

# Travel report

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## **Congratulations on being accepted to exchange at City University of Hong Kong!**

If you are still exploring and weighing your choices, I highly encourage considering CityU or just Hong Kong overall. Although I had very little knowledge of Hong Kong before I left, going has truly been one of the best decisions I have ever made! I will try and give you an idea of what an exchange in Hong Kong can look like but if you have any additional questions feel free to contact me anytime.

## Practicalities

**VISA:** The most time-consuming preparation was applying for visa. Apply well in advance (3-4 months ahead), but don't panic if it arrives relatively late. Personally, I applied in February and only got the approval a week before landing in Hong Kong. Consider the time it takes to send your visa application to CityU in paper format in your planning since the embassy typically takes 2-3 months from the day CityU receives it to provide an answer. You will receive your VISA in digital format so if you plan on traveling before arriving in Hong Kong that is totally fine as you do not need to pick it up in Sweden or anything like that.

**Accommodation:** While CityU offers reasonably priced accommodation for the majority of students, receiving a spot is not guaranteed. Given that Hong Kong is one of the most expensive cities for renting apartments, alternative options can become very pricey. If you do not get student accommodation or prefer off-campus choices I would recommend looking at Airbnb or Weave Studio Apartments. I personally shared a studio at Weave—while it was a very nice experience, it did come with a higher cost.

**Card/Cash:** In Hong Kong, the preferred payment methods for locals are either cash or the Octopus Card, widely used for restaurants, taxis, and the subway. There is a Tourist Octopus Card App which eliminates the need for a physical metro card, allowing you to top up through Apple Pay which is very convenient as otherwise you have to take out a lot of cash. If you apply for a student Octopus card you get 50% discount on all your travels. Additionally, many exchange students had Revolut cards during my semester which was quite handy, especially when splitting expenses as you can easily transfer money.

## Courses

**Course registration process:** Navigating the course registration at CityU brought some confusion, but there are a lot of interesting courses to choose from which is fun! It's important to keep in mind that most people do not get all their first choices, so having alternatives in mind is a smart move. One recommendation is to pick courses you are interested in already during the first course-interest-application (before the official one) as you might get a spot before they open the official selection date in August.

Here are the courses I ended up taking:

### **CA2066 Professionals and Society**

Workload: 2/5

Recommend: ¾

Mid-term test: Yes

Final Exam: Yes

Group Work: No

This course was mainly about professionals' role in society. The course was about the construction industry and different control systems, safety and environmental issues and how professionals should act in different scenarios. The course was very simple, which meant that you could easily lose focus. Although the teacher was very kind, he was very repetitive. The course consisted of one lesson and one tutorial a week. During the tutorial various questions connected to the lesson were discussed

### **CA2213 Development Economics**

Workload: 4/5

Recommend: 4/5

Mid-term test: Yes

Final Exam: Yes

Group Work: Yes

This course was mainly about basic principles of economics and discovering the applications of these principles to real life projects. The course had a good structure and the lessons were often very interesting. During the course we had one bigger group task, a report submission as well as mid-term and final exams. I highly recommend this course if you are interested in construction economics.

### **CA2311 Construction Contracts 1**

Workload: 3/5

Recommend: 2/5

Mid-term test: Yes

Final Exam: Yes

Group Work: Yes

This was probably my least favorite course as the pace was quite slow and the lessons very long. The teacher was enthusiastic, but the content was not for me as I am more interested in Construction than law, but that is just a personal preference. However, if you like case studies this could be a good fit as we did a lot of case analysis in class. It should also be said that the course was built on common law and not civil law as we have in Sweden, which meant that it can not be applied to Swedish cases.

**CA3214 Construction Economics**

Workload: 3/5

Recommend: 5/5

Mid-term test: Yes

Final Exam: Yes

Group Work: Yes

This course was very similar to the course mentioned before "Development Economics" but had a different approach, and focused mostly on different pricing techniques, project cost control and procurement methods. This course was a favorite due to the teacher being very engaged with the students.

**CA3314 Surveying Studio**

Workload: 5/5

Recommend: 5/5

Mid-term test: No

Final Exam: No

Group Work: Yes (alot)

This course was structured in three parts using three software programs called Revit, Costx and AtlasPro. In the first part, you would draw up a primary school in Revit with all the different rooms and details etc. In the second part, you would measure all the parts of the school building in AtlasPro and start making your BQ documents (bills of quantities). In the third step, you would enter all of these quantities into a program called Costx to create your finalized BQ documents. All the work was done in groups and despite having the most workload, I would say that this course was very good.

## Life in Hong Kong

The best part about Hong Kong is that it offers the big city life while simultaneously providing a unique cultural experience and a lot of nature! Initially, I thought Hong Kong would be just a big city, but what I have come to appreciate the most about my time here are the beautiful islands, hikes, beaches, and small fishing villages on the outskirts of town. The aspect I appreciated the least about Hong Kong is probably the expensive accommodation and groceries. On the upside, eating out in Hong Kong is less expensive, so almost no one cooks during their exchange here.



## A few Must Do's

What I love most about Hong Kong is that there is so much to do! Although we did something almost every day, I feel like I could have stayed another semester and still not run out of ideas and activities.

Top Five must-not-miss experiences in Hong Kong!

- **Hike Suicide Cliff and watch the sunset:** It is magical, and you will see the whole city with the ocean in the background! My tip is to hike up Kowloon Peak and then walk on the back of the mountain towards suicide cliff.
- **Camp at the beach and watch the sunrise:** We did this at San Wan beach, but there are several places where you can rent affordable tents and do this. Right next to San Wan is Sai Kung Rock pools, which is a beautiful waterfall where you can swim.
- **Rent a Junk Boat:** It is very popular in Hong Kong to rent a private boat with a crew that fits approximately 30 people. The boat will leave from central and then stay for a few hours by a beach outside Hong Kong.
- **Explore Kowloon or "Old Hong Kong":** Hong Kong Island, which is the more modern part of the city, is very nice. However, the "true Hong Kong", in my opinion, is in Kowloon around Mong Kok, where you can find a lot of cheap and authentic Hong Kong food and shops. The atmosphere between Hong Kong Island and Kowloon is completely different so do not miss exploring both sides.
- **Eat at Sheung Wan Cooked Food Market:** During our exchange, we ate dinner several times at a food market that almost only locals go to. This was a true favorite as you could go with a big party of people and always fit, plus the food is delicious. In general, do not be afraid of trying all the local cuisine.

## Other Suggestions

**Hikes:** Hong Kong has a lot of beautiful hikes such as Lion Rock, Dragons Back, Lantau Sunset Peak and Sharp Island.

**Islands:** From the central there are several ferries that takes you out to small islands outside of Hong Kong. The most popular one is Lamma Island which has several beaches however there are a lot of other ones which are less crowded and have beautiful beaches just 20 min from central.

**Bars:** Mr Wong, Eyebar, Aqua, Fayee, Iron Faries, DarkSide, Pieology!

**Restaurants:** An Choi, Samsen, Tequila Jack (cheap tacos on tusedays), SHARI SHARI, Tim Ho Wan (dim sum - which is like Chinese tapas), Temple Street Night Market in Jordan

**Travel:** While in Hong Kong make sure to take a weekend and visit Macau and Shenzhen, both which are approximately only 40 minutes away. Macau is like Asia's Las Vegas where they have built a life size Eiffel Tower and a Big Ben (don't miss their panda sanctuary also). Shenzhen is a mega city right next to Hong Kong which is Chinas 7th largest city, so you have to cross the border. Even through it is so close to Hong Kong it is a completely different experience with a lot of cheap food and shopping!

**Other activities and places to visit:** Tai O fishing villiage, Tian Tan Buddha, Wisdom Path, Kayaking in Hoi Ha, Ladies Market, Stanley Market, Hollywood Rd & Upper Lascar Row antique market, Kowloon Art Park, Happy Valley Horse Race, Braemar Hill Peak Sunset, Lamma Island.

Hope this gave you an idea of what exchange in Hong Kong can look like and helped you in your decision of where to apply. Good Luck!