

IT UNIVERSITY TRAVEL REPORT

Host University: James Cook University

Study Programme at IT University: MSc in Software Design

Exchange Agreement or Study Abroad: Study Abroad

Courses studied abroad:

- Foundations for Data Science
- Statistical Methods for Data Scientists
- Data Visualization

Exchange Period: Autumn semester of 2022 (September - February)

My Stay Abroad

What was it like to study at JCU?

Studying at JCU was a joy given that it was a highly international and diverse study environment. Furthermore, the courses that I had could not have been better for my specialization, research project and my thesis so that made it very motivating to study. That being said, this high relevance in terms of topics was also necessary for me to have a good academic return on this trip given that the academic level was a bit low considering this was graduate courses.

What was your initial motivation for going abroad and did your stay meet your expectations?

I have always had a fascination for living abroad. I did this in Portugal during my gap year which convinced me that an exchange semester at university would be a great experience. Initially, I planned on doing this on my bachelor's degree where I was accepted in Hong Kong, but with Covid occurring at this point in time, this was of course cancelled. Therefore, having the chance to go on exchange outside of Europe doing my master studies was exciting and this for me meant that it was almost impossible not to meet my expectations because of just felt fortunate going in the first place - luckily, the trip was also amazing.

Please describe what you got out of your stay, both personally and academically, and how do you expect it to contribute to your further studies?

Personally, this trip was almost half a year outside my comfort zone which was exactly what I wanted. I learnt about new cultures, formed nice relations, and had experience that I will remember for life. Academically, this stay let me specialize in data science which is not a regular specialization in my study (although similarities exist). This was rewarding as it is relevant for the work I will do once I graduate and go full-time, but also in terms of my thesis as it lets me write about data analytics in football/soccer.

Arranging Your Stay

Please give a short description of the process of arranging your stay

Arranging my stay was pretty straightforward. I was fortunate to have time both before and after my studies to some travelling in Asia, so I felt that I already had some idea about how to deal with logistics and housing. While housing could have been done cheaper, I ended up choosing convenience by using AirBnB long-term stays (which give discounts the longer you stay in a home).

What resources did you find helpful in planning your stay and which people did you use (if any)?

Numbeo.com was useful to get an idea about price levels, but in general, travel reports (whether that be from ITU, other universities, or just found online) were a good source of inspiration and information. Furthermore, my network was also somewhat helpful.

Expenses and Financing

Please comment on expenses connected to your stay abroad

The largest expenses for me were housing and tuition (even after the Udlandsstipendie) as I did study abroad. I was fortunate to be able to sublet my apartment so I aimed at having housing cost not exceed what I was used to too much.

Did you apply for scholarships and would you recommend any ones in particular?

I received a handful of scholarships which were very helpful in relation to the costs stated above. As I am a master student, some grants are solely focused on this, so I would target them (e.g. Stibo, Nordea, Knud Højgaard, and Augustinus Fonden).

Recommendations for other students

Just do it ;-) - you will figure everything out one way or the other and it is an experience you will treasure for life.