



## My Exchange Evaluation

### Basic Information

<b>Host University</b>	Chinese University of Hong Kong
<b>Semester &amp; Year of Exchange</b>	Semester 2 2024
<b>Otago degree(s)</b>	LLB and BA
<b>Major(s)</b>	Law and Chinese

### Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

<b>Course title</b>	<b>Language of instruction</b>	<b>Otago equivalent</b>
CHES3014 Family Marriage and Love: Exploring Intimate Relationships in Contemporary China	English	CHIN300
CLCP2213 Application of Vocab and Grammar	English/Mandarin	CHIN300
CLCP2223 Oral Skills Practice II	English/Mandarin	CHIN300
CLCP2233 Communication in Context II	English/Mandarin	ARTS200/300
LAWS3290 Chinese Civil Law	English	CHIN300

Total Otago credits gained:  54 points  72 points  108 points  \_\_\_\_\_

Any comments about these papers?

There is not a big difference in the level for the papers. CLCP2213 and CLCP2223 go together. CLCP2233 is a level up, however, it is not much harder. Rather, the grammar and vocab is just different.

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

Most CUHK papers do not provide recordings so attendance is mandatory. The workload is light outside of the language papers.

## Accommodation

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

I stayed in Wu Yee Sun College on campus. I was not able to specifically select this college but it is one of the colleges in the option without meals. This was my second choice of three.

Everyone has a roommate at this college, which is very common. At some colleges you may have two or three roommates, but at Wu Yee Sun you only have one. From what I heard, you are more likely to have lots of roommates at United College or I-House.

Wu Yee Sun is one of the newest colleges so it has amazing facilities including a gym and creative studio. There is also a café and canteen downstairs. There are multiple events to connect exchange students within the college but few to connect with locals.

You pay for air conditioning as well as the washing machines and driers using your Octopus Card.

The college is a 20min walk downhill into main campus but there are buses running every day except Sunday that most people take to their classes. Wu Yee Sun is about a 7min walk to the main library but there are study rooms within the college.

The most competitive colleges are SHHO and Morningside due to their mandatory meals, close location to central campus, and great facilities. However, most exchange students stayed in I-House which are not colleges, but apartment-style buildings designed for exchange students. I would recommend going there if you want to meet lots of exchange students, but the facilities are run-down and they do not have canteens in them. The colleges with the best facilities further up the campus are Wu Yee Sun and Lee Woo Sing. CW Chu is really nice but it is very far away from main campus.

## Money matters

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

Flights approx. \$2500

Accommodation approx. \$1800

Food approx. \$200 a week (eating at canteens and local restaurants)

However, my whole exchange was covered by a Prime Minister's Scholarship. I strongly urge you to apply – it covers everything including insurance, you may even be left with some money at the end. This scholarship is lifechanging.

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

You use cash or Octopus card at most places but you need cash to top up your octopus card. The ATM fee is very expensive (\$40-\$60 nzd) so I got out the max (\$500 nzd) each time. It is difficult setting up a HK bank account, I did not know any exchange students who attempted this.

## Visas & Insurance

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

I needed to fill out many forms and physically mail them to the University. They guide you through the whole process so it is not too bad. I recommend taking half a day and doing it all.

*Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?*

## Extra-curricular/Social Activities

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

There are not as many clubs as at Otago but there are lots of workshops for international students. There are many tours to different areas in Hong Kong as well as cultural workshops.

Another thing to note about clubs is that often people will only speak Cantonese at meetings so this can also be a barrier to joining. However, I know some exchange students that joined the cheerleading club – I think sports teams are easier.

*What was the university/ city like?*

AMAZING! Hong Kong is so vibrant, diverse and busy. It is such a unique city with a very fast pace of life. However, CUHK is a 40min train ride out tucked away in the mountains. There is a lot of beautiful nature, including monkeys! The vibe at CUHK is very peaceful.

However, if you are more interested in the city experience I would recommend considering HKU over CUHK.

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

Go on the ferry to some other islands, like Lamma island. Try all the cheap Michelin guide restaurants. Go to Sham Shui Po to see the markets and get cheap tech.

Visit the city (HK island, Tsim Sha Shui, Mong Kok) as often as you can as there is always something new happening. I went on a cruise of the harbour for \$20 NZD on Klook, I would definitely recommend this as it was so beautiful and a great way to see the amazing HK skyline.

*Any tips for future students?*

I think it's worth looking on Klook for tickets for things like Disneyland and Oceanpark.

Spend lots of time exploring Hong Kong, and try to make local friends!

## Overall Experience

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

I had the best time on exchange immersing myself in Hong Kong's unique mix of Chinese and Western culture. Although I did not use Mandarin a lot outside of class, the intensity of the classes helped me improve a lot and you can go directly from CUHK to mainland China. The highlight of my time was exploring all Hong Kong has to offer – from incredible hikes, a bustling nightlife, convenient and cheap transport, incredible variety of food and markets galore.



