

OUTGOING STUDENT FEEDBACK FORM 2008-2009

Programme: IM

University Attended: Chinese University of Hong Kong

INDUCTION/ORIENTATION PROGRAMME

The orientation in August lasted about 5 days and involved all exchange students living in the same halls (although these had curfews and were single sex). Overall it was a good introduction to cuhk life.

Activities included campus tours (necessary when the uni is so enormous! It even has its own supermarket), lunches in our colleges, a city tour, and dinner in town.

Semester 2's orientation, however, was only for the newly arrived exchange students and although those of us who had stayed from the previous semester asked to be included, we were not involved. This did make it slightly more difficult, especially when only about 50 of the original 300+ students had stayed for semester 2.

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

The course selection was online, with various different websites for different departments. They were only available for a very limited period before the start of each semester. The first two weeks of the semester are a series of three "add-drop periods" with strict deadlines, which should be avoided wherever necessary as they involve obtaining lecturer's approvals and signatures (sometimes this proved difficult).

All classes were about 35-45 pupils in size and were therefore a kind of combination of lecture/seminar compared to Manchester. This proved to create lots of interaction from the students.

Assessment varied slightly for different courses, but in general, group work had a much more focal role than in Manchester.

Presentations were particularly popular. In one module, for example, I had three separate groups. This proved difficult at times, for example when local and mainland students would suggest meeting at 11pm on Friday nights!

Assignments in the form of essays also featured quite heavily. However, in group essays I discovered that local students do not often reference their work to the same standard that we are used to. Poor written language meant that the editing of group work often became a significant aspect of my contribution.

Courses were graded on a normal distribution bell curve.

MBS INTERNATIONAL OFFICE

Having visited hk before and with family living there, there was no further information that I can think of which could have been useful.

MBS SECOND YEAR MEETINGS

No additional information that I can think of.

HOST INTERNATIONAL OFFICE

The host international office, and in particular Claire Li (the European coordinator) proved to be efficient and helpful with everything, and very friendly.

They even organised a formal dinner and party at the end of each semester.

ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation was the only slightly negative part of cuhk. I elected to live in I-house (international house) where the majority of exchange students live. The atmosphere here proved much livelier than in the other student halls.

The two blocks are split into flats of 9-15 people, with single, double and triple rooms. My triple room was very cosy and it took some time to adjust to having two roommates. The mattresses are about 5cm thick and the pillows provided are solid. There is however an IKEA just 2 metro stops away to buy some home comforts!

The kitchens are very basic indeed, with only a fridge, microwave and two electric hobs per flat. This means that the substandard canteen food was often a more attractive option than cooking.

Restrictions are slightly less severe in I-house compared with the other halls, although still a huge contrast from anything I was prepared for. Visiting hours for members of the opposite sex are until 12 midnight, and noise must be kept to a minimum after 9pm. Block tutors (post-grad students) are constantly willing to hand out hefty fines, as well as verbal and then formal warnings, three of which will result in eviction. Overnight guests are forbidden, and the I-house staff are not afraid to give \$500 (£50) fines.

DESTINATION INFORMATION AND OVERALL EXPERIENCE

Overall, Hong Kong is a vibrant, fast-paced city of extremes, be it Chinese v western culture, or the bustling city v the tranquil mountains and beaches. Transport is efficient, cheap (student discounts are available) and reliable. HK's location also presents itself as a hub for further travel in Asia, and I visited mainland China about 10 times, as well as Thailand, India, Singapore, and Macau.

With such a large ex-pat community, Hong Kong also has a lively nightlife, with most bars and clubs staying open until late every night of the week. Ladies nights were a further bonus, when drinks were free and entrance fees were waived.

DESCRIBE IN ONE SENTENCE YOUR YEAR ABROAD

Without a doubt, the best year of my life!