

The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST) Fall Semester 2016 – Ore Neviot



- If you are considering the option of doing an exchange semester, don't just consider it, do it! It's a most enriching experience and an interesting way of reaching your MBA and you should be glad of this opportunity.
- The HKUST program is one of the best in the world. It's ranked no.14 according to the Financial Times;
<http://rankings.ft.com/businessschoolrankings/global-mba-ranking-2016>
- Hong Kong is a very good place to live, it mixes "West and East" cultures, offers a super international experience and very comfortable gateway to China and other great countries around.

Summary

I would do it again without a second thought, I feel that it was the best choice!!!



Student Visa

The Exchange students get a guidebook which explains the application process. You will be required to fill in documents and send a hard copy to HKUST office. The office will handle the process and send your visa back via mail.

Insurance

The insurance coverage is compulsory and included in the application process.

You will be required to pay online and to upload the payment confirmation doc to your HKUST account.

Living Expenses

Living expenses in Hong Kong are pretty similar to those in Israel, with one major difference – housing.

Housing in Hong Kong is a big issue. In general, there are three options:

- **Living on the Island;** most of the exchange students prefer living on the Hong Kong Island, it's the best place to live, but also expensive – approximately 1.5-2 times the prices in Tel-Aviv. A tiny, modest studio is going to cost between 4,000-6,000 NIS per month.
- **Living in Kowloon;** is a different experience. It's less international and feels a bit more like the Mainland China. Housing in Kowloon area is cheaper than on the island.

- **Living on Campus;** We were responsible in finding a suitable place for ourselves and living on the dorms wasn't an option. If you have the option to live in campus, take into account a few things:
 - It's supposed to be significantly cheaper, 500 NIS per month
 - It's far from the "Center" (an hour with public transportation)
 - Most of the elective courses are taught in the central campus (on the island)

To get a sense about housing in Hong Kong, visit Airbnb site, the monthly prices there are a good reflection (look on monthly rate).

Campus

HKUST has an absolutely amazing (main) campus in a beautiful location with State of the Art facilities. Note, HKUST is located an hour from Hong Kong island.



*The HKUST business school

If you like sports, don't forget to visit HKUST's amazing facilities – pool, gym and more.



In addition, HKUST holds another “Central” campus. This campus has beautiful classrooms which are located in a building next to the central MTR station.



*pic from the Central campus

Most of the courses are taught on the main campus, but still there are many elective options in “Central”.

Transportation

The transportation in Hong Kong is cheap and very efficient.

You are going to use the MTR a lot, it’s cheap, simple and convenient.

*Get an “Octopus” card! Get it on arrival, It’s an MTR deposit card which makes life in Hong Kong much easier. You are able to pay almost everywhere with this card.

Taxis are also a relatively cheap option in Hong Kong with a starting price of approximately 10 NIS.

Buses are the same, cheap and efficient. There are some situations in which buses will be your best option.

Overload

As a Tel-Aviv university student you are obliged to finish between 4-7 “YAS” which approximately 1.5 times HKUST credits (means that you need to take approximately 9 HKUST credits to get 6 TA YAS exemption).

*As an HKUST exchange, you are allowed to take 10 credits at most.

The overload and assignments in each course is varied, there are some courses which don’t need too much effort during the term, and there are some that are pretty demanding.

- The semester is divided into two terms

- Most of the courses are two credits and there are some that are just one credit
- One credit courses, usually include only 3-4 classes – take it into account when you are planning your schedule

As a full time student, it's totally possible to do the max amount of credits and still have enough time to explore many destinations around Hong Kong.

Courses

Although HKUST MBA specializes in finance, there are still many other topics.

My personal review (my review from 1 to 5):

- **FINA5210 Investment Analysis (2 credits):** Great material, I would say it's like an advance and applicable course for the TA MBA mandatory finance course. The professor was ok, but I still think that this course could be helpful for everyone.
Score 3.5/5, overload - Medium.
- **FINA5380 Raising Debt in the Financial Markets (2 credits):** In retrospect I think it was the wrong choice for me. The material of the course is too specific; it's suitable for students who are involved or interested in this specific topic. The professor was good and showed a great experience in industry.
Score 3/5, Take it only if you are interested in this topic! overload – Medium.
- **ISOM5370 Technology and Innovation Management (2 credits):** very interesting course, great professor who presents up to date material.
The professor encourages everyone to be involved and there are many assignments.
Score 4/5, overload – High.
- **MARK5220 The Art of War and Eastern Wisdom in Business Competition (2 credits):**
It's a kind of marketing course with a strange philosophical approach, a “unique” experience. If you want to try something different (and easy:) pick this one. I didn't find it very educational.
Score 2/5, overload - Low
- **MGMT5680 Politics and Socioeconomic Environment of China (2 credits):** Interesting topic, great professor. As one who had almost zero knowledge of China, this course was an eye opener course for me.
Score (4-5), overload – Low/Medium.

Leisure Time and activities

There are many things to do in Hong Kong, you can make an advanced search easily on the web. I am going to point out only on some general information which could help you to make the right decision, to pick Hong Kong as your exchange destination:

- Nature and hiking; Most of us don't know, but Hong Kong is blessed with nature and amazing places to explore, with only a 20 min drive from this crazy dense metropolis, you will find many beautiful paths and beaches.
- Night life; Great night life experience, for a start look for LKF.
- Shopping; endless places for shopping, check Times Square Mall.
- Macau: With approximately an hour away and 90 shekels you can take a ferry and visit the "Asian Las Vegas".
- Amazing destinations around which are only 1-4 hours (100-400 USD) away. The list includes: Taiwan, China, Thailand, Philippines, Vietnam, Cambodia, South Korea and even Japan.

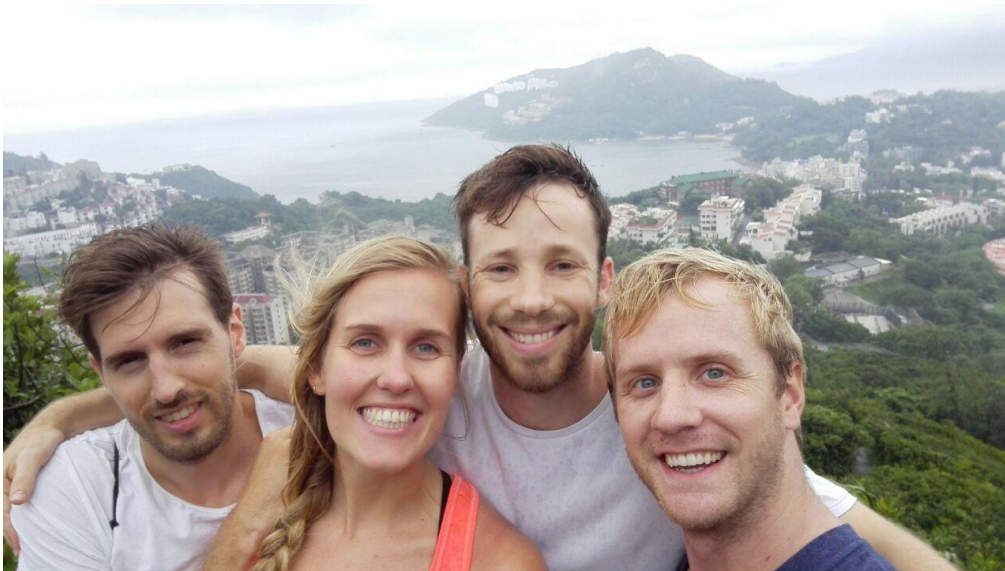


***only 30 min by buss from the city**

Tips

- Course Registration; Try to register to courses on consecutive days, so you will be able to travel 3-5 days in some weeks without losing any classes. *The attendance in most of the courses is mandatory. You are allowed to miss one or two classes during the term.
- Course Choosing; We got the final course list just a few days before the beginning of the semester. The best approach is to ask for a review from a second year full-time student.
- Main and Central campuses: In each term, register to courses in both the main and central campus and enjoy the pros and cons of each one of them.
 - Central – on the island, probably going to be close to your place

- Main campus – amazing place, great atmosphere, spend at least one full day over there each week.
- Renting a place; As you already know, renting a place in Hong Kong is super expensive. I suggest booking a hotel in advance for a week or so and during this week spend some time in finding the most suitable place for you.
- The orientation day is a week before the opening of the first term. Make those days productive; find a great value place for yourself, get to know your new friends and travel! It's very tempting to travel in Hong Kong during the first week. You are going to have a lot of time there... there are great destinations nearby, if possible, fly somewhere else!
- You will probably form a group with other exchange students, try to mix with the full-time students also. They have many good activities which could be a great opportunity to mingle and have fun.



*You are invited to contact me for any question you may have,
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*Good luck,
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