

ERASMUS+ TRAINING COURSE: EXPLORING LOCAL RESOURCES – AN INQUIRY BASED APPROACH TO OUR COMMUNITY – REF. OTC12

1 week. Minimum English language level B1

Alpha College PIC Number: 945 895 889

This 1 week course on Exploring Local Resources is of significant benefit to teachers and trainers who would like to explore the possibilities of using an Inquiry Based Learning approach to creating dynamic learning opportunities using the wealth of easily, and often very economically, available resources in their locality. This course will increase their awareness of current thinking on Inquiry Based Learning; its potential to support students to become more collaborative, thoughtful and innovative learners, its application across a range of topics and classes including its relevance in the area of preparing students for a changing world of work and employment opportunities. They will also have the opportunity to share ideas on best practice methodologies with colleagues from across Europe thereby improving the overall approach to teaching in their schools and, as a result, the learner outcomes for their students.

Objectives

The primary objectives of this 1-week Inquiry Based Learning course are

- to familiarise participants with key concepts and issues in Inquiry Based Learning and to help develop their skills in incorporating IBL into teaching and learning processes in their schools.
- to increase participants' skill and confidence in the use of tech tools used in IBL.
- to explore a range of school projects for subjects such as English, geography, history and citizenship with a focus on the tools and resources needed to implement IBL.
- to provide opportunities for improved methodology and creativity to help participants increase their student engagement and retention on their return to their own schools.
- to provide an opportunity to develop and consolidate participants own language skills.
- to establish contacts between teachers from a variety of European backgrounds and facilitate future networking among these professionals.
- to promote awareness of contemporary Ireland.

Pre-course Preparation

- Pre-course reading list
- Pre-course cultural information
- Pre-Course general arrival information
- Needs Analysis

Support offered by Alpha College

- Course Tutor
- Learning Materials
- Individual formative assessment
- Setting of learning objectives
- 24 hour emergency contact number
- Accommodation service
- Information on optional extra cultural visits

Follow up provided

- A Certificate of Attendance
- Europass Mobility Documentation Completion
- On the final day of the course, the participants are encouraged to examine benefits gained from the course and how they can implement them in their own professional capacity
- Participants are encouraged to keep contact via email and private social networking and to join our forum for previous trainees
- Alpha trainers are available for follow-up advice and support when teachers return to their schools.

Outcomes

- Increased confidence in developing and implementing Inquiry Based Learning in participants' schools, including implementation through the participants' first language
- Increased confidence in using tech tools to implement Inquiry Based Learning Projects
- Digital portfolio of IBL work done during the programme as a reference for implementing new approaches in participants own classrooms and to facilitate dissemination of their Erasmus+ project to colleagues
- Participation in a real world project using some of the core characteristics of IBL
- Increased awareness of the possibilities of exploiting easily accessible local resources as a basis for supporting collaborative, thoughtful learning across a range of contexts by introducing an IBL approach.
- Enhancement of personal English Language skills – reading, writing, speaking, listening, fluency, accuracy
- Sharing of experience and knowledge with professionals from a range of European countries
- Increased knowledge of Irish history and culture
- Knowledge of Erasmus+ potential for professional development

Format

This course on Exploring Local Resources – An Inquiry Based Approach to our Community is a one-week course consisting of 20 morning contact hours as well as an excursions programme which is linked to the morning sessions. Advice is provided on opportunities for extended Informal Learning and Personal Research related to their course on Saturday and Sunday.

Methodology

This is a practical, hands-on, participative course which focuses on the application of IBL in the classroom. The input sessions are a blend of presentation format, discussion and practical activities. Throughout the course participants are encouraged to reflect on their own practice, consider alternative practices and try out a variety of classroom activities through lesson planning, workshops and presentations. Participants will build up and evaluate a portfolio of project ideas and develop a project idea of their own.

The morning sessions are complemented and reinforced by afternoon cultural visits to places related to Irish history or culture which could be incorporated into an IBL project. Participants are encouraged to develop their language skills in a more informal environment outside the classroom and further enhance their knowledge of Ireland.

Course Programme

Day One

- Induction and introduction to the course. Creation of a digital portfolio
- An Introduction to Inquiry Based Learning. Key concepts and essential questions. Teacher and student roles in Inquiry Based Learning.
- An orientation tour of Dublin to provide participants with an opportunity to practise their English in a more informal setting outside the classroom, familiarise themselves with the art and architecture of the city and consider how an urban area could be used as a basis for Inquiry Based Learning projects

Day Two

- The Inquiry Cycle: planning the module. Strategies for developing student contributions and fostering student engagement.
- Workshop: Street art, architecture and cultural spaces in our community. Tools and resources for developing walking tours of our communities. Reflection on how urban areas are used as a basis for Inquiry Based Learning projects.
- Visit to a local Library - the role of the library in our community, in education and in the Digital Age.

Day Three

- The Inquiry Cycle: monitoring students' progress, reflecting on learning goals and setting up the final stage.
- Workshop: Transportation in our Community. The role of transportation in historical developments, local and national economy and recent headlines.
- Visit to Dun Laoghaire – Train Station and Port.

Day Four

- Approaches to assessment in Inquiry Based Learning. Exploring and developing formative and summative assessment in an Inquiry Based Learning module. The role of self and peer evaluation in employment.
- Workshop: The changing world of work. Employment trends and opportunities in localities then and now.
- Visit to a local Enterprise Centre to see how small local industries and start-ups work. (This is an organisation set up to help create and grow young businesses by providing them with necessary support and financial and technical services)

Day Five

- Workshop: Developing a project idea for our context.
- The Inquiry Cycle: Reflection and assessment of project ideas. Course Evaluation
- Outdoor Learning Environments in Inquiry Based Learning Projects. Visit to St. Anne's Park.

Course Dates:

- 22nd July 2019. (or by arrangement for closed groups)

Course Fees:

€495 (Price includes tuition, learning materials, excursions and activities as outlined in the programme, completion of Erasmus+ documentation)

(Participants on this course may extend their programme, if necessary, by taking a 1 week General English language training course for an extra fee)

Host Family Accommodation, standard, single room, half board

€200 for 1 week (July and August 2019)

Student Self Catering Accommodation: July and August only

€295 per week. Single bedroom, private bathroom, shared kitchen/living room. 5 minutes on foot from Alpha.

Airport Transfers (optional)

arrival €70; departure €70

Sample Timetable

EXPLORING LOCAL RESOURCES – AN INQUIRY BASED APPROACH TO OUR COMMUNITY – REF. OTC12					
Wk 1	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9:00-10:50	Induction and Information dissemination. Creating a digital portfolio	The Inquiry Cycle. Planning the module	The Inquiry Cycle: monitoring students' progress	Approaches to assessment in Inquiry Based Learning	Workshop: Developing a project idea.
<i>Coffee Break</i>					
11:10 - 13:00	Key concepts of IBL. Roles of teacher and student	Workshop: Street art, architecture and cultural spaces in our community	Workshop: Transportation in our Community	Workshop: The changing face of employment.	Finalising digital portfolio. Course review and evaluation. Establishing guidelines for future contact and networking
<i>Lunch Break</i>					
p.m.	Orientation tour of Dublin	Visit to a local library	Visit to Dun Laoghaire	Visit to a local Enterprise Centre	Visit to St Anne's Park
Saturday: Informal Learning. Self-guided research and cultural activities along guidelines from Alpha College					

About Alpha College

Alpha College has a staff of highly qualified, experienced and motivated teacher trainers who are also practising teachers of English, experienced in using up-to-date methods with learners at all levels of language learning.

In addition Alpha College has been providing in-service training courses for teachers from overseas for the last 18 years. Alpha personnel are committed to providing professionally delivered training in a supportive environment resulting in high quality learner outcomes for participants and are also experienced in completion of Erasmus+ documentation.

Alpha College is a full member of EAQUALS (Evaluation and Accreditation of Quality Language Services). As a result of the most recent 2-day EAQUALS inspection the Inspectors identified points of excellence in the following categories:

- Management and Administration
- Client Services
- Teaching and Learning
- Staff Profile and Development
- Course Design and Supporting Systems
- Internal Communications
- Assessment and Certification
- External Communications
- Academic Resources