



IT UNIVERSITY TRAVEL REPORT



Host university: City University of Hong Kong

Study Programme at IT University: BSc Data Science

Exchange agreement or Free mover: Exchange agreement

Courses studied abroad: Operating Systems, Java Programming, Fundamentals of Internet Applications Development, Managing Software Projects, Information Security and Management

Period studying abroad: semester (autumn/spring): Autumn 2024

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MY STAY ABROAD

What was it like to study at the university (including choice of courses, academic level, social life at campus)?

Choosing and registering for courses was the least enjoyable part of the whole exchange. The reason for that is that you will be assigned a specific time slot for registering for courses that you would like to have. There are different time slots for exchange students, full time students and also for different types of courses (I don't think there is a similar concept at ITU, but there are so called GE courses which are generally easier). Unfortunately, the time slot for the exchange students was the very last one which meant that many courses were already full. In that case, you will need to have a backup option – thus, I would highly recommend applying for pre-approval at ITU for more courses that you might think you need. Once you get past this, congratulations, it will only get better!

Higher university ranking does not necessarily mean higher academic level. Despite being ranked as the Top 62 university in the world (2025), I felt that the academic level was lower than back at ITU. I took 5 courses, and perhaps there were more assignments that I was required to do, but they tended to be easier and quite straightforward, of course with a few exceptions. I had 5 exams in total, which were all written. The difficulty was set right, since they required some studying, but it was definitely passable. If you take coding courses, be prepared that you will be asked to write full code (tens of lines) in paper.

City University of Hong Kong is the most international university in Hong Kong, and they would love to keep this status. Thus, there were many activities prepared for the students at the beginning of the semester, but also during the semester and their holidays. What I found very interesting and weird at the same time, was that the activities during Orientation Week depended heavily on what college you are studying at. For instance, I was in the College of Engineering, where we basically did not have any meeting activities, except for one dinner which took place in mid-September (2 weeks after the Orientation Week). On the other hand, the College of Business had various trips and many meet and greet activities from the first week, which received positive feedback. With that said, it doesn't really matter how many activities your college prepares for you, since you are surrounded by international students all the time, waiting for you to be friends with! So don't worry, I am sure you will meet great people in Hong Kong.

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

As an international living in Denmark, coming to ITU has shown me how great and exciting it can be to live and study in a new country. Asia has always seemed very interesting to me and that is why I wanted to go there. Studying and living there for a few months has taken this experience to another level. I tried not to have any expectations, I was just hoping to meet some new friends, get to know the culture and of course learn something under a different academic system. These hopes were fulfilled, and I can even say that these few months have been one of the best in my life, so I would call it a success.

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, I am very glad that I got out of my comfort zone. I am truly grateful for this opportunity since I have made some long lasting memories, friends and saw many beautiful places.

Academically, it has been very valuable to see a different educational system which has given me the chance to compare European and Asian styles of teaching. I have really enjoyed the majority of the courses that I took, thus I would say that I have gained some new skills which will be helpful after coming to ITU.

ARRANGING MY STAY

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

I attended the event at ITU about studying abroad, researched about the possibilities for my programme and then decided to apply. After being nominated, I felt like everything was well organized. Anna was very helpful, since she could always try to clarify any questions that I might have had.

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

I read the previous travel reports, asked a few students from ITU who have studied in HK before, and also researched on the internet. CityU also has some useful information on their website for exchange students. Then I was researching the private accommodation beforehand to get an idea how much it would cost in case I did not get into the student residence.

How did you arrange practicalities such as accommodation?

I have applied through the official online application, and there was just one section about student residence, so I would say that it was relatively simple to apply.

You might be aware of the situation in Hong Kong, which ranks it as the most expensive housing market in the world. CityU tried to tackle this issue by building a whole new student residence and I was fortunate enough that they were able to complete the whole project just a few weeks before my semester started. The student residence was brand new, which was great, while some of the facilities such as the canteen or gym were not complete – no big deal to me. With that said, I would recommend applying for the dorms, but if your budget allows it, you can also go for a private room closer to the city centre, since the student residence is about 40 min from CityU by metro.

EXPENSES AND FINANCING

Please comment on expenses connected to your stay abroad

I feel like this section is very difficult to generalize as it hugely depends on your spending, what is important to you and where you can make some sacrifices if that is needed. I will give a few examples of what might give you a general idea about the costs in Hong Kong:

Return flight ticket CPH - HK: ~ 8000 DKK

Student residence for 4 months (Aug 28 – Dec 27): ~10,550 DKK (2637 / month)

Meal at a local mall with a drink: 50 DKK

Transport: 1 way MTR from the dorms to uni (around 35 min): ~ 10 DKK

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

I looked at the scholarships that ITU recommended on their website, however I was not able to get any. Fortunately, ITU offers a possibility to apply for a Travel Pool, which I would highly recommend!

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OTHER STUDENTS

You have most likely heard it a thousand times, but it is so true – start as early as possible. Take it seriously, plan and then it will make your life easier. Travel to other countries from Hong Kong if possible - I would recommend Ha Giang Loop.

Try to get to know the locals, some might appear shy at first, but maybe you just need to make the first move. There are many organizations at CityU which you can join during the semester, and that I found to be a very natural way to make local friends.