

I had my interests since I heard about this one-year exchange program for THM students. The applications for APHMP required a few paperwork for the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) and the University of Queensland (UQ) which were successful with the help from Ajarn Nixon.

The first term was in MUIC which I had met with other APHMP participants from Hong Kong and Australia. As we went through different universities, they were very friendly in helping us with any questions. I enjoyed the campus of CUHK as it was very accessible for grocery shopping, canteens, study areas, and more. Some lectures had more students which we had small groups for projects and presentations. I also got to know other international students in many activities and we had a great time watching the horse racing. Exploring different places in Hong Kong by taking MTR was my exciting adventures after classes, one of my favorites was the milk tea in Hong Kong style. As I had my second internship in Hyatt Sha Tin which was besides CUHK, I gained a lot of real working experience and knowledge in hotel industry.

We came to the last term of this program in Australia and it was a little more challenging as to be more independent in every aspect. For example, it was very important to find an accommodation that suits the need and easy routes to the campus. UQ has a stunning campus where people would sit on grass doing their own things. It was also very accessible to libraries and facilities for study and research. The lecturers were very helpful in answering questions and students were encouraged to discuss with each other. They had online resources for courses such as recordings from lectures and related articles. Some classes had tutorials where we discussed further in the topics as to help us understand better and communicated through small groups. I enjoyed spending time in Brisbane City and other areas which had multi cultures. Overall, I had a great time during the exchange program, not only developed my academic skills but also met more new friends and experienced different cultures. It had been one of the highlights in my university life with many great memories.

The greatest experience studying at MUIC was participating in Asia-Pacific Hospitality Management Program where I had an opportunity to study at the top-ranked universities in Hong Kong and Australia which are the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) and the University of Queensland (UQ) respectively. By undertaking this one-year exchange program, it has also allowed me to complete an internship at Hyatt Regency, Sha Tin; a school of hotel and tourism management of CUHK. I spent my first trimester at the home university, second semester at CUHK, followed by the last semester at UQ. Since CUHK and UQ are prestigious academic institutions, it was an honor to study at both universities.

The learning environment in Hong Kong was competitive, students were mostly productive, therefore, I had to adapt and push myself a lot more to avoid being left behind. Apart from studying, there were several activities going on during the semester for exchange students to attend; the noteworthy volunteer project I was part of was teaching English to children at the schools in rural area. Additionally, in terms of housing, I got to stay in girl dormitory where everyone was treated as family members. The student committees and Warden of the dormitory often arrange activities such as dinner gathering and birthday parties to encourage building good relationship among residents. The dormitory life at CUHK was very unique and fun.

Regarding the study at The University of Queensland, it can be seen that UQ has different methods of teaching in which it does not only include lecture based learning, but also tutorial classes that mostly involve with discussions rather than one-way communication. It is different from MUIC in the way that UQ tends to encourage more engagement between the instructor and students. Additionally, there are more than 200 clubs and societies available for students to join to boost social life while study. Dance club was my most favorite one that provided a small community for beginners to learn. Attending most dance classes was not only to develop my new skills but another good advantage was that I got to make new friends from different countries and faculties.

As a trainee interning at Food and Beverage Department at Hyatt Regency, Sha Tin, it was quite challenging to work in the environment where people commonly communicated in Cantonese and Chinese rather than English. However, it was absolutely a great chance for me to practice both Chinese and Cantonese that I have learnt from MUIC and CUHK. Training in Café, a buffet restaurant of the hotel, enabled me to gain the practical knowledge and experience which is necessary for me in terms of becoming a more successful individual. I have learned and enhanced personally and professionally through my training from proficient Hyatt team.

Going on exchange enabled me to experience different cultures and to be able to learn to adjust myself getting along with people and society. I personally think studying is not all about learning in the classroom, there are so many things out there waiting for you to explore. Student exchange has impacted me greatly, as I have become a lot more open to new things and realize that a world is bigger than just my comfort zone. I am truly grateful to Tourism and Hospitality Management Division of MUIC for offering such a worthwhile exchange opportunity, as well as the invaluable internship experience. This is definitely the highlight of my senior year studying at Mahidol University International College.