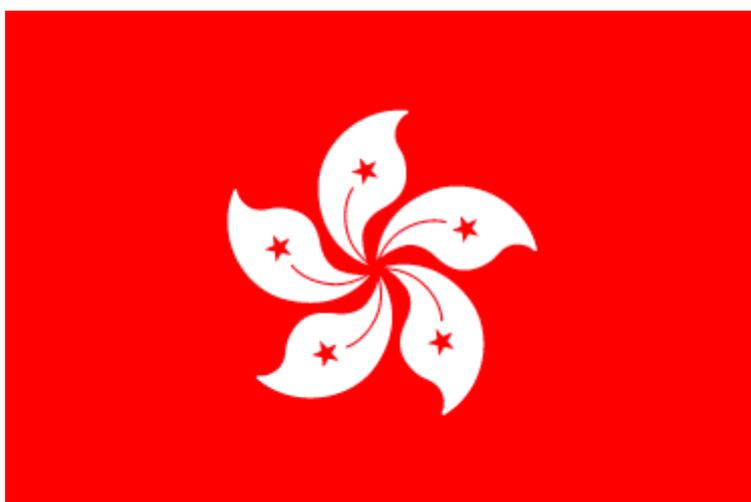


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My exchange semester in Hong Kong



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Why go on an exchange semester

A semester abroad is a perfect opportunity to widen your horizons, it gives the student a possibility to gain knowledge about another city, another country and possibly even another continent that is not easily acquired thorough spending 2-3 weeks on a vacation. Furthermore it is possible that you will get to know local people, learn local habits and see everything back home in another perspective.

Short summary of different aspect regarding the exchange:

Hong Kong

Hong Kong is an excellent choice for an exchange semester, the city has a pulse that is hard to find elsewhere, and you will find excitement and new experiences both day and night.

The skyscrapers looks gracious and the harbor view is unlike anything other, meanwhile you can find local shops and markets just around the corner.

Hong Kong is a city of contrast, the island is very international and modern meanwhile the Kowloon side and new territories are more typical what you would think of a Chinese city. Moreover the Hong Kong people are very nice and welcoming and you will have a fun time meeting plenty of them.



Courses:

During my time at the City University of Hong Kong I read 5 different courses, given from different faculties, the courses were ranging from mobile application development to statistical reasoning. The quality of the education were lower than the what I have experienced so far at Stockholm University, this was due to mainly language difficulties which led to a lot of PowerPoints and group work without any actual development of skillset. Although having a lot of group presentation and group work was an excellent way to meet local friends, and I valued that more than experiencing top quality lectures.

First impression:

When arriving there were information overflow, a lot to take in and you could get a touch of the Chinese bureaucracy, a few examples of this were given during the first week: "take form at location A, sign at location B and leave it at location C" were instructions that had to be followed a couple of times during the first week while signing all official documents. Although this was a good introduction of the university campus. Information about courses and other things regarding the housing and school related stuff were presented in a very good and structured way, and there were always someone to help if you had any questions.

Housing:

I lived at the university campus in Kowloon Tong which is about 15 minutes from Hong Kong Island and the central station and very close to school (3 min walk). The rooms were about 16 sqm for a double room with a shared bathroom. The school here in Hong Kong were really helpful regarding the housing.

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I shared my room with a local guy which was a great experience. By sharing a room with a local person it is very easy to get a glimpse and some extra knowledge of what it is like to live like a local "Hong Konger"

My tips for future exchanges

- Go on an exchange, it is a very fun way to travel and to have a chance to experience another country as a local resident.
- A few things to keep in mind before going is to: Do your research, plan ahead where you would like to go, what courses you would like to read and which term/ which season that would suit the location best.
- Be open to new cultures, try to interact as much as you can with foreign exchange students as well as locals. This is an amazing way to hear stories and sharing cultures and values from all over the world and at the same time you will have a lot of people to visit while traveling in the future.
- Step out of your comfort zone, try to find places far from the tourist streets, the more local the funnier it gets.
- Apply for scholarships: exchange can be expensive, take your time to look for scholarships, do not procrastinate!
- Take your time to enjoy the country and local environment - > do not stress to travel all over Asia instead of enjoying the near. Do both.
- Create a visitation schedule, having multiple visits during the end of the term, can be rather stressful.
- Do not underestimate the school – Exchange students can be somewhat called a burden, by locals during group works, help your future fellow students to change that by taking your part and responsibility.
- Invite your friends over, let them experience "your city", take your opportunity to guide your friends in an exotic city as it were your home city.

Please, do not hesitate to contact me for further questions and recommendations.

Best regards,

Gustav Örjebo