UNDERGRADUATE
STUDENT EXCHANGE
PROSPECTUS

Spend a term or a summer in Hong Kong at
The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
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5 GREAT REASONS TO DISCOVER HONG KONG
Quality living in an international cosmopolitan city

Situated in the heart of Asia at the southern tip of China, Hong Kong is a unique place where you will find a fast-paced, 21st-century lifestyle interwoven with local traditions and countryside charms. Here, you can be a part of the city’s hustle and bustle in the morning, unplug with a stroll or hike along a picturesque beach or peak in the afternoon, and come evening, an array of entertainment options await. Hong Kong’s first-rate public transport system puts every corner within easy reach. And while you can go off to explore a nearby nature reserve or a sleepy fishing village, rest assured that Hong Kong offers all the conveniences of a world-class city to live in.

Rich heritage and diversity

From a small trading port to a strategic foothold in World War II, to British rule and the return of sovereignty to China, many events and different groups of people have left their mark on Hong Kong. And while it is indeed a blend of cultures, Hong Kong is much more than simply a place where “East meets West”. For example, did you know it was in defense of Hong Kong that Canadian forces first engaged in battle during World War II, and a memorial still takes place every year for those Canadian soldiers who sacrificed their lives in this territory’s defense? And did you know that the Parsees – descendants from Iranians of Zoroastrian faith – who arrived in Hong Kong in the 19th century played a prominent role in establishing many important institutions, including a popular local ferry service, a large university and an international bank? You will be amazed to find out how rich Hong Kong’s heritage and diversity is.

One of the world’s freest economies and safest cities

As a leading international center of trade and finance, Hong Kong is the ideal place to learn about business in Asia. Home to nearly 1,400 regional headquarters of foreign companies, Hong Kong offers an attractive business environment, based on the rule of law, an independent judiciary, free market principles, the free flow of information, effective anti-corruption measures and the use of English as the language of government and business. And you will be glad to know that with consistently low crime rates, Hong Kong is a remarkably safe place, by day and by night.

Gateway to Asia and Mainland China

On Hong Kong’s doorstep are the many fascinating sights and cities of Asia. The Hong Kong International Airport is a hub for regional and international travel. You can easily board a direct flight that will take you to anywhere in Asia within four hours, and a train from the city can whisk you across the border to Mainland China in just 40 minutes.

Great food and shopping

Hong Kong is without doubt a paradise for shopping and dining. From local street stalls to fine dining to cuisine from all parts of the world – you name it, we’ve got it. Visitors are also fascinated by the endless opportunities for discovering shopping treasures, whether in bargain alleys and roadside markets or designer boutiques and glitzy malls. With its 24/7 lifestyle, this vibrant city has something for everyone.

World-class education, a vibrant city nearby and people from all over the world, HKUST combines it all right above a lovely beach.

Urs, ETH Zurich
Facts and Figures: Hong Kong

Language

- 89% Cantonese speakers
- Chinese and English are the official languages
- English is widely used in the government, legal, professional and business sectors

Population

- 7.2M people
- 6,620 people/km²

Size

- 1,104 km²
- 25% developed
- 75% open space (40% country parks and nature reserves)
Climate
Sub-tropical with distinct seasons

Currency
HKD
Hong Kong Dollar

Ethnic/national groups

26°–31°C
Summer
(Jun–Aug)

10°–20°C
Winter
(Dec–Feb)

92% of Chinese descent

Koreans 12,000
French 12,000
British 16,000
Japanese 22,000
Americans 28,000
Indians 45,000
Australians 80,000
Filipino 160,000
Indonesian 164,000
Canadians 290,000

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KUST occupies a stunning 150-acre (60-hectare) site overlooking the pristine Clear Water Bay, located on the Sai Kung Peninsula. The area is often considered as one of Hong Kong’s havens for outdoor lovers.

People do not normally associate Hong Kong with nature. But the truth is that only around 25% of Hong Kong is the dense urban space that is so well known to the world. The other 75% is undeveloped, and is comprised of country parks and nature reserves. Of course, with the efficient public transport system, you are never far from urban areas.
Beautiful trails and beaches

Sai Kung is endowed with great natural beauty. The area is host to a number of outstanding hiking trails and beaches. One trail that has consistently been popular with locals and visitors alike is the Sai Kung Peninsula hike. It winds round the Sai Kung Peninsula, passing through some of the most scenic spots and lets you see the amazing hexagonal volcanic columns of High Island.

Sai Kung town

Sai Kung town, 15 minutes from the HKUST campus, boasts a number of great eateries, including seafood restaurants, western restaurants and bars. The area began as a market town where fishermen and villagers gathered. Today, the Sai Kung Pier is used as a typhoon shelter. Visitors can conveniently hire sampans or boats or go on tours around the outlying islands nearby.

Outlying islands

You can head out to one of the 70 outlying islands in the Sai Kung area. One such island is Yim Tin Tsai. The island was first settled by Hakka people in the 19th century, with the early settlers mostly engaged in sea salt farming. Home to around 1,000 villagers at its peak more than three decades ago, the island has since been abandoned, as inhabitants moved to urban areas. One of the main attractions on the island is St. Joseph’s Chapel, a beautifully restored Catholic chapel first inaugurated in 1890, which won an Award of Merit at the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Heritage Awards. Yim Tin Tsai is also home to many mangrove species. Ferry services are available from the Sai Kung Pier.

“
I love the outdoors, nature and photography. Luckily, Hong Kong offers opportunities for all of them in fairly close proximity. I also like the ability to travel freely and change destinations with ease. It is a great experience to not know what the next day will bring or who you will meet.

Thomas, Missouri University of Science and Technology
The university

HKUST is a publicly funded university that opened in 1991. It is a leading international research university dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge in science, engineering, business, humanities and social science, and the education of tomorrow’s leaders.

As a young university into its second decade, HKUST’s achievements are quite remarkable. It has consistently been in the top spots in international rankings, a demonstration of the university’s high academic quality and the global recognition it has gained.

World-class faculty

HKUST has approximately 500 faculty members, all holding doctorates. Senior faculty members of the University have taught at leading research universities around the world, or served in equivalent senior posts in major industrial laboratories. Younger members have all been recruited on the basis of proven accomplishments and strong potential.

Student body

HKUST is coeducational, with a total enrollment of more than 13,000 students. The university comprises five Schools – Science, Engineering, Business and Management, Humanities and Social Science, and the HKUST Fok Ying Tung Graduate School. The undergraduate student body comprises 83% domestic students and 17% equally split between students from Mainland China and overseas. With approximately 400 exchange students passing through HKUST every term, you really can make friends with people from around the world.

World-class research facilities

HKUST is actively creating the knowledge and advanced technologies that will sustain local, regional and international development in the 21st century. Research facilities that are unique in the region include an environmental wind/wave tunnel and a geotechnical centrifuge. Other state-of-the-art facilities are available for conducting research in leading areas, such as microsystems, energy and thermal systems, logistics and supply chain management, multimedia technology, pharmaceutical products and processing, optoelectronics and display, advanced construction materials, electronic packaging, advanced manufacturing, internet technology, nanoscience and technology, among others.

My semester at HKUST has given me a new outlook on life. I have created new lifelong friendships, both with locals and other exchange students. The academic aspect of the exchange has been fruitful, and I may come back to do research later.

Martine, University of Bergen
STUDENT EXCHANGE AT HKUST
It was a great experience studying at HKUST. A beautiful campus, nice friends, great lectures and so forth. Everything about HKUST will stay in my memory. If I had a chance to be an exchange student again, I would surely choose HKUST.

Junhan, Sungkyunkwan University
**Chinese language courses**

The HKUST Language Center offers Putonghua courses for students from non-Chinese backgrounds. Exchange students are welcome to enroll in these credit-bearing courses. Enrollment is free as the courses form part of HKUST’s academic programs.

Alternatively, you can enroll in one of the non-credit bearing Cantonese or Putonghua courses offered by the Language Center on a fee-paying basis. These courses are meant for students who wish to pick up the local language at leisure. They do not offer credits and will not appear on your official HKUST transcript.

**Academic year and term dates**

The academic year runs from September to May, with the Fall and Spring terms being the major terms. Exchange students can choose to study at HKUST for one or both terms.

- **Fall term**: Early September to late December
- **Spring term**: Late January/early February to late May

**Course numbering and prerequisites**

You can enroll in any undergraduate course as long as there are places available and you fulfill the course prerequisites and any other enrollment conditions prescribed for the course. Postgraduate level courses are usually not open for enrollment to exchange students.

**Credits**

The Fall and Spring terms are each 13 weeks long. Most courses at HKUST are 3 credits, with three hours of lectures per week, totaling 39 lecture hours per term. The normal credit load is 15 credits (5 courses) each term. The minimum credit load is 12 credits (4 courses) and the maximum is 17–18 credits (6 courses).

**Assessment**

A two-week final examination period takes place at the end of the Fall and Spring terms. Exam schedules are normally announced in the middle of the term. The format of the exams will vary from course to course. HKUST uses a 4.3 grading scale, with letter grades, with Grade D being a marginal pass. The typical course assessment is based on a combination of items, which may include class participation, projects, labs, mid-terms and final exams. You should check with your home institution on its policy regarding the transfer of grades.

**Transcript**

HKUST will produce transcripts detailing the courses taken and the grades obtained. The transcripts will be mailed to you and your home institution.

**Credit transfer**

Credit transfers are approved by students’ home institutions. You should consult your home institution on this matter.
The HKUST International Summer Exchange Program (ISP) welcomes students from our partner institutions to study at HKUST in the summer. The program aims to create a rewarding exchange experience for students from around the world. It comprises high-quality courses taught by the HKUST faculty and provides opportunities to participate in local excursions that enable you to gain insight into the region.

Program dates and schedule
The HKUST Summer Program is an eight-week program running from June to August.

Courses and credits
Courses are offered by HKUST’s four Schools: Science, Engineering, Business and Management, and Humanities and Social Science. In addition, Putonghua courses for students from non-Chinese backgrounds are also available. Courses are taught by the HKUST faculty. Course lists will be made available on the program website.

For participation in the Summer Program, you should take at least one regular undergraduate course. Courses normally bear three credits unless otherwise specified. The maximum course load is nine credits. You should check with your home institution on credit transfer policies.

Application and fees
The HKUST Summer Program accepts applications from students who are nominated by HKUST’s exchange partners. If you are interested, please inquire and apply through the Exchange or International Office at your home institution. Applications are normally invited from December to March each year.

As with regular term exchange, students nominated by home institutions do not have to pay tuition to HKUST. HKUST will provide on-campus housing, and you will pay for accommodation costs and a few minor fees.

Details and contact
Application procedures, course selection and other details are available in the fall before the year of the Summer Program. Please check the Summer Program website for details.

Website: http://isp.ust.hk
Email: isp@ust.hk
Accommodation

Undergraduate exchange students are provided with on-campus housing. After HKUST confirms your nomination status with your home institution, we will send you information on student housing. To be eligible, you must apply by the deadline given by the University. There are nine halls on campus that are available for undergraduate exchange students. You may indicate your hall preference when you apply. Subject to availability, the University will allocate hall places according to the stated preference. Housing check-in for exchange students is usually in the week before the start of the school term.

Rooms and facilities

Most undergraduate halls are designed for double occupancy, with some for triple occupancy. Single rooms are only available in Hall VII, Hall VIII and Hall IX. Each room is air-conditioned, and furnished with desks, chairs, bookshelves, beds (no bedding), wardrobes and a mini-fridge. Common facilities include showers, toilets, common rooms with TVs, pantries, microwaves, telephones and student card-operated washing machines and dryers. Students can connect to the internet in their rooms through the HKUST network with a LAN cable or via Wi-Fi. Air-conditioners are operated by student cards. Upon program registration and obtaining student cards, students can charge up their student cards at Add Value Machines (AVM) to operate the air-conditioners and other facilities.

Living learning communities (LLC)

Students reside in clusters based on themes to form “Living Learning Communities” (LLC). Some such themes include Fitness Connection, Live Green, Rise & Shine, Arts a-LIVE, Creative Affinity and iVillage.
## Living expenses

Living expenses will vary depending on your accommodation and lifestyle choices. We recommend that you budget HK$40,000 per term, excluding airfare and any personal traveling that you are planning. Below is an approximate breakdown for your reference. Note that these may change from year to year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major expenses (per term)</th>
<th>Hong Kong Dollar</th>
<th>Approx. in USD (1 USD = 7.7 HKD)</th>
<th>Approx. in EUR (1 EUR = 10.5 HKD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) On-campus accommodation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Double rooms and triple/bunk rooms</td>
<td>5,000–7,800</td>
<td>650–1,000</td>
<td>480–750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- No meal plans available</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Food — approx. HK$35/meal on campus</td>
<td>13,000</td>
<td>1,700</td>
<td>1,240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Books and supplies</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Health insurance</td>
<td>1,950</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Transportation and other personal expenses</td>
<td>8,000</td>
<td>1040</td>
<td>760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>29,450–32,250</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,800–4,200</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,800–3,070</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Orientation

Exchange students normally arrive one week before the start of the term. This provides enough time for participation in orientation activities and to adapt to the new environment. Two orientation sessions are organized by the University and the School for incoming exchange students prior to the start of each semester. The sessions help students settle down in Hong Kong and familiarize themselves with HKUST’s learning environment.

Academic advising

The School Offices will provide advice on course selection and other academic matters.

Student counseling and development

Counselors at the Student Affairs Office can assist students with physical and learning disabilities. They can also provide assistance if you face academic or personal difficulties, or emotional distress or difficulties adjusting to the new environment.

Library

The HKUST library is a centrally located five-storey building that provides over 3,100 reader seats. In addition to over 700,000 print volumes and a large collection of media resources, it provides access to more than 35,000 electronic and print journals, a large number of e-books, databases and other digital information resources. The library and the Learning Commons provide many places for individual and group projects or studying.
Students’ Union

The Students’ Union is the students’ voice at HKUST. It operates independently from the University, and all undergraduate students become full members at the time of registration at the University. It also functions as the umbrella society for all student societies.

Student societies and clubs

Joining a club is a great way to make new friends and pick up a new skill or passion. There are more than 100 student societies affiliated to the Students’ Union, covering sports, recreational, academic, religious, music and other themes. There are over 30 sports clubs. No matter what your interests are, there is something for you.

School societies such as BSU (Business Students’ Union), ESU (Engineering Students’ Union) and SSU (Science Students’ Union) provide a great opportunity to meet people in your School.

Stay fit

There is a wide variety of sports and recreation facilities available for your use. All the facilities at the Indoor Sports Complex are fully air-conditioned. We have a large indoor sports hall of 1,600 sqr. meters for activities such as badminton, basketball, volleyball and handball. In addition, there are courts for squash and table tennis, and areas for fencing, dance, indoor archery, martial arts and weight training.

Outdoor sports facilities include an artificial turf soccer pitch, a 400-meter 8-lane track, a hard-surface mini-soccer pitch, a basketball court, a lawn area and tennis courts. We also have a 50-meter outdoor pool and a 25-meter indoor pool for swimming and other aquatic activities.

I have joined the Dragon Boat Society and that has given me the chance to integrate with the locals, experience amazing food and learn survival phrases like “I don’t understand” and “What time are we eating?” as well as how to count in Cantonese (which we practice when we are stretching!).

Claudia, University College London
There are many eateries on and around campus. They are a great place to catch up with your friends as well as fill your stomach.

**Canteens**

The student canteens located on Lower Ground Levels 1 and 7 and at the Business School Building are the largest on campus. They mainly serve Chinese dishes, with some noodles, pastas and sandwiches. There is also a McDonald’s on campus.

**Coffee Kiosk**

Packed in the morning and afternoon rushes, the Coffee Kiosk is the place for getting your coffee, tea or something light that you wish to grab and go.

**Chinese Restaurant**

What would be an authentic Hong Kong experience without dim sum and the many-course Cantonese dinner? The Chinese Restaurant, located right on campus, is a full-scale restaurant. You can order dim sum for lunch, and Chinese dishes for dinner.
Coffee Shop
For breakfast, the restaurant serves pastries, muffins, bagels, sandwiches, omelettes, as well as continental breakfasts.

For lunch and dinner, the restaurant serves salads, sandwiches, panini, baked potatoes, Indian curry (veg and non-veg), soups and hot entrees. This restaurant is popular with students with vegetarian preferences. There is indoor and outdoor patio seating available.

Ebeenezer’s (Halal-certified)
Ebeenezer’s Kebab & Pizzeria is a well-known eatery in Hong Kong that specializes in a variety of kebabs, Indian curries, biryanis and pizzas. It is Halal certified.

UC Bistro & Bar
The University Center Bistro serves a western menu for breakfast, lunch and dinner. The adjacent Uni-Bar is the bar on campus.

Milano Fresh
Serves custom-made salads, wraps, soups, pizzas, pastas, roast chicken and other western hot entrees.

Campus Supermarket
You can get your daily necessities from the campus supermarket. Those wishing to opt for a simple breakfast can get milk, cereals and breads from here.
PREPARE TO TRAVEL
Student visa

The Hong Kong Immigration Department requires all non-local students to obtain a student visa in order to study in Hong Kong. In general, if you do not possess the right of abode or the right to land in Hong Kong, or a dependant visa, then you will require a student visa.

After HKUST confirms your nomination status from your home university, we will send over information to assist you with the student visa application process. You should send your application to HKUST, as the University will liaise with the Hong Kong Immigration Department on your behalf. When your student visa is issued, we will collect it and mail it to you.

Health and insurance

Travel insurance
You must have appropriate travel insurance that covers the duration of your study. Your insurance must meet a basic set of specifications that HKUST requires. If you are unable to do so, you can purchase a plan through HKUST that meets all the requirements.

Pre-existing medical conditions
Please note that the HKUST travel insurance plan, and many others, does not cover pre-existing conditions. These include medical or physical conditions that you have before you enroll in the plan. If you require additional coverage for a pre-existing condition, it is advisable that you check whether your pre-existing condition will be covered by that policy.

Health and dental check-up
We recommend that you have a thorough health and dental check-up before you leave home. This will give you the peace of mind that you are embarking on your studies with no major health or dental concerns. It also helps to avoid the hassle and possibly high costs involved in seeking treatment while abroad. We also advise that before you leave home, check with your medical practitioner for any medical/health advice for the regions you are travelling to, including any suggested immunizations.

Healthcare in Hong Kong
The Hong Kong public healthcare system is of high quality. As an exchange student, you are eligible to use the public hospitals in Hong Kong at the local rates. Being a HKUST student also allows you to use the campus medical and dental clinic.
Want to join HKUST as an exchange student?
If you are a student at one of our partner institutions, you should first approach the Exchange Programs office at your home university to check on the application procedures, timelines, eligibility and selection criteria. Once you are nominated by your Exchange Programs office, they will notify HKUST and we will send you a welcome package.
My courses here at HKUST are amazing. My professors have studied all over the world and love to share their experiences and knowledge. I have found them to be very approachable and willing to answer questions regarding the coursework.

Kristen, Rice University
Enquiries

Global Student Programs Office
The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
Clear Water Bay, Kowloon, Hong Kong
Telephone: +852 2358 8178
Fax: +852 3521 0097
Email: inexchange@ust.hk

School of Science
Website: http://advise.science.ust.hk/sfs/exchange
Email: ssci@ust.hk

School of Engineering
Website: http://www.seng.ust.hk/exchange
Email: sengexchange@ust.hk

School of Business and Management
Website: http://undergrad.bm.ust.hk
Email: bmugexch@ust.hk

School of Humanities and Social Science
Website: http://www.shss.ust.hk/global_experience
Email: gcs@ust.hk

Interdisciplinary Programs Office
Website: http://www.ipo.ust.hk
Email: ipo@ust.hk