

# Go Global with Fisher

Hong Kong University of Science and Technology : From a Student's Perspective



Office of Global Business  
250 W. Woodruff Ave., Second Floor Mason Hall  
Columbus, OH 43210  
+1 (614) 292-0845  
[fisher.osu.edu/international](http://fisher.osu.edu/international)



**FISHER**  
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS



## Hong Kong University of Science and Technology : From a Student's Perspective

This booklet is designed by past Student Exchange participants in order to share their experience and knowledge with students participating in the Fisher International Student Exchange. Items in this booklet are not endorsed by the Office of Global Business at Fisher College and information contained in this booklet is subject to change.

### ACCOMMODATIONS

#### University Housing

- University housing is split into halls. These are numbered UG Hall I through UG Hall VII.
- The newest dormitory is UG Hall VI. This dormitory is highly recommended as it provides the most comfortable accommodation as well as a spectacular view. Other dormitories are cheaper yet smaller, making UG Hall VI worth the extra cost. The majority of exchange students stay here which gives students the opportunity to really get in touch with other internationals.
- Students should expect to pay between HK\$6,000- 8,000 for the semester.
- In the past, students have said that living in the dorms is the easiest and best option for living. Hall VII has been hard to get into in the past so students should apply early.
- Because the campus is located far from central Hong Kong city, apartments were found to be very expensive. (2012)

#### Apartment Search

- HK Island – This includes Sheung Wan, Central Island, Wan Chai, and Causeway Bay. The lifestyle in this area is elegant and exciting offering a big city atmosphere with an international population and many options for dining, shopping, and entertainment. Students that choose to live in of these areas are encouraged to choose courses offered at the central classroom to avoid having to travel to campus. Students can expect to pay HK\$8,000- 30,000 per month for a studio flat/suite. Additional Resources: <http://www.gohome.com.hk/english/serviceApt/>, <http://www.hongkonghomes.com/>, <http://www.squarefoot.com.hk/serviced-apartments/>, Zandie Leung at Studio-Studio, [zandie@studiostudio.com.hk](mailto:zandie@studiostudio.com.hk), or +852 9187 8000
- Tseung Kwan O – This includes the areas Hang Hau and Po Lam. This area offers a residential atmosphere with a local population along with good shopping and grocery options. Students often choose courses offered at either central classroom or campus, but commute either way is required. Students should expect to pay HK\$8,000 - 14,000 per month for a 2-bedroom apartment. Additional Resources: Isabella Ip from Centaline Property Agency, [isabellaip@centamail.com](mailto:isabellaip@centamail.com)

### DOCUMENTS

#### Passport

- Passports should be secured as soon as possible. They are required not only for travel overseas, but also for application to HKUST among other things.



**FISHER**  
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

- Check expiration date. In the past students have failed to realize that their passports expire during their trip which can cause serious issues with reentry to the United States.
- It is a good idea to keep several copies of all relevant documents on you at all times: licenses, residency cards, passports, visas, enrollment verifications, whatever has been issued to you. This is not required but you may find yourself in a situation in which these things would be extremely helpful to have and save time.



### Student Visa

- Exchange Students are required to secure a Hong Kong student visa. HKUST normally helps with this process. University administrators will contact students with the appropriate forms to be filled out. Undergrads simply must send all the required documentation by the stated deadlines along with payment. Several weeks before departure the HK student visa will be mailed to the address provided in the forms.
- A separate visa is required to enter mainland China. This is definitely easier if the visa is obtained in the United States. The nearest Chinese Embassy is in New York. Students are encouraged to obtain a multiple-entry visa instead of the double entry visa. This will come in handy if students plan to travel several times to mainland China.
- Past students have travelled to Thailand, Korea, or Malaysia. In the past you have not needed visas to enter these places for a short travel period. However, double check these before travel.
- More information can be found at: [http://www.immd.gov.hk/ehtml/hkvisas\\_4.html](http://www.immd.gov.hk/ehtml/hkvisas_4.html)
- If students have any questions about obtaining a visa, Travel Solutions can help. Found here: <http://controller.osu.edu/travel/travel-agencies.shtm>. Or call Travel Solutions by phone at 877-678-8785 or 614-750-4020, ask for a Visa Expert.

### Health Insurance

- Ohio State requires that outgoing students purchase the HTH Supplemental Insurance, this will cover the student's time while studying. However, if a student decided to travel before or after specific program dates, the HTH supplemental insurance will not cover any illness or injury. It is recommended that students contact their health insurance providers before traveling. In the case that a student requires medical attention out of the HTH time period, it is important to know how to deal with copayments, insurance, etc. Specific questions about health insurance can be directed to OIA (Office of International Affairs).
- The campus has a basic medical center with a dentist office.
- On campus, if a student decides to see a doctor for basic health issues, the consultation is free of charge.
- Medications for common illnesses such as cold and flu are free, but specialized medications may require insurance co-pay.
- Mannings and Watsons are two stores that carry various medical and health products. Some also house a pharmacy where you can find a variety of medicines.
- One important note is that some medicines are not available in Hong Kong so the recommendation is to bring a supply of any common over-the-counter or prescription drugs from the US.

### Proof of Enrollment

- If HKUST does not provide students with a formal document for proof of enrollment, using an acceptance letter with the student's name listed may be acceptable. These may be useful for setting up banking and also when traveling.
- It is a good idea to keep several copies of all relevant documents on you at all times: licenses, residency cards,

passports, visas, enrollment verifications, whatever has been issued to you. This is not required but you may find yourself in a situation in which these things would be extremely helpful to have and save time.

### FOOD AND DRINK

#### Grocery

- The three common groceries are Welcome, Park n Shop, and Taste.
- Each of these stores carries the basic necessities including produce, fresh meats, packaged foods, health & beauty products, and cleaning products.
- In some cases, item descriptions may not be in English.
- There is no shortage of convenience shops in Hong Kong. 7-Eleven and Circle K can be found on nearly every corner.
- One can purchase snacks, drinks, and other miscellaneous items at reasonable prices.

#### Dining

- The food at the school is really good, particularly in building LG5. This is where most traditional Chinese, Cantonese, and Japanese meals are prepared. Building LG7 also offers a variety of Cantonese meals.
- American fast food restaurants such as McDonald's, KFC, and Pizza Hut can be found throughout the city.
- Chinese style fast food can be picked up at a few local chains or at any of the many small stands in the city.
- There is a fisherman's village near campus which offers a little outdoor restaurant serving freshly prepared seafood. It is recommended that students go with a group of more than 5 people to allow everyone to taste a variety of seafood and split the cost. If costs are divided, an average meal ranges from HK\$200 to HK\$300; which for seafood is very inexpensive.



### MONEY

#### Currency Exchange

- Currency can be exchanged at TravelEx or at a variety of banks around town. TravelEx has locations at the airport and in Central Island with varying rates.

#### Using an ATM

- Though additional costs may be incurred, using an American bank card at an ATM can be a quick and easy way to withdraw cash. Withdrawals will be made in the host currency but will show up on an account statement as withdrawals in the appropriate amount of dollars.
- Students have found that some banks charge a percentage of the amount that you withdraw internationally. Talk to your bank about the different options they offer.
- ATMs are readily available and easy to find. It is best to check with one's American bank to estimate the additional expenses of foreign withdrawals.

- While cash is the only form of payment taken at many places, be smart about the amount that you carry at any given time. Carrying an excessive amount of money makes you more vulnerable in certain situations. The stores that have high price tags will most likely take credit cards.

### Establishing a Bank Account in your Host Country

- Students may save money on credit card service charges by opening an account at a local bank. The host university may be able to help in this process. Some students have found that it may not be worth the time and effort to do; they would rather utilize their American cards despite the fees.

### Credit and Bank Cards

- Again, make sure you check bank fees. If students choose to use their card for minor purchases the fees can accrue quickly. It is a better idea to carry some cash around with you for this reason.
- Students are encouraged to write down the customer service numbers on all credit cards and keep the numbers with them in case cards are stolen and cancellation is necessary.

### Travelers Checks

- Though travelers' checks may have once been the safest way to manage money while traveling, they may not be the best option. Traveler's checks are only good once converted. Therefore, if a student plans to use traveler's checks, it is recommended that this be only part of the whole money management scheme.
- Travelers' checks are accepted at no additional cost. Some banks also offer currency exchange with no or low fees. The rates are usually close to market, but there may be a limit on the amount one can exchange.



### Other

- Past students have recommended having backup solutions to problems you might face in advance. For example losing your credit card. Come up with a backup plan to what you would do if this were to happen because it takes a while to get a new credit card to be sent overseas. (i.e.: have a second credit card stored in a different place, pay for the entire group dinner when going out and then have everyone pay back in cash, etc.) (2013)
- Past students have recommended making a rough budget for your expenses abroad to avoid missing out in activities at the end of the semester. For example, one student limited her expenses to \$2000 a month while abroad. (2013)

For more information about using credit cards and ATMs while abroad, visit: [http://www.flyerguide.com/wiki/index.php/Credit/Debit/ATM\\_Cards\\_and\\_Foreign\\_Exchange](http://www.flyerguide.com/wiki/index.php/Credit/Debit/ATM_Cards_and_Foreign_Exchange)

## PHONE AND INTERNET

### Using a Phone from Home

- If planning to use a phone from home, do homework with respect to cost. In the past students have realized that using devices such as smartphones with international capabilities can be much more expensive than planned.
- An international SIM card will be necessary, and can be purchased at a phone outlet upon arriving.
- Often iPhones can be unlocked for use abroad, in which case an international SIM card may be inserted. Check with your mobile carrier before attempting this.

- Some phone providers have international calling to emergency numbers only, or they charge you an insane fee when used. Some students have suggested bringing your phone from home if you have this option; it gives a sense of security when first arriving at the airport.

### Purchasing a Cell Phone

- Students can go to phone providers and purchase a cheap phone along with prepaid minutes. Talk to host university friends about the best place to buy a reliable phone. A cell phone is recommended for coordinating plans, handling business, and safety reasons.
- Most students obtain a prepaid phone for frequent in country calls, often from a Three store. Students have preferred purchasing a 3G phone. Anything other than these phones will not allow international calling, despite use of an international phone card.
- Students should beware of purchasing phones from street vendors. Past students have purchased phones that stopped working within a week.

### International Communication

- When calling home, Skype video use is free with wifi access! This is a great option for keeping in touch with friends and family from home as well as those met while traveling.
  - Help parents and friends set up and learn how to use Skype before traveling.
  - Purchasing Skype credit allows students to call a landline or a cell phone back home at a lower rate. When internet is available this can reduce the hassle involved with international calling cards. Users can also pay \$6-\$10 for a month of unlimited calls to any landline or cell phone in the U.S. from their computers.
- G-chat is also a favorite channel of communication for students. It has a G-Video option as well. It can be more convenient than Skype because it is more user-friendly. Which mode of communication you choose ultimately depends on your preferences. It is recommended to explore both programs before departure so you can inform family members which you will be using.
- If you want friends to be able to call you, leave voicemails, or leave text messages like a regular cell phone, you





can sign up for Google voice. You will need to use a VPN (virtual private network) but students have said that it is well worth it. With Google voice, you receive a US telephone number that works like a landline. If you have to make business calls while abroad, this can be a great tool! For more information go to: <http://www.google.com/googlevoice/about.html>.

### Internet

- The Hong Kong airport has unlimited free WIFI. It may be best to send out e-mails before you exit the airport to let friends and family know you have arrived safely in Hong Kong. The express train to and from the airport also has free WIFI as well.
- You will have internet access almost everywhere in the major city cafes. (Starbucks, Pacific Café etc.) They have free WIFI with a time limit of 20 minutes. Some places have desktop computers in the cafes to use for free, up to 20 minutes as well. The desktops are usually occupied frequently though.

### SAFETY TIPS

- Hong Kong is generally very safe but be aware of all surroundings and keep your items close to you at all times. If staying in hostels it is advised to bring a lock to protect your valuables. Avoid bringing anything of extreme sentimental value.
- When navigating yourself in the host country or on a trip, move in groups and communicate your whereabouts as a pre-cautionary measure.
- Keep emergency numbers specific to your host country with you at all times.
- When traveling to Shenzhen or anywhere else in Mainland China extreme caution is necessary. Students have been the victims of theft in the past. A stolen passport will leave a student stranded for several days before being able to return to Hong Kong. When traveling to the Mainland, take the necessary steps to make sure belongings are safe.

## TRANSPORTATION AND TRAVEL

### Subway - MTR

- The subway system in Hong Kong is rather extensive and is the primary form of transportation around the city.
- Single trip tickets can be purchased at each station or one can opt to use an Octopus card. This card can also be purchased at each station and it acts as a debit card. A Student Octopus card is available to students under the age of 25. This card reduces most fares by half. An Octopus card is priced at HK\$150. The usable balance will be HK\$100 with the other HK\$50 going toward a refundable deposit.

### Mini-bus (Public Light Bus)

- The mini-buses (16 seats) are a popular form of transportation throughout much of the new territories.
- A mini-bus loop runs between Hang Hau and campus on a fairly regular schedule throughout the day. The trip is about ten minutes either way and is a generally accepted method for commuting to campus from Central Island.
- Generally the green roofed buses operate on a regular scheduled route whereas the red roofed buses do not.
- Usually will not announce the stops, so you will have to know when and where to exit before boarding.
- Acceptable forms of payment include Octopus card or exact change.

### Double Decker Bus

- There are two major bus companies that provide service in Hong Kong.
- Citybus primarily operates within the city and on the island. <http://www.nwstbus.com.hk/>
- KMB (Kowloon Motor Bus) primarily operates in Kowloon and the New Territories. The bus route between Po Lam and campus is 91M serviced by KMB. <http://www.kmb.hk/english.php>
- Usually will not announce the stops, so you will have to know when and where to exit before boarding.
- Acceptable forms of payment include Octopus card or exact change

### Taxis

- Traveling to specific areas sometimes requires a taxi. The key piece of information to remember is that red taxis cover most of Hong Kong except Lantau Island. Green taxis cover the New Territories. Blue taxis cover Lantau Island.
- Taxis are said to be very affordable especially when split between others. Taxis come in handy because the university is a little offset from some favorite Hong Kong areas.

### International Travel

- When traveling between countries make sure to follow and complete all visa requirements for all countries you plan to visit.
- Students in the past have traveled a great deal more than originally expected. Keep this in mind when budgeting and packing. Many students over pack. Appliances such as straighteners, hair dryers, electric shavers, etc can be





bought in country; as well as toiletries, bedding, and many other bulky items. This will save room in your bag as well as solve any wattage conversion problems you will encounter.

- For the flight over to your destination and back, utilize StudentUniverse.com. Students have had great luck with affordable prices.
- With affordability comes the possibility of delays and cancellations with these airlines. They will rebook you it may just take time. Take situations in stride.
- If possible print out any boarding passes prior to arriving at the airport or you may have to pay an additional fee. Also, double and triple check your bag measurements. These airlines are very adamant on their luggage regulations and will impose hefty fees for any passengers that bags do not apply.
- Buy plane tickets and make travel arrangements as least a week in advance if you want a cheaper price.
- Buying a round trip flight is okay for some, but most have ended up delaying their departure date. If you decide to do so and already have a round trip planned it will probably cost around \$200 to change. That being said, it may be better to delay buying a flight for back home until you are sure of your plans.
- Flying in and out of Hong Kong International Airport is a fairly easy process. The MTR offers an Airport Express that connects directly with the subway in Kowloon or Central Island. The only difficulty can be managing luggage in the subway before getting on the Airport Express.
- Flights can also be taken out of Shenzhen, China. These flights are on average 20 to 30 percent cheaper than those out of Hong Kong. The major difference is ease of traveling to the airport. One can take a light rail train to the border and then take a bus or taxi to the Shenzhen airport. An alternative is to take a bus from Kowloon. Air Asia is a common airline used by students.

## Hong Kong University of Science and Technology : From a Student's Perspective

- Keep in mind, when traveling to nearby Asian countries, many of their modes of transportation, customs and norms will be completely different. Additionally, language barriers can be even greater when venturing out of a big city. Make sure plans are made with this in mind. Write down destinations, hostels, hotels and any key phrases in the language of the country you are visiting.



### Places to Visit

- Some must see places that students have gone to in the past include seeing the Symphony of Light (TST or Peak), hiking in the New Territories (Sai Wan), taking boat trips with fellow exchange students, or going to Repulse Bay (a beautiful beach)

### UNIVERSITY TIPS

#### Course Selection

- Before leaving for Hong Kong, a university administrator will contact students with a list of classes that will be offered the semester students are attending. This is important as not all courses are offered each quarter.
- From this list, students will choose courses that have been approved by Fisher as those that will receive specific transfer credit. A student may request approval for a course that is not preapproved by Fisher, but is not guaranteed specific credit.
- OSU language courses are typically post-evaluated for equivalency. If you are planning to take language courses abroad, keep that in mind. If you are in a language minor, talk with your academic advisor regarding taking language courses abroad.
- Students are encouraged to have several backup courses due to the likelihood of high demand for some classes at HKUST.
- Students are to submit a form in which his or her course selection is stated. By submitting this paperwork as soon as possible, a student will increase her chances of getting into first choice courses.
- An add/drop period that usually ends after the first week of classes allows students to attend the first class and make a decision on whether to keep or drop the class. Students often attend several classes that they had not signed up for in order to help make the final add/drop decisions for the semester.
- Students usually take 2 or 3 core classes and 1 language or elective course. The language teaching system is great at HKUST. Past students have learned a lot of Chinese in a short period of time!
- Be wary of GPA equivalencies and transfers back to OSU. Students have had some confusion in the past about what the letter grade/GPA will transfer back as for each class. Contact coordinators with any questions for a class

#### Break-out Rooms

- The library has an online registration system for reserving more than twenty different rooms. Some are equipped with multimedia devices and others have white boards.
- There is a board room style option at Central Classroom which can be reserved by emailing the office.

#### Student Programs and Organizations

- HKUST holds several planned activities prior to the first week of classes. These are a great way to meet people! The school will inform you about these events in ample time for you to plan these with your arrival date.

- Students will be assigned a buddy upon arrival. They are very helpful and forming a relationship is encouraged because of the quick, local, connection it provides the student.
- Exchange students are allowed to join student organizations. During the first several weeks of school, students may visit various booths set up by student groups to determine which organization a student wishes to join.
- Students are encouraged to join at least one organization in order to keep busy during school and to get to know more local students. Students at HKUST are quite involved in school activities; more so than a typical American student would be.

### Study Areas

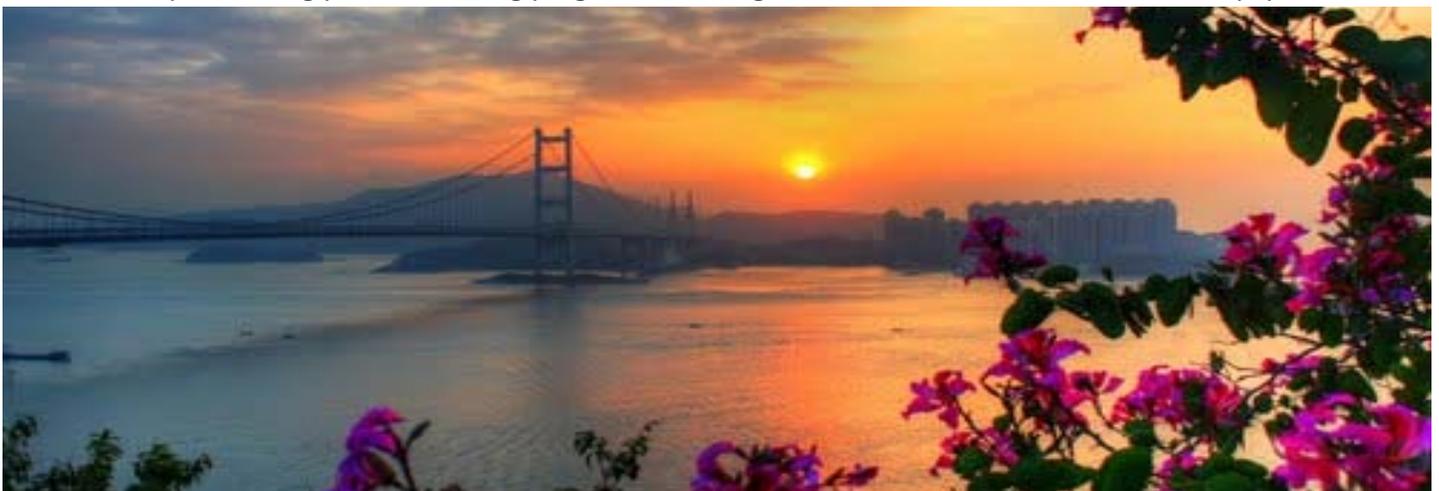
- The library is the main place where most undergrads study. This offers many individual study desks along with large desks in many of the open areas. The library always tends to be full so arriving early in the morning to secure a seat is often the common practice if a student intends to study all day.
- Each dormitory has a lounge that students often use as a study area, especially during midterms or finals.
- While Wi-Fi is not readily available at city establishments and internet cafes are uncommon, wireless access is readily available on campus.

### Text Books

- Students should talk to local students to inquire about their classes. Chances are someone will have the textbook needed and will be willing to sell or lend the book.
- If this does not work, not to worry - generally textbooks are around 50-75 percent cheaper than they would be in the U.S.
- Textbooks are less expensive than the United States, so it is unlikely that students will spend more than \$200 on them.

### Recreation Center

- There is a small recreation center on campus that houses basic weight machines and exercise equipment. Other indoor facilities include handball and basketball courts.
- Outdoor facilities include a track, soccer field, swimming pool, and tennis courts which are accessible without going through the training program.
- Lockers are available in the changing rooms and are operated by depositing a HK\$5 coin. Upon opening the locker with the key, the coin is returned.
- Access requires taking part in a training program consisting of a 1-hour video on how to use the equipment. A



passport sized photo is needed for the card that will be issued.

### Language Center

- This university resources offers language programs and resources to students. The resources can be used in the center free of charge.
- Everyone at the university speaks English well, you should not have any substantial language issues.

### Attire

- Students often wear shorts and t-shirts to class and around the city when the temperature is high. As the temperature drops (could be as late as early November), jeans and long sleeved shirts are often worn.
- There are occasions when one must dress in business casual or professional so those items are necessary.

### MISCELLANEOUS TIPS

- Hong Kong is a fast paced, exciting environment. Take advantage of every opportunity. Many multinational corporations have their headquarters in the city. Network when possible to further any future career, study, or travel plan in the future.

### Language

- The majority of the younger generations in Hong Kong can understand English, so most likely you will be able to survive without knowing Mandarin or Cantonese, although it is recommended to learn a few phrases.

### Tidbits

- It is advised that you be very open minded and patient when you are on exchange. Not everything is going to go your way while abroad and you will hit major road blocks that you've never encountered before, but its best to just keep an opened mind and don't let things get you down. The times that don't go exactly as planned are going to be the biggest learning experiences. (2013)
- People usually understand if you need them to speak slower, or explain something in different words; they will appreciate you taking the time to learn and understand their language and culture.

If there are further questions or concerns, different resources are available that students can utilize. The Office of Global Business will be a resource throughout the entire trip. Past students have also volunteered to be a contact if additional questions would arise.

**CONTRIBUTORS**

Todd Marchal  
Outbound exchange student to HKUST  
Autumn 2009  
marchal.13@buckeyemail.osu.edu

Lilian Perez  
Outbound exchange student to HKUST  
Autumn 2009  
perez.146@osu.edu

Juhyun Wi  
Outbound exchange student to HKUST  
Autumn 2011  
wi.2@osu.edu

Jeffrey Lake  
Outbound exchange student to HKUST  
Autumn 2011  
lake.101@osu.edu

Sung Jae Won  
Outbound exchange student to HKUST  
Autumn 2012  
won.58@osu.edu

**ADDITIONAL CONTACTS FOR FURTHER QUESTIONS**

Kozue Isozaki  
Assistant Director for International Exchange at Ohio State  
isozaki.1@osu.edu

Wendy Cheung  
Incoming Students Coordinator  
bmwendy@ust.hk

Yee Suen Wong  
Inbound exchange student from HKUST  
Autumn 2009  
ac\_wysab@stu.ust.hk

Chiu Yu Pang  
Inbound exchange student from HKUST  
Autumn 2009  
pang.66@osu.edu