

## University of Hong Kong

I am having a complete blast at HKU and have adapted to the learning environment. I love how interactive the lectures are and how they are discussion-based. Every day, I am in a constant awe of how beautiful the university campus and scenic views are. It still surprises me that the campus is bombarded with escalators and lifts. Only a few months into my study abroad experience, I can truly call Hong Kong my 'home'. To be in such an exciting city that resembles London in some ways, it feels great to call another city 'home'.

I did not think it could be possible for my mind-set to change in such a short amount of time. You do not realise the flaws you have in your mind-set until you shift out of your comfort zone and into a new environment. Battling my ignorance's and prejudices has been rewarding where I can now view the world outside of all the assumptions I have built up over the years. Having met all the kinds of people from across the world triggered this process. I have met some of the most amazing, intelligent and open-minded people that have truly made this experience incredible. I feel like I have travelled across the world simply through conversations. In addition, physically travelling to nearby countries has developed my confidence, self-esteem, awareness and street understanding.



The biggest challenge I have faced so far on my study abroad experience only occurred to me a few weeks ago. My brand-new phone had been pickpocketed. I may come across petty or materialistic but I truly did not think that my phone being stolen could have a detrimental impact on my mental health (for a very, very short amount of time). It feels horrible to be in a foreign country where a few weeks old phone that you rely on to capture your best shots is taken from you. However, I am so thankful that I have had this experience. I have discovered that I am truly a materialistic, social media-obsessed, technology-driven 21st century youth. Being like this can take one away from the moment and forget the real problems of this reality. So, I want to change this about myself. Also, I am glad that I

brought a back-up phone with me from the UK as it was useful in this situation. But I have learnt how to deal with the aftermath of an item being stolen, such as reporting it to the police, contacting your phone carrier and informing the insurance company.

One of my goals in Hong Kong was to discover the life of a local and thus live like one. Other than the fact that I live with locals and eat hot-pots for dinner, a new local experience that I had at the start of second semester was having a family dinner with a local family. It was great to venture away from the city-busting Hong Kong Island and to the rural parts of Kowloon to a local home. It has been so long since I have been able to go into a cosy home and sit on a dinner table or sofa with a family. I immediately felt at home once I entered a local family home. How local can one get in Hong Kong if one has not spent time in a local family home? It was an insightful experience to see how majority of the people in Hong Kong live in high rise flat buildings.

