

“I set it up with one mission – to teach students at all levels correct exam technique.”

DR DAVID COSGRAVE

Exam Performance Institute



Dr David Cosgrave, from Marfield, Clonmel in Co Tipperary, returned to Ireland from Abu Dhabi in 2020 to set up his business, the Exam Performance Institute, in Clonmel.

David moved to Abu Dhabi with his wife Amy in 2017 after finishing a PhD in Marketing, but the couple always intended to return to start a family.

“We like to travel and wanted to experience another environment and from a financial perspective, there was a lot of opportunity in Abu Dhabi,” David says.

“We always planned to come back to Ireland at some point, but Covid speeded up the process. With lockdowns, we preferred to be at home.”

While abroad, David worked as a professor in Abu Dhabi University where he taught Digital Marketing. It was this experience, together with having lectured at universities in Ireland, that prompted David to create the Exam Performance Institute. “I set it up with one mission – to teach students at all levels correct exam technique,” he says.

“I saw a pattern over time that students make the same mistakes in exams year

on year. Through my own research and looking at other research, I realised that most students are never actually taught how to take an exam correctly. And the further you go into your education; it’s automatically assumed that you learned how to take an exam at an earlier step.”

David says the typical way students prepare for an exam, by learning off as much as they can and hoping to get it on the page on the day, is not the best way to maximise performance.

His research showed that the problem he observed in Ireland and Abu Dhabi was widespread in other education systems too.

David’s business venture was initially hampered by the fact that the pandemic resulted in the widespread cancellation or alteration of exams. “That was an interesting start, but I had been doing exam coaching prior to setting up the business. It grew organically from helping children of family friends to getting calls from people that I didn’t know,” he says.

While he enjoyed the lifestyle in Abu Dhabi, he is now appreciating the comforts of being home. “It’s nice in the sense that we

started our family since we came back. We have a little girl, and both of our families are close enough to where we live, so we have a great support network,” he says.

David found that the Back for Business programme helped him in a number of ways, including accountability, growing his network and the support and advice from fellow participants on similar journeys. “After the difficulties of Covid, it motivated me to make sure that this was the right thing to do – not to walk away without really fulfilling the potential of the business,” he says.

In September 2022, the Exam Performance Institute launched new exam technique courses for several major exams. Exam Performance Institute works with schools, colleges and companies to provide exam technique training to students preparing for exams. It also works closely with student disability services to provide exam technique training for students with additional educational needs.

As well as developing the existing business, David’s future plans include growing an online community for students with additional educational needs.



Exam Performance Institute

POSITION

Managing Director

WHAT WE DO

We teach correct exam technique to students.

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