

Exchange experience report, City University of Hong Kong, Autumn 2019

1. Preparation

1.1 Study abroad application

It is important to attend the meetings held by the LLB exchange office in order to gather all the necessary information, especially regarding the deadlines. Furthermore, information for the study abroad application can be found online on the University website (<http://www.iese-exchange.nl/>). It is also very helpful to talk with students that went on exchange the year before.

1.2 Application to the host university

The application to the host university is more complex compared to the selection process. Once you have been nominated, you will be contacted by your host university and they will send you all the information regarding the application procedure, course enrolment, accommodation and Visa. The requirements that were stated in “iese” were different from the ones that I found on the host university’s website as they were not updated. Hence, I highly recommend checking both “iese” and the application requirements of the host university where you wish to apply in order to avoid having to take a language exam last minute.

1.3 Visa

Follow all the instructions regarding the Visa application given by your host university. You must have a valid passport and need to provide a bank statement that proves you will be able to afford living in Hong Kong for that period.

1.4 Language

The school of law in Hong Kong requires a 7 IELTS (while “iese” said 6.5) or respective TOEFL score in order to be accepted into the law school (for all the other departments 6.5 IELTS is required). However, if you prove that your medium of instruction is English, they will accept it.

2. Stay abroad

2.1 arrival and orientation

Arriving in Hong Kong was very complicated as massive protests were going on and they took over the airport exactly when my flight had to land. The situation was very overwhelming and incredibly busy everywhere. CityU organised shuttles from the airport to the residence. However, I did not get into the residence, so then you have to organise the transfer to your own place by yourself. Many orientation activities were cancelled due to the protests and due to the area where I was living it was very difficult to go or come back from school as protests were pretty intense at that time.

2.2 study programme

I followed Mooting, International Human Rights Law, Consumer Law, Intellectual Property Law, and Hong Kong Legal System. I managed to arrange and get into the courses just a few

days before the semester started. All the courses were full before the application period started. Fortunately, my buddy recommended me to personally e-mail the professors teaching the courses and they accepted me even though the courses were full. There were not many options to choose from as most of the courses had clashing teaching times and that is why most of the courses I applied for in advance got rejected. I recommend applying for as many courses as possible when you have the first chance. Most of my professors were from the USA or China and their English was very good. Overall, CityU is very organised regarding the course material and the library has all the books you need. You just need to be very organized and quick as in Hong Kong there are many people and consequently many students that might want the same book.

2.3 Housing

The rent in Hong Kong is one of the highest in the world, so be prepared in case you don't get in the university dorms. 700 € / month is the starting price for a shared room with one or more people (I mean 700 € each). The space is extremely small and the price extremely high. Don't expect the same living and hygienic conditions as in Europe.

2.4 Grant and costs

I received the Hollande Scholarship Abroad which was very handy, and the standard Marco Polo.

2.5 Free time/ travelling/ student life

Hong Kong is great, it offers all sorts of things. Sea, jungle, mountains and lots of amazing temples. You can go hike and camp on the beach, you can take the MTR and go to the sea or visit one of the many islands for a day. If you are organized and plan your time well according to your exams and lecturer you will definitely find enough time to go away for a long weekend. From Hong Kong there are many cheap flights to Taiwan, Seoul, Philippines, Thailand...

3. Return

3.1 Contact with the host university before, during and after my stay

CityU was extremely helpful especially my exchange coordinator. She was very concerned about our well-being as it wasn't easy at all to stay in Hong Kong during the protests. They tried to keep us as safe as possible. Many classes were cancelled and in the end the exchange was interrupted. The only real lack of communication was with the LLB and exchange office.

3.2 Hong Kong culture

Hong Kong people are kind, reserved, focused on their goals, very competitive and hard-working. Life in Hong Kong is very hectic, it is definitely not a quiet city where you go to relax. Hong Kong is a unique international place that gave me a holistic insight into a multitude of different societies across the globe.