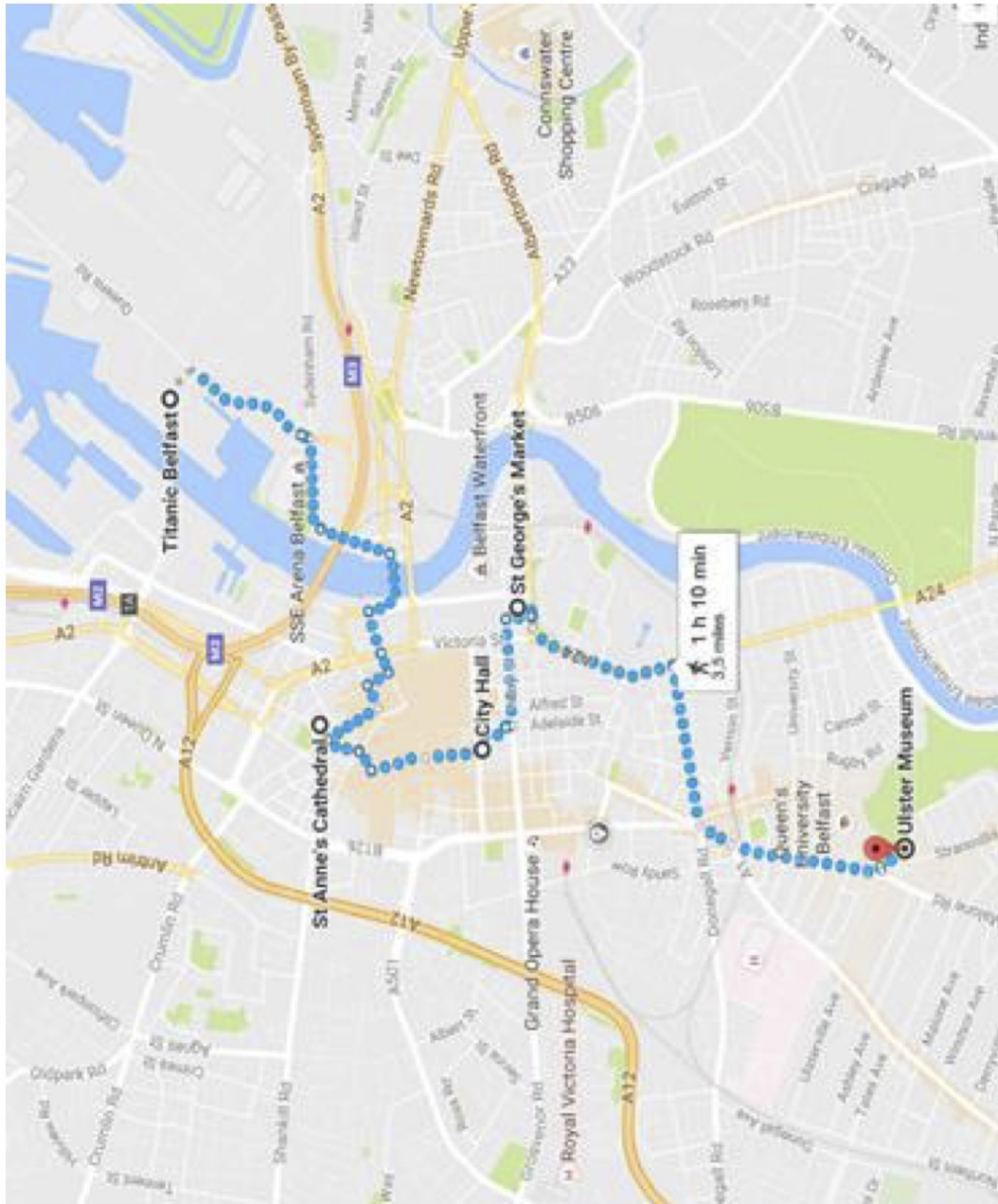
Belfast Famous Black Cab Tours (Belfast Attractions) have been offering award-winning political, sightseeing and Causeway tours for over 15 years, offering an insight into Belfast during The Troubles and today with a black taxi tour of the city's famous hotspots and murals.



VISITING BELFAST



SAMPLE BELFAST SIGHTSEEING ITINERARY MAP



THE INTERN EUROPE TEAM RECOMMENDS...

To eat

- **The Woodworkers**, rotating tap room
<https://www.facebook.com/thewoodworkersbelfast>
- **The Morning Star**, gastropub
<https://www.facebook.com/themorningstarbar>
- **Boojum**, burrito place <https://www.facebook.com/boojumbelfast/>
- **Maggie May's**, breakfast all day <https://www.facebook.com/maggiemaysbelfast>
- **Made in Belfast**, resto-lounge & bar
<https://www.facebook.com/madeinbelfast>
- **Little Wing Pizzeria** <https://www.facebook.com/littlewingpizzeria>
- **Stix and Stones**, seafood & steaks <https://www.facebook.com/Stix-and-Stones-267859806708786>
- **Cosmo**, fusion all-you-can-eat <https://www.facebook.com/cosmobelfast>
- **Slim's Healthy Kitchen** <https://www.facebook.com/slims.kitchen>
- **French Village**, bistro <https://www.facebook.com/frenchvillagebakery>
- **The DOCK Café** <https://www.facebook.com/docktqcafe>
- **The Jharna**, Indian <https://www.facebook.com/thejharna>
- **Villa Italia**, Italian & pizza <https://www.facebook.com/villaitaliarestaurant>
- **Scalini**, Italian & pizza <http://scalinirestaurant.co.uk>
- **Big Al's BBQ & Burgers** <https://www.facebook.com/bigalsbbqbuners>
- **BubbaCue** <https://www.facebook.com/bubbacuebelfast>
- **Doorsteps**, sandwiches <https://www.facebook.com/doorsteps>
- **The Chip Company**, fish and chips to go, multiple locations
<http://thechipcompany.co.uk/>

To go for a pint

- **The Parlour** quiz and game nights <https://www.facebook.com/theparlourbar>
- **Basement Bar** <https://www.facebook.com/Basement-Bar-Belfast-168721233146106>
- **Kelly's Cellars**, the oldest traditional Irish pub in Belfast, also a restaurant <https://www.facebook.com/kellys.cellars>
- **Filthy McNasty's**, pub and beer garden <https://www.facebook.com/FilthyMcNastysBelfast>
- **The Duke of York** <https://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Duke-of-York/185331278168655>
- **The Botanic Inn** <https://www.facebook.com/TheBotanicInn>
- **The John Hewitt** <https://www.facebook.com/thejohnhewitt>
- **The Hatfield House**, sports bar <https://www.facebook.com/The.Hatfield.House>
- **The Dirty Onion**, special Fridays, upstairs <https://www.facebook.com/thedirtyonion>
- **Brewbot**, the first brewpub to open in Belfast <https://www.facebook.com/teambrewbot>
- **The Bar With No Name**, pub and beer garden <https://www.facebook.com/TheBarWithNoName>
- **Cuckoos** beer, music & ping-pong <https://www.facebook.com/cuckoobelfast>

For live music & dancing

- **The Sunflower**, pizzas and live music <https://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Sunflower/100484753458119>
- **Fibber Magees**, live Irish music <https://www.facebook.com/FibbersBelfast>
- **Lavery's**, pub and disco <https://www.facebook.com/laverysbarbelfast>
- **The Belfast Empire**, live music and stand-up comedy <https://www.facebook.com/belfastEmpire>
- **The Limelight Club** <https://www.facebook.com/limelightbelfast>
- **The Black Box** www.blackboxbelfast.com
- **Maddens**, pub and live music <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Maddens-Bar/353950868055722>
- **Villa Club** <https://www.facebook.com/villa.belfast>
- **Kremlin**, LGBT-friendly club <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Kremlin-Belfast/299816160112598>

Theatres, cinemas, arts & event centres

- **QFT Queen's University Film Theatre** <https://www.facebook.com/pages/QFT/162221643788664>
- **Lyric Theatre** <https://www.facebook.com/lyrictheatrebelfast> (UK's Most Welcoming Theatre 2015!)
- **Crescent Arts Centre** <https://www.facebook.com/crescentartscentre>
- **The MAC Belfast** <https://www.facebook.com/theMACBelfast>
- **The Waterfront Hall**, concerts and events <https://www.facebook.com/waterfrontandulsterhall>
- **The SSE Arena**, concerts, games and events <https://www.facebook.com/thessearenabelfast>

To see & visit outside Belfast

- Dunluce Castle <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Castelo-de-Dunluce/646809675365238>
- The Antrim Coast Road [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A2_road_\(Northern_Ireland\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A2_road_(Northern_Ireland))
- Bangor & Helen's Bay https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Helen%27s_Bay
<http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/Bangor-Visitor-Information-Centre-Bangor-P6893>
- Day trips to Newcastle or (London)derry
- Cultra Beach <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Cultra-Beach/247469871944237>
- ... plus all you can find in the "Visit Belfast" section!

For outdoor activities & sports

- Slieve Donard & the Mourne Mountains
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slieve_Donard
<http://www.walkni.com/destinations/mourne-mountains/>
- Ormeau Park <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Ormeau-Park/133147030057833>
- Hiking in Cave Hill Country Park <http://www.walkni.com/walks/79/cave-hill-country-park/>
- Sailing in Bangor <http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/Sailing-in-Bangor-T15533-L35>
- Queen's University PEC Sports facilities
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Queens-University-PEC-Belfast/221999717904850>
- Sir Thomas & Lady Dixon Park <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Sir-Thomas-Lady-Dixon-Park/168329746511698>
- T13 Urban Sports & Skate Park <http://t13.tv/>
- Gaelic Games <http://ulster.gaa.ie>
<http://www.culturenorthernireland.org/article/708/gaelic-games-in-northern-ireland>
- The Ozone Leisure Centre Complex (includes climbing facilities & Laser Zone field)
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Ozone-Leisure-Centre-Complex-Ormeau-Park/165369340208951>
- Take a long walk or bike to Lisburn and visit the Irish Linen Centre & Lisburn Museum <http://www.lisburnmuseum.com/>
- Coca-Cola Zero Belfast bikes www.belfastbikes.co.uk

Events and Festivals

VISITING BELFAST



It's hard to keep track of all that's happening in Belfast! To see which festivals and events will be happening during your time in the city go to <http://visitbelfast.com/whats-on/festivals>

Some of the main events and celebrations are:

- **St Patrick's Day** (17th of March)
- **The Twelfth/Orangemen's Day** (12th of June)
- **Belsonic Music Festival** (June),
- **Belfast Mela Festival** for cultural diversity (August),
- **Belfast Pride** (August),
- **Culture Night Belfast** (September),
- **The Autumn Fair** (September),
- **Halloween Monster Mash and Fireworks Display** (October),
- **The Twilight Market** (November)
- **The Christmas Markets** (December)

APPENDIX 16 – Welcome Pack/House Rules Standard

HOUSE RULES



- If when you arrive at the house you **spot anything broken** or that doesn't seem OK to you, please **inform us at the induction meeting** and **send an email to the helpline** with pictures attached;
- During your stay in Belfast **keep all areas of the accommodation tidy and clean**. If we find the house in an unacceptable state during your stay or just after your departure, we will have to charge you an additional fee for cleaning;
- **Cleaners should be expected** in the house, they only do common areas and they are not expected to do dishes or rooms. A fortnightly cleaning (every 2 weeks) has been arranged for your accommodation;
- **It's completely forbidden to smoke in the accommodation**. You have specific areas to smoke outside;
- Posters or **anything on the walls are not allowed**. Sellotape, BluTac and pins all cause damage and are forbidden by the landlords;
- If you **lose your key, contact Intern Europe through the helpline**. We will provide a new key for you. A fee of £40 will be charged for the replacement service;
- **When you leave the house make sure all windows are close and the front door is close and locked;**
- Whenever you are in the house **make sure the house is ventilated**, open the windows and blinds;
- In the UK **bins are collected in specific days of the week**, you can find this dates in the fridge door, and normally they **need to be moved** to the back alley of the house;

Any damage in the house must be reported immediately to Intern Europe!

IF THERE ARE ISSUES IN THE HOUSE...

Any house problems should be reported to the Intern Europe helpline email address **help@interneurope.org**.

HOUSE RULES



In case of emergency you can contact the helpline phone number **+44 (0) 28 9562 2084**.

- If the heating system in the house isn't working, you have issues with the electricity, or something else (not urgent) happens, send an email to the Helpline at **help@interneurope.org**

Example:

Hello,

My name is Jorge and I live in 169 Ormeau Road. When I arrived home from work the heating system wasn't working. Can you please help?

Thank you

- On the other hand, if it's something that can't wait, like what is shown in the pictures, just call the helpline and explain the situation.



- If you have issues with your **flatmates**, try to talk about it openly with them.
- If you came in a **group**, your group supervisor can help you deal with it.
- If, however, the issue remains, please get in touch with the Intern Europe staff and we will act as **mediators** in order to find the best solution for everyone involved.

APPENDIX 17 – Welcome Pack/House Rules Homestay

HOUSE RULES



Family Life

You are expected to behave as a member of the family, not as a guest: try to participate in family activities, both work and play, and talk to your family about any problems or needs

Respect

Respect the house rules, as well as every member of your host family.

Respect any cultural or religious differences, and do not be afraid to ask if there is something you don't know or don't understand.

Be truthful and express any concerns or needs in a respectful way.

Household Chores

As a member of the family, you should help with the general household work: for example, you could offer to help with the cleaning, set the table, help with meal preparation, take out the garbage, sweep the floor, etc.

Bedroom & Communal Spaces

You should keep your bedroom clean and tidy: your family is not expected to clean it for you.

If you use the bathroom, kitchen, living room or any other shared space, make sure to leave it clean and tidy.

Meals

Your family will provide you with breakfast and a warm, cooked dinner every day; if you know that you will be late or absent, contact them in advance.

Should you have any food allergies, or if there is any type of food which you can't eat, please warn your host family in advance.

Offer to help with small tasks, such as setting the table or helping to clean up after meals.

Language

In order to improve your English, you must practise, and your Belfast home is a great place to do it!

HOUSE RULES



Your host family can help you to understand how English is spoken in everyday situations and can explain things you don't understand

Cultural Exchange

Many host families choose to host international students as a way to exchange culture.

They want to learn about your country and your traditions so, when you experience real differences between cultures, it may be interesting to share them with your hosts.

Issues with the Host Family

Once you arrive in Belfast, it will probably take you at least a couple of days to get accustomed to your new environment and to the host family, so be patient and do your best to adapt.

Should you have issues with your host family, first of all try to talk about it openly with them: explain what is wrong, and try to solve the problem together.

If something more serious arises, please get in touch with the Intern Europe staff, and we will act as **mediators** in order to find the best solution for everyone involved.

WORKPLACE RULES



YOU HAVE BEEN CHOSEN TO BE AN INTERN IN BELFAST...

Congratulations!

It is probably one of your first work experiences, if not the very first: if you are unsure of how to behave or dress at your new work placement, do not worry, it is completely normal.

Either before or at the time of beginning your placement, your host company will probably give you a list of rules to follow, as well as (if needed) a dress code.

However, there are a few basic, **general rules** that are valid for any kind of work placement:

- **THE GOLDEN RULE: Always do your best!**
- **Be punctual and respect your work hours.**
- **Smile and try to always have a positive attitude.**
Especially on your first week, when you still do not know your job and colleagues very well.
Be polite and try not to be too nervous!
- **Be patient.**
Remember that most things can be solved through communication and time: if you don't like your first day, it doesn't mean that the internship will be a disaster!
Be patient and talk with the people around you about any doubt you might have.
- **Ask questions.**
If you do not understand a task, ask your supervisor to explain again.
If you would like to try different tasks or to be given more things to do, communicate it to your supervisor.
- **Learn names and get to know your colleagues.**
You will spend all of your work days with them, so this is very important.
- **Interact with everyone.**
You came to Belfast to improve your English and to learn new skills.
Try to talk with your colleagues and supervisor, and do not be afraid to interact with clients or locals: the people here are very nice and do not care if your English is not perfect.

- **Know who to call if there are any problems.**

If greater issues with your placement arise (ex. Not enough work, too much work, work that is different from the job specified in your contract...), **start by talking to your work supervisor.**
If the problem is not solved, or if it is a very severe issue, **contact Intern Europe.**
- **Absence can lead to your disqualification from the programme.**

Any reason that can seem valid to you is not an excuse to miss work, as you have weekends and time after work to do anything you need to.
Haircuts, shopping, receiving packages, sleep, are all things that need to be done outside of your work day!
- **Holidays and days off are not part of your EU-funded programme.**

However, in special cases you can have free days, like bank (national) holidays.
These days must be agreed upon by the sending organization, the host organization and Intern Europe.
- **Work placement meetings.**

During your stay, you will have several meetings with Intern Europe.
We will ask you to pick up/bring documents to the office: they are all mandatory, so please check your email regularly!
- **Limit your technology and social media usage.**

Avoid being on the phone unless it is an emergency: put it in silent mode and wait until your break to go on Facebook or any another social media.
If you want to listen to music on your phone or PC, ask your supervisor for permission and always use your earphones.
- **Be tidy.**

Keep your desk and communal areas clean and tidy.
Avoid eating at your desk unless it's the only option.
- **Dress appropriately.**

There are different ways to dress for different work placements, depending on the situation.

If your company requires a dress code, you will find it in your work placements information document; should they not have a dress code, you must still be dressed properly.

If you are not sure, in your first day just overdress and then just see how your colleagues dress!

Here you can find some pictures illustrating the most common dress code terms, so that you will know what your company means when they say that you should dress casual, smart casual, business casual, etc.

- In most offices the dress code is SMART CASUAL: when thinking of smart casual dress, focus on the word "smart," which means presentable and neat; men might wear sports jackets or sweaters and trousers, and women might wear sweaters and trousers or skirts, or dresses.
- BUSINESS CASUAL, on the other hand, is more formal, with more elegant and professional-looking jackets, trousers, shirts, skirts and dresses.
- BUSINESS FORMAL (e.g. suit and tie) is rarely required during our internships, so do not worry.
- In some cases, the required dress code will be CASUAL: you must still be presentable and look tidy, but there are less rules and you are free to wear simpler, less formal clothes.

Obviously, there is no need to copy exactly what you see in the following images: these are just generic examples!

**** Remember: if your work requires safety clothing or work uniforms, your company will let you know in advance!*

DRESS CODE EXAMPLES

Office Clothing

WORKPLACE RULES



Business formal



Business casual



Smart casual



Casual



Business formal



Business casual



Smart casual



Casual

Safety Clothing



YOUR EUROPASS CV

TIPS AND TEMPLATES



INTRODUCTION

Your CV (*Curriculum Vitae*) is the most important document that you have to show future employers who you are and what you can do.

There are many ways to create a CV, but all will have to include your contact information, relevant education, relevant work experience and personal skills (including languages and driving licences).

Intern Europe requires you to fill in a CV in the Europass format, as it is very easy and straightforward: simply use the online tool available at:

<https://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/editors/en/cv/compose>

You can see some templates in various languages here (but remember that for Intern Europe the CV must be in English):

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In this document you will find some tips to create a good Europass CV, as well as one template example to use as a point of reference.



OFFICIAL EUROPASS GUIDELINES

Before you start: Five basic principles for a good CV

1. Concentrate on the essentials

- Employers generally spend less than one minute reading a CV before deciding to reject it, or to shortlist it for detailed consideration. If you fail to make the right impact, you missed your chance.
- If applying for an advertised vacancy, always ensure that you comply with any application process entirely. The vacancy notice might specify: how to apply (CV, application form, online application), the length and/or format of the CV, whether a covering letter is required, etc.
- Be brief: two A4 pages are usually more than enough, irrespective of your education or experience. Do not exceed three pages. If you hold a degree, include your secondary school qualifications only if relevant to the job in question.
- Is your work experience limited? Describe your education and training first; highlight volunteering activities and placements or traineeships.

2. Be clear and concise

- Use short sentences. Avoid clichés. Concentrate on the relevant aspects of your training and work experience.
- Give specific examples. Quantify your achievements.
- Update your CV as your experience develops. Don't hesitate to remove old information if it does not add value for the position.

3. Always adapt your CV to suit the post you are applying for

- Highlight your strengths according to the needs of the employer and focus on the skills that match the job.
- Do not include work experience or training which is not relevant to the application.
- Explain any breaks in your studies or career giving examples of any transferable skills you might have learned during your break.
- Before sending your CV to an employer, check again that it corresponds to the required profile.
- Do not artificially inflate your CV; if you do, you are likely to be found out at the interview.

4. Pay attention to the presentation of your CV

- Present your skills and competences clearly and logically, so that your advantages stand out.
- Put the most relevant information first.
- Pay attention to spelling and punctuation.
- Print your CV on white paper (unless you are asked to send it electronically).
- Retain the suggested font and layout.

5. Check your CV once you have filled it in

- Correct any spelling mistakes, and ensure the layout is clear and logical.
- Have someone else re-read your CV so that you are sure the content is clear and easy to understand.
- Do not forget to write a cover letter.



INTERN EUROPE TIPS

- **Personal information:** include picture, full name, address, email address, phone number with national prefix, Skype name, and date of birth. Gender and nationality are optional. Do not put religion or marital status.
- **Education:** put your current course first. No need to put your elementary and middle school, only high school/A levels/vocational training/university, etc. Always write the name and type of school and add the main subjects. You can add any summer/language school course here, too.
- **Work Experience:** put your current job or apprenticeship first. Always write your function/role, the name and location of the company and a list of your main tasks. Remember: even if it was a part-time, volunteering or summer job, it is still relevant!
- **Dates:** for each education level or work experience add the beginning and end dates. If you are not sure of the exact day, simply write the month.
- **Skills:** the skills section is very important, so do not forget to fill it in. You can check the templates here and online to have a better idea of what to write in these sections.
- **Driving Licence:** if you have both A and B, there is no need to write both. The B driving licence includes the A too.
- **Form:** make sure that there aren't any grammar nor spelling mistakes. Most of all, do not write words in your native language! If you are not sure, check an online dictionary like www.wordreference.com
- **Format:** download and send us the CV both in Word and PDF.



EUROPASS CV TEMPLATE

PERSONAL INFORMATION

John Smith



12 High Street, London, 123456 (United Kingdom)

0044 123 456789

john.smith@gmail.com

Skype ID: JSMITH

Date of birth: 12/10/1999

JOB APPLIED FOR

Administrative Clerk Internship in Belfast

NAME

ADDRESS

PHONE

EMAIL

SKYPE NAME

BIRTHDATE

(the order isn't important)

WORK EXPERIENCE

09/2015–Present

Administrative Clerk Apprenticeship

Smith Ltd, Birmingham (United Kingdom)

- mailing, filing
- booking trips and scheduling meetings

01/2014–10/2015

Shop salesperson

H&M, London (United Kingdom)

- interacting with clients and colleagues
- operating the tills
- inventory

LATEST JOB FIRST

“POSITION – COMPANY NAME AND LOCATION – TASKS”

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

08/2015–Present

Vocational course - Administrative Clerk

Vocational School "L. Clark", Cardiff (United Kingdom)

- English, Math, IT, French, Accounting, Administration
- Part-time course, integrated with practical work experience (apprenticeship)

2010–2015

High School Diploma

South Wales Technical College, Cardiff (United Kingdom)

- English, Welsh, Math, History, Accounting

06/2013

Intensive French Language Course

Renoir Language School, Paris (France)

- French Language and Culture
- Final Examination (Level B1)

LATEST SCHOOL FIRST

“TYPE – SCHOOL NAME AND LOCATION – SUBJECTS”

LANGUAGES

PERSONAL SKILLS

Mother tongue(s) English

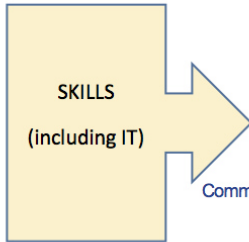


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intern europe



Other language(s)

UNDERSTANDING		SPEAKING		WRITING
Listening	Reading	Spoken interaction	Spoken production	
B1	B1	B1	B1	B1
DELFB1				

Levels: A1 and A2: Basic user - B1 and B2: Independent user - C1 and C2: Proficient user
[Common European Framework of Reference for Languages](#)

Communication skills

- Good written and spoken communication skills gained through my experience as salesperson and football team captain

Organisational / managerial skills

- Leadership skills gained as a football team captain
 - Punctual and well-organized

Digital competence

SELF-ASSESSMENT				
Information processing	Communication	Content creation	Safety	Problem solving
Independent user	Independent user	Independent user	Basic user	Independent user

[Digital competences - Self-assessment grid](#)

ECDL

- Office Suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint)
 - SAP software

Other skills

- First aid certificate (2011)
 - Fire brigade volunteer (2009-2012)
 - Football team Captain for the XXX team (2010-present)

Driving licence

B



YOUR EUROPASS CV

TIPS AND TEMPLATES



INTRODUCTION

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In this document you will find some tips to create a good Europass CV, as well as one template example to use as a point of reference.



OFFICIAL EUROPASS GUIDELINES

Concentrate on the essentials: be brief
(no more than 2 pages)



Be clear and keep the CV updated



Adapt the CV to the position you are
applying for



Pay attention to the presentation
(picture, spelling and grammar,
punctuation, font, layout...)



Check it once it is finished (or have
someone else check it for you)



INTERN EUROPE TIPS

- **Personal information:** include picture, full name, address, email address, phone number with national prefix, Skype name, and date of birth. Gender and nationality are optional. Do not put religion or marital status.
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EUROPASS CV TEMPLATE

PERSONAL INFORMATION

John Smith



📍 12 High Street, London, 123456 (United Kingdom)

📞 0044 123 456789

✉️ john.smith@gmail.com

Skype ID: JSMITH

Date of birth: 12/10/1999

NAME
ADDRESS
PHONE
EMAIL
SKYPE NAME
BIRTHDATE
(the order isn't important)

JOB APPLIED FOR

Administrative Clerk Internship in Belfast

WORK EXPERIENCE

09/2015–Present

Administrative Clerk Apprenticeship

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- French Language and Culture
- Final Examination (Level B1)

LATEST SCHOOL FIRST
"TYPE – SCHOOL NAME AND LOCATION – SUBJECTS"

LANGUAGES

PERSONAL SKILLS

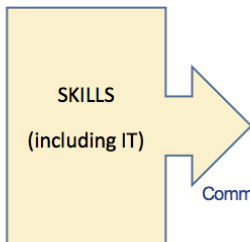
Mother tongue(s) English



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Opening doors to learning and working in Europe





Other language(s)	UNDERSTANDING		SPEAKING		WRITING
	Listening	Reading	Spoken interaction	Spoken production	
French	B1	B1	B1	B1	B1
DELFB1					

Levels: A1 and A2: Basic user - B1 and B2: Independent user - C1 and C2: Proficient user
[Common European Framework of Reference for Languages](#)

- Communication skills** - Good written and spoken communication skills gained through my experience as salesperson and football team captain
- Organisational / managerial skills** - Leadership skills gained as a football team captain
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Digital competence	SELF-ASSESSMENT				
	Information processing	Communication	Content creation	Safety	Problem solving
	Independent user	Independent user	Independent user	Basic user	Independent user

[Digital competences - Self-assessment grid](#)

ECDL

- Office Suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint)
- SAP software

- Other skills** - First aid certificate (2011)
 - Fire brigade volunteer (2009-2012)
 - Football team Captain for the XXX team (2010-present)

Driving licence B

