

Possibilities Are Endless; Unleash Your Limitless Potential- My Undergraduate Journey at CityU



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Hi there! I am a recent graduate of the Department of Accountancy. Looking back on my academic journey, it might be different from other people's journeys, and I would say it was not easy. I wanted to major in accounting at university after I took BAFS as one of the electives in Secondary 4. However, the process was challenging. I got disappointing results in HKDSE and aggressively took on an associate degree program and retook DSE simultaneously. I could not strike a balance at that time. My GPA was not high enough to compete with other candidates, so I did not receive the ideal offer in my first non-JUPAS application and applied for non-JUPAS again. Finally, I received an offer as an Advance Standing I student to study accounting at the City University of Hong Kong (CityU) for 3 years. Even though it was only 3 years, I tried to fulfil my dreams of university life by joining several internships and an exchange programme and engaging in other activities offered by the school.

Internships

There are many internship opportunities at CityU. In contrast to attending lectures in the lecture theatre, joining an internship is an excellent chance to get exposure to the real business world. What you can gain is not only knowledge but also something unexpected, such as friendship, soft skills, and knowledge outside the classroom.

I spent a whole semester taking AC4383-AC Professional Internship and Professional Attachment and worked as an assurance intern in Financial Services at PwC. My primary role was assisting in preparing the financial statements by performing reasonableness testing and substantive testing. This was the lengthiest internship I had and the most unforgettable one. When I started it in January, the peak season was underway for the audit firms. In addition, it was my first audit internship and I knew nothing about auditing. I was baffled and stressed at the beginning. Everything was new to me and I did not know which task I should start with. The ways for me to overcome the obstacles were to study last year's database, make a list of all my questions, and ask my supervisors when they had time. I hope that my experience will be helpful for you if you are going to join the audit internship. I vividly remember how Mr. David Yip and Ms. Suzie Kim encouraged and comforted me when I felt stressed after submitting the internship interim report. Although the internship workload was heavy, I understood more about what auditors do, which was helpful for my career planning.



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Apart from AC4383-AC Professional Internship and Professional Attachment, there was also an opportunity to join CB3800 Business Practice Internship.

I also worked as a tax intern in Accounting and Payroll at PwC. This was a part-time internship. I was mainly responsible for recording and maintaining the financial transactions of companies. Last summer, I also worked as a summer intern in investor relations at CLP, a listed utility company in Hong Kong. The job was very different from the one at PwC. I worked in-house rather than outsourcing. The internship gave me a deeper understanding of the company.

Exchange Studies in Finland

CityU collaborates with more than 400 institutions to hold exchange programmes worldwide. I highly recommend that students take advantage of these programmes, and I am sure participants will discover more about themselves after the programme.

Once, I struggled to go on an exchange, as I might have needed to defer my graduation. Later, I still decided to go. Luckily, everything went smoothly and I could graduate on time. I was glad to be an exchange student at Aalto University in Finland for one semester. This was my first time traveling to Europe, and I met many Western people. Before going on the exchange programme, I was pretty shy about speaking English, as there were very few chances to speak English every day in Hong Kong. Since then, I have gained more confidence in speaking English, as I need to use English to communicate with people who have different linguistic backgrounds.

In addition, I chose to live in the hall. Apart from homework, I also had to handle all of the housework. In Hong Kong, my parents usually do the housework (sometimes I cook for lunch/dinner), and I focus on my academic assignments. Yet, in Finland, doing both homework and housework allowed me to hone my time management skills, as every day I had to complete all of the items on the to-do list.



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Some minor accidents happened during the exchange programme. I was charged an €80 fine for holding the wrong metro ticket, and someone pickpocketed my wallet in the first week after my arrival in Finland. These experiences taught me how to take care of my personal belongings and to do research before going to new countries to avoid making the same mistakes.



Most importantly, I made many new friends from other countries. When we had time, we traveled together. We travelled to many European countries. I was lucky to be able to visit famous tourist spots and taste different cuisines in other countries. We also went to visit Santa Claus in Rovaniemi on Christmas!

Finland is famous for its unique education system. I am happy that I had a chance to experience it. Finnish teachers were very different from Hong Kong teachers. There were no set answers to the questions and they gave students much space to think. In addition, the timetable pattern was also very different from the one in Hong Kong, which took me some time to adapt to.

Scholarships

I received two scholarships during my undergraduate studies.

I was fortunate to receive Fung Scholarships from the Victor and William Fung Foundation for the exchange programme. This scholarship aims to nurture future world leaders by enabling university students to experience different cultures and environments early in their careers. Upon receiving the scholarship, the recipients automatically become "Fung Scholars." This foundation regularly organizes activities for recipients like me to help us expand our horizons; these include leadership conferences, academic seminars, and leisure activities.



This scholarship helped reduce my financial burden and allowed me to interact with people from diverse cultural backgrounds. After I arrived in Finland, the foundation arranged a meeting for me with one of the Fung Scholars, who came from the U.K. and worked in Finland. The foundation also helped me connect with other Fung Scholars from different universities and industries. Joining the program inspired me to consider studying for a master's degree or working abroad.

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Recently, I was informed that I would be rewarded a QP scholarship from the Hong Kong Institute of Certified Public Accountants (HKICPA). The recipients can enjoy the award in the form of a fee waiver (QP application fee, 1-year student annual fee, exemption and examination fees of QP) that is valid for 2 years. You may wonder how I got this award. I think the critical factor is that in the personal statement and panel interview, you need to show your passion for your future career with the qualifications, and how your personality and personal development enable you to get these qualifications.

To conclude, you should enjoy university life by actively participating in school activities to broaden your horizons and self-discovery. University is not just a place to acquire knowledge, skills, and expertise in a particular field. It is also a place for you to enhance your soft skills. If you need help in planning your career, remember to seek advice from your student mentors and academic advisors. There are always people to help you.

