
Students Learning with Communities: All of these projects were undertaken in collaboration with community partners and supervised by academic staff members

DIT Access and Civic Engagement Office

2017

Report on Sustainable Leisure Facilities Management: TFLM3916 Assignment with Donabate Sports and Community Centre, Co. Dublin and Corduff Sports Centre, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15

Catherine Gorman

Technological University Dublin, catherine.gorman@tudublin.ie

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Report on
Sustainable Tourism
TFTR1005
Assignment
with

Sonairte, Laytown, County Meath



Dr. Catherine Gorman,
Department of Hospitality Management and Tourism
College of Arts and Tourism, DIT,
Cathal Brugha Street, Dublin 1

Tel: 4027583 Email: catherine.gorman@dit.ie

Context of the Project

Sustainable Tourism is a module attracting **five ECTS** which runs in Semester 1 each year and is delivered as a core module as part of the following programmes: There were 90 students studying the module:

- DT 412/2 B.Sc in Tourism Marketing
- DT406/2 BA in Tourism Management
- DT518/2
- DT519/2
- DT520/2

The learning objectives of the module are to provide an overview of sustainable tourism provision and consumption under definitional, policy and resource considerations. The three constructs of sustainable provision, namely economic, socio-cultural and environmental sustainability as well as the impact of climate change underpin the content of the module

The expected learning outcomes of the module with italicised outcomes relevant to SLWC are as follows:

The student should be able to:

- Evaluate the *significance of Agenda 21* and the principles of sustainable development
- Consider the development of Irish tourism in the context of environmental, social and economic sustainability
- Assess tourism's commitment / responsibility to global sustainability
- *Display a deeper understanding of the environmental impacts tourism activity has on our surroundings local, regional and international level.*
- *Display specialised, practical and technical skills in the area of sustainable tourism development / management*
- *Confidently execute a field study, as part of a team, managing learning tasks both independently and in conjunction with others*
- Express an internalised appreciation of sustainability, reflecting the global importance of this concept

This module is allocated three hours per week. The topic of Local Agenda 21 is particularly important to sustainable provision. Local Agenda 21 (LA21) links in well to community participation as it advocates the 'bottom-up' approach to planning requiring the engagement with all stakeholders and local communities in formulating development plans. All county councils in Ireland use LA 21 as a basis for their planning and development

Delivery of the Module

The methods of delivery involve a mix of lecture, guest lecture, a fieldtrip and presentations.

All materials are uploaded on to Web courses including web links (usually embedded in the presentation notes), examples of exam questions and various documents and academic papers

Assignment/project

The assignment description, useful links, mark allocated and criteria used are uploaded on Web Courses on Day 1 of meeting with the students. The assignment attracts 40% of

the total mark for the subject. Attendance and paper evaluation attracts 10% of the module...

There are two parts to the assignment/project

1. Attendance on a fieldtrip
2. An academic report undertaken in pairs following a brief which requires the students to evaluate and considers the sustainable provision of a site using the three constructs as a guide. A theoretical context is expected at the outset of the work and they are also encouraged to make recommendations.

The students are also given ample scope to refer back to their assignment work within the exam, and this component attracts 50% of the total mark for the module.

Community Participation

Sonairte is a registered charity located in Laytown Co. Meath. It is the National Centre for Ecology in Ireland, however as it is a charity, it lacks financial resources and this has been an issue with its continued operation. A past graduate of DIT (Clare McAnaney) is involved with the Centre and she contacted Catherine Gorman in October 2015 to explore developing a case study and working with students on how the centre may develop and progress into the future.

As part of the assignment, **20 students** were allocated Sonairte as their study site visit in Semester 1 2016. A trip was organised to the Centre where presentations were made and a guided walk around the centre and grounds was organised.

Timeline and Activities

- October 2015 – Sonairte express an interest in working with DIT
- September 2016 – communication and meeting with Clare McAnaney (Director Sonairte) to discuss project and to agree on contract of operation and delivery. Assignment criteria agreed
- Early November 2016 : Site visit to Sonairte with student group
- Individual visits by some students (local to the site)
- Project work on and delivered by the students and examined
- February 28th 2017 – Lunch with Community partners and best engaging students Hand over copy of assignments to Sonairte (with permission from students)
- March 2017: Students and community group nominated for SLWC awards.

Key Student/DIT Outputs of the project (2016/17)

- Students experience the issues and challenges of the real world and using their knowledge have an opportunity to evaluate and recommend
- **Twenty** students undertook this project with Sonairte.
- **Ten** academic reports were developed and handed back to Sonairte

Key Community Outputs of the project

These have not been measured quantitatively; however from a qualitative perspective a number of outputs can be posited.

- Greater awareness and insight of sustainable provision with inputs from both a tourism and student perspective
- Increased links and engagement with DIT

Sustainable Tourism

Conclusion

This was the first time DIT had linked with Sonairte. Both students and the charity were very positive about the link and the students especially were made aware of the reality and challenges of being a National centre whose main aim was to be sustainable. A number of sustainable initiatives were demonstrated to the students while on their visit.

Since the project concluded, unfortunately, Sonairte had had to shut its doors due to a high increase in their insurance premium which the charity is unable to pay or source.

Appendix 1

Financial Costs (receipt enclosed)

Activity	Cost	Date
Lunch in DIT with Partners/students	34.00	28/02/2017
Total	34.00	

No. _____

The Green Room
Faculty of Tourism & Food
Cathal Brugha Street

Table No: 5 Covers: 4 Date: 28/07

Food

3 courses x4. 32

Beverages

Bottle sparkling x1 2
