



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: Managing Software Projects, Information Security and Management, Software Engineering Practice, Multimedia

Period studying abroad: semester (autumn/spring): Autumn 2025

If you wish to give advice to other students regarding your travels, please state your contact info here: pavd@itu.dk

Your stay abroad

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

I will not be the first to point out how difficult the course registration process is. The pre-registration happens as soon as the exchange students are accepted and the course preferences are shared with the university during application; that being said, in my case I was mostly given the low-priority courses I had put just in case. Potentially, it would make sense to narrow your selection and only request the courses you want to avoid such an issue.

The time slot to adjust the pre-registration is very short and if one fails to change their courses during that window, they are stuck with the adjustment period that runs in parallel with the first week of studies. All in all, not problematic, but something to be aware of.

I made a mistake of choosing a course that has Java as prerequisite which made my life a bit more stressful on campus and the amount of mandatory attendance/regular hand-ins is quite high in CityU, but the courses are designed to be passed and were at the appropriate level of difficulty for university. It is worth noting that ITU's Data Science programme only collaborates with the Computer Science Department of CityU, so be prepared to lean more into that field if you are Data Science. Notice: some of the courses that you take could not only have their sessions scheduled for 6-10 pm, you might have to go to school on Saturdays for midterms and finals.

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

When I was considering Hong Kong as my destination, I was mainly curious to see the part of the world where education and business are highly competitive. Hong Kong is a densely populated area and it was of immense interest to me to see how life works there. Given how I would be surrounded by other exchange students who decided to travel this far from home, I was very excited to meet people that are similarly adventurous and excited to travel the world.

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?

I met many new friends from Hong Kong, went to a music festival, founded a band and played a concert at the dorm. I would say it was one of the most rewarding experiences of my life. Seeing life so far away from home and the way everything works was eye opening and I would claim it changed me forever.

As for the academic side, it felt like a little bit like a side-quest. I was almost never using any Python, ML or statistics because of my course selection. It was an interesting mix of high-level overview courses focused on management and security in context of software and multimedia technologies, which I enjoyed because of my personal interests. I picked up some Java and Java script and got familiar with unit testing and refactoring practices. To sum up, unless you choose courses that logically extend your studies ITU you may end up living a completely different life at CityU, whether you find it exciting or not. Fortunately, I was able to find some beauty in that.

The overall approach to education in Hong Kong revived my love for the approach at ITU where overall comprehension and ability when finishing the subject are seen as more important than hand-ins and assignments completed in the course of the semester.

Arranging your stay

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

Upon receiving the nomination from ITU, I started researching courses at CityU to file for Credit Transfer Pre-Approval. I had to fill the application with CityU to get accepted. As soon as I received a letter of acceptance from CityU and had my passport renewed, I applied for visa and set up all the CityU services and awaited my time slot for course adjustments.

Unfortunately, many courses I wanted were either full to the brim or required special approvals. So my sign-up saga continued until the end of first week in Hong Kong already but it all worked out in the end. Be sure to ask as many questions as possible, both ITU and CityU are very responsive and quick to help.

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

ITU's resources and CityU's website are very helpful as they contain most of the information one needs for this exchange. Going through every page associated with exchanges helped me stay up to date on deadlines, course descriptions and credit transfer. Make sure to read course descriptions thoroughly even though not all of them give you exhaustive information about what is going to happen at the lessons.

When it comes to the visa application, the website of Hong Kong Immigration Department was helpful in clearing all the details; however, it was infinitely easier to apply through the university so that is what I did and that is what I recommend. Be prepared to deal with paper-based documents because that is how the host university accepts them for visa applications.

Chatting with the student who spent a semester in Hong Kong a year prior and reading their report

was helpful as well. Additionally, I would really love to thank Anna Elizabeth Thomsen for ongoing support and coordination.

How did you arrange practicalities such as accommodation?

The Accommodation was one of the easiest things to arrange as the exchange application already included the dormitory application. The dorm is very new and is located close to the metro, but it will have you making 40-minute long trips to the campus and if you are planning to see the city itself, the trips may take a bit more than an hour. If that is an option for you, I would recommend finding your own accommodation; however, Hong Kong is pricy in that regard.

Expenses and Financing

Please comment on expenses connected to your stay abroad

The dorm is an upfront payment of around 10000 DKK for the whole semester from the last week of August to the 23rd of December. A one way trip is around 8-20 DKK depending on the destination from the dorm. Taxis are quite expensive in Hong Kong due to fuel prices being heavily taxed and the distances being quite vast (especially if the dorm is to be considered).

When it comes to food, I personally couldn't find the balance between enjoyment, price, and distance for myself; but I do agree that it is not expensive, flavourful and fast in Hong Kong. My mistake was trying all the cheapest things first and disappointing myself because the quality of the cheapest things isn't exactly stellar. A good meal can cost around 50-70 DKK in Hong Kong, but be explorative, find out what you like.

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

I did apply to Stibo Fonden, but I was rejected. But ITU does have a travel pool which I applied for when I learned about it. I do recommend applying early on.

Recommendations for other students:

- **Octopus Card** – get it first thing. It's necessary for public transport and some spots. It is accepted in some places where Visa or Mastercard are not.
- **Don't sit around in the dorm – explore.** Make sure to plan things in advance because it's easy to get lost or feel overwhelmed in a city like Hong Kong. It's hard to find a place to calmly sit down and think about what to do next.
- **Find GE Courses.** For your electives, consider GE courses. Some of them might not have an exam and it could be a way of broadening your scope with studies outside of Computer/Data Science world. I didn't do so and slightly regret it.