

Ireland feedback

A higher proportion of students studying English in Ireland intended to continue on to university study this year, according to our Feedback survey. This is due to the higher number of Chinese students among those canvassed.

Ireland feedback at a glance

Total number of students:	female 52, male 29 (unknown 1) 82
Average age in years:	24.3
Average length of programme in weeks:	12.17
Average number of students per class:	7.8
Average number of hours of language tuition per week:	20
% of students who found their course through an agent:	46
% of students who booked through an agent or adviser:	48
% of students who had been on another language programme:	38
% of students who would recommend their school:	93

Student nationality

The league table of the top nationalities of students who took part in this issue's survey reveals the swift rise of Chinese students in the Irish market. Chinese students were the largest single nationality, accounting for 20 per cent of respondents, while just two years ago, they were in fourth place with 10 per cent (see *Language Travel Magazine*, pages 18-19, December 2001). Japanese numbers were up again this year, improving on their fifth position last year (see *Language Travel Magazine*, pages 14-15, December 2002). Swiss

students also made significant gains, taking second position with a share of 17 per cent. The increase in Chinese and Japanese students boosted the total share of Asian students by six percentage points this year compared with last year, while Western Europe's share was down by four percentage points. Latin America also slipped, accounting for only one per cent of respondents, compared with five per cent last year.

Student age and motivation

While the main motivation for taking a language

course in Ireland among our respondents was for current or future work, the proportion of those who were going on to study in Ireland was up by five percentage points this year. This is a direct result of the increased number of Chinese students in Ireland. Nine per cent of students were intending to go on to another English-speaking country to study.

Student enrolment

With the growing importance of learning English for academic reasons, the average length of stay, at 12.2 weeks, was higher than last year's 9.6-week

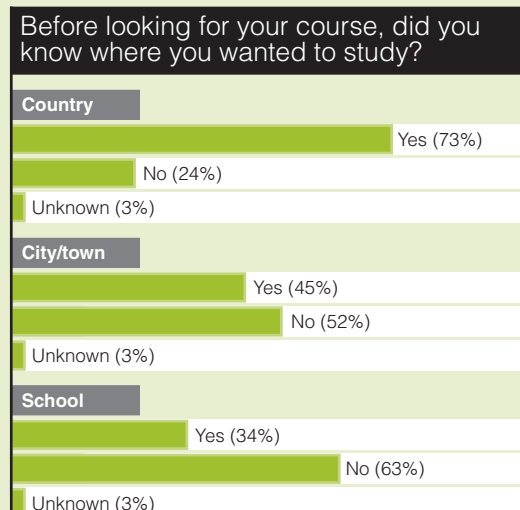
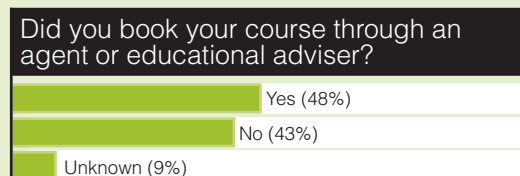
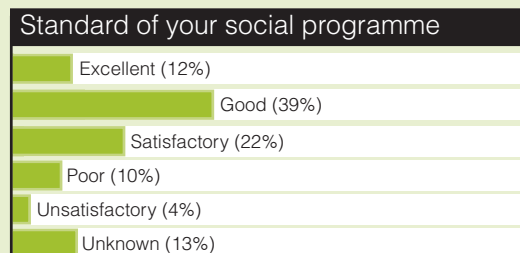
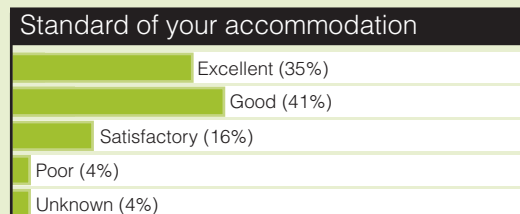
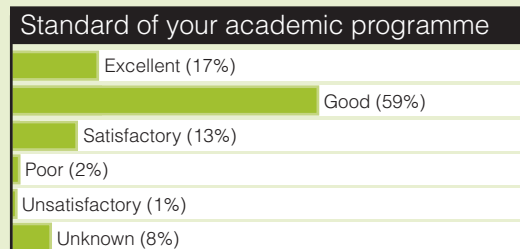
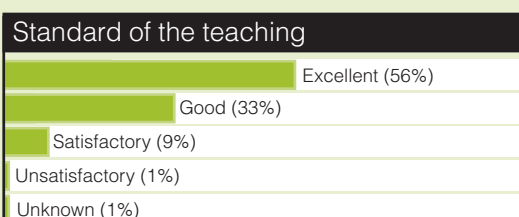
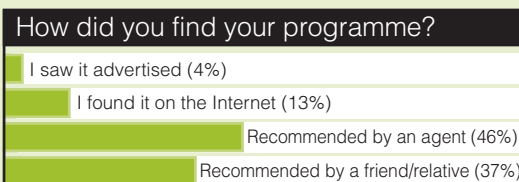
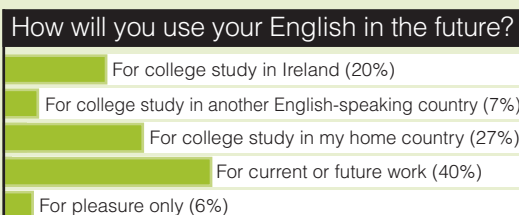
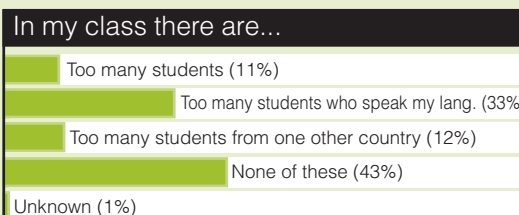
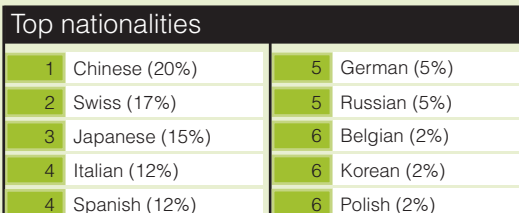
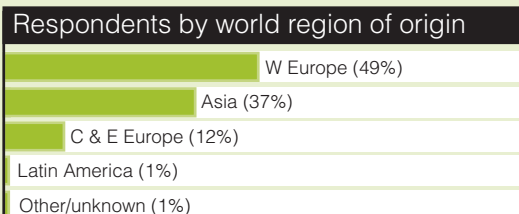
average. In terms of recruitment, although 48 per cent of students said they had booked their course through an agent this year, this figure was down from 56 per cent last year. Ireland is becoming the first choice English language destination for a growing number of students. When asked if they knew the country in which they wanted to study before starting their search for language courses, 73 per cent of students said yes, compared with 68 per cent last year.

Standard of the schools

Overall, the quality of the schools that took part in our survey was high, with 89 per cent of students saying the standard of the teaching was either excellent or good, 76 per cent saying the same of both the academic programme and accommodation, and 73 per cent rating the social programme to be at least satisfactory. Students generally benefited from small classes, of between three and 17 students, averaging out at just under eight students per class. However, because of the high concentration of Chinese students at one school in particular, 33 per cent of students overall – which included 63 per cent of all our Chinese respondents – indicated that there were too many students of their own nationality in their class. Half of all Swiss students also gave this answer.

Living in Ireland

Host family accommodation was by far the most popular choice, accounting for 66 per cent of living arrangements, and the typical spend per week on tuition and accommodation was 340 (US\$377).



Thank you to the following schools for participating in our survey: Aisling Ireland, Dublin; Alpha College of English, Dublin; Clare Language Centre, Ennis; Dublin School of English, Dublin; EPTI, Drogheda; Galway Language Centre, Galway; Holywell Language Centre, Ballyvaughan; International House, Dublin; Irish College of English, Malahide; Munster School of English, Limerick.