



My Exchange Evaluation

Basic Information

Host University	University of Hong Kong (HKU)
Semester & Year of Exchange	2 nd semester, 2018
Otago degree(s)	Bachelor of Music
Major(s)	Composition and Studio Production

Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

Course title	Language of instruction	Otago equivalent	Otago credit value
MUSI2026	English	MUSI234	18
MUSI2067	English	MUSI232	18
CHIN9501	English	CHIN131	18
SOWK1011	English		18

Any comments about these papers?

How did the academic experience/ workload/ style of teaching differ from Otago?

A normal lecture at Otago runs for about 50 minutes to 1 hour. However, a typical lecture at HKU runs for 2 hours, and some for 3 hours (eg. SOWK1011). This can get very tiring, as they have a tendency to drag out the content. I feel like I personally learn more in a 50 minute lecture because if it's too long I just switch off. But I suppose the up-side to longer lectures is more opportunity to ask questions if needed. The workload was similar to Otago, with assignments due frequently.

Accommodation

What accommodation did you stay in? What were the pros and cons of your accommodation?

I stayed in Chi Sun College, part of the Jockey Club Student Village III. It was nice and modern, and I had a great view of Kennedy Town from my room (I was on the 22nd floor). There were cleaners that ensured the communal facilities were clean daily, however you had to ensure the cleanliness of your room. I had a double room so I got to make an awesome friend from China, however there were some students that were given single rooms. There is a pool room, mini theatre and library for all Chi Sun residents to use which always came in handy for a bit of fun or a study session. There are many great restaurants around Kennedy Town (about 5 mins walk from Chi Sun) so food is never really a problem, and the MTR (subway) is very close. However, Chi Sun is located on a hill so I had to walk up and down it every day!

Money matters

Please detail your basic costs, e.g. accommodation, flights, visa, food, insurance

Accommodation: \$8,580 HKD (approx. \$1,600 NZD)

Flights: Approx. \$1,700 NZD (return)

Visa: \$170 NZD

Food: Approx. \$850 HKD (\$160 NZD) per week

Insurance: \$400 NZD

What means did you use to access your finances? What would you recommend? (Credit card, Cash passport, foreign bank account, etc.)

A foreign bank account would be good to get if you were to stay at least a whole year, however because I was only there for a semester I just used my debit card to withdraw cash from the ATM.

Visas & Insurance

Did you have to apply for a visa? What was the process?

I applied for my visa through CEDARS, and once they had all of the necessary documents, they sorted it.

Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?

For me to be able to go on this exchange, it was mandatory that I had travel insurance.

Extra-curricular/Social Activities

What organised activities were available to students? What extra-curricular activities would you recommend to future exchange students?

There were many clubs that were available to students including sports, martial arts, religious and political associations and many more.

What was the university/ city like?

The university was very similar to the style of Hong Kong. The campus ground area was average size but there were a lot of tall buildings. The campus is quite modern, especially the centennial campus which was where all of my lectures were. There is always something happening around the city and the restaurant selection is very diverse. The temperature can get very hot and humid as well, which meant I sometimes felt like I had just dived into a pool! But I really enjoyed the hot weather, especially when I came from the NZ winter!

Any recommendations for things to do, places to visit, places to eat etc.?

- Big Buddha and Lantau peak hike
- Dragon's Back hike
- Lan Kwai Fong (entertainment and nightclub district)
- Aberdeen
- Temple Street night market (and many great restaurants surrounding)
- Sai Kung
- Any street food
- Central Hong Kong
- Victoria Peak
- Soho
- Central light show (viewed from Kowloon)

Any tips for future students?

Get a student octopus card (card used for the subway, food and many other things) as soon as you can because you can get discount on subway fares amongst other things.

Overall Experience

Please write one paragraph (or more) about your exchange experience. Please include some photos!

Hong Kong was an awesome place to go on exchange! I loved how it was so central to many countries in Asia so in the breaks I could get cheap flights to explore a bit more of Asia as well. I love how Hong Kong can go from a densely populated city to peaceful hikes in the mountains. The university was of good quality and enabled me to learn a lot more about HK culture and how they approach a particular problem. It was great to see how they differ from Otago in teaching and learning a subject. The MTR was amazing, as I could get almost anywhere in Hong Kong with one swipe of my octopus card. The food was very affordable and delicious! I would recommend Hong Kong to anyone wanting an overall taste of what Asia is like, and to be able to easily travel to other Asian countries. I can confidently say that this experience has developed my understanding of my area of study, alternative cultures and view of the world in a very positive way. I would recommend the exchange programme to anyone with the drive to experience something new and get out of their comfort zone.

















