OVERVIEW - Exchange Programmes

- HKU Worldwide Student Exchange Programme (HKUWW)
- Faculty-level Exchange Programme
- Department-level Exchange Programme
- Visiting Programme
Pre-departure Briefing

Briefing by HKU International Affairs Office

i. Preparation – Before You Go
ii. Upon Arrival
iii. Before Leaving Your Host Institution & After Returning to Hong Kong
1. Preparation –

Before You Go
Credit Transfer

- Credit transfer is managed and subject to approval by your home Faculty at HKU.
- Apply for pre-approval for selected courses.
- Prepare the course outline and description to seek Faculty advice and approval.
- Always prepare a list of backup courses for consideration.
- Consult your Faculty Academic Adviser/Course Selection Adviser/Faculty or Department office in advance about any questions or doubts.

Does NOT affect CGPA: Pass or Fail grades only

Leave of Absence

- Submit and complete the Leave of Absence application before departure to your home Faculty at HKU.
- Check the academic calendar for any conflict with semester teaching dates.
- Applications for leave retrospectively might be rejected and will only be considered in very exceptional circumstances.
Prepare to Study Abroad

Before your departure for study abroad, it is very important for you to take some time to read through the information here to ensure a smooth application of leave of absence and other preparations. Therefore, the information you need to know and prepare.

Pre-departure Briefing

Pre-departure Briefing Session is to provide soon-to-be study abroad students with the most important information and reminders before they take off. Students may refer to the important information for preparation:

- Pre-departure Briefing for Exchange in Semester 1 and Full Year 2023-24
- Pre-departure Briefing for Short-term Abroad Programme - SAP & SAO 2023
- Pre-departure Notes for Outgoing Students (Booklet)
- Crisis and Emergency Outside Hong Kong
- Assistance to Hong Kong Residents Unit (AHU), the Immigration Department of the Government of Hong Kong
- HKU Mentorship Programme

Credit Transfer

Before departure, students should seek pre-approval of courses for credit transfer according to the Faculty's regulations and requirements. Please consult the Head of Department or Departmental Course Selection Adviser on the credit transfer application. Students selected to participate in the exchange programme should submit the application form for credit transfer for exchange studies to their Faculty.
Scholarships for Semester Exchange

➢ Only students who travel outside Hong Kong and join in-person exchanges will be eligible.

➢ Students should obtain a CGPA of 3.0 or above before the exchange semester to be eligible for receiving the HKUWW Scholarship Scheme.

➢ Eligible students must submit the scholarship acceptance document, arrival confirmation, e-form of the Insurance declaration as required in the scholarship offer email.

➢ Input the correct local bank account details on HKU Portal for receiving scholarship, subsidies or refund of exchange deposit.

➢ Students should NOT consider it a major financial source.

Scholarship Disbursement Timeline -

For Semester 1 and Full-year Exchange

Scholarship Disbursement

September October November

Announcement of Scholarship Offer

https://intlaffairs.hku.hk/scholarships
The Education Bureau (EDB) is offering government subsidy schemes to subsidise local undergraduate students to participate in exchange activities outside Hong Kong

I. Subsidy on Exchange for Post-secondary Students (“SSE”)

II. Subsidy on Exchange to "Belt and Road" Regions for Post-secondary Students (“SSEBR”)

III. Non-means-tested Subsidy on Exchange to “Belt and Road” Regions for Post-secondary Students (“Non-means-tested SSEBR”)

Financial Assistance

Government Subsidies for Semester Exchange Programme

Subsidy Application and Disbursement Timeline -

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2024</td>
<td>Late August - October</td>
<td>Application Period</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- The release of application result is on a rolling basis.
- Upon approval, the subsidy will be disbursed within 3 months after the release of results.

https://intlaffairs.hku.hk/government-subsidies
Settle all HKU tuition fee payment (before departure)

Get financially prepared
- Withdraw foreign cash before departure
- Keep some money in-hand when you arrive in your host country
- Prepare proof that you are able to support yourself financially for the planned study period (e.g. a bank account statement) (if applicable)

Consider how to access foreign currency upon arrival
- Activate Overseas ATM cash withdrawal
- Look into how to open a bank account while studying abroad

Create a trip budget
Observe the terms and conditions (including refund policy) of flight tickets, accommodation, and any other arrangements

Keep all related documents such as receipts, booking confirmations, and transaction records

We recommend you NOT to make any non-refundable financial commitments unless necessary
Accommodation

- Student housing/ Apartments
- On-campus / Off-campus
- The earliest move-in date for on-campus accommodation
- Examine the space with safety and security in mind (safety considerations list)
- Take photos of any damage to the apartment/room or furniture when you move in
- Carefully read the rental policy, especially regarding cancelling or changing your booking, before signing any contracts
- Make sure you understand the terms of the tenancy agreement before signing it, including the non-flexible end date
- If you are paying a deposit, make sure it is stated in the contract
- Remember it is a legally binding document
- Beware of fraud
Insurance

Study abroad programmes that are arranged by HKU will be covered by the Corporate Business Travel ("Travel") Insurance Policy

- Travelling overseas on academic activities
- Insurance coverage will only be valid for the first 183 days of the trip
- Details of coverage under Travel Insurance are available at [https://intraweb.hku.hk/local/finance/student/insurance.html](https://intraweb.hku.hk/local/finance/student/insurance.html)
- A Certificate of Travel Insurance can be obtained by submitting the eForm on the FEO website to the FEO Insurance Team for processing (5 working days)

Reminder

- Check the coverage (region, duration of stay) on the insurance plan
- Save all receipts and medical reports for use when filing a claim
- Keep 24-Hour Emergency Telephone Service Hotline easily accessible and call when in doubt
Additional Insurance

Please check if an additional insurance is required from the host university or country

☑️ Health & Medical Insurance, Accident Insurance, Liability Insurance etc.
☑️ consult with a private health insurer of your choice to obtain a policy appropriate for international studies
☑️ Check with the host institution whether the insurance policy on the insurance plan is sufficient and acceptable

☑️ insurance coverage (must cover urgent cases of sickness and accidents, psychological treatment and, if applicable, chronic diseases, pregnancy and delivery etc.)
☑️ period of validity of insurance
☑️ geographical area in which your insurance is valid
☑️ insured amounts

If you are planning to take separate/occasional short travel trip(s) for leisure purposes when you are abroad, make your own travel insurance arrangement at your own cost to ensure that you are properly and adequately covered by a comprehensive insurance policy.
Immigration

- Ensure you have a valid passport
- Apply for student visa and/or Residence Permit (if applicable)
  - Check with host university and relevant consulates/Migration Agency of host country
  - Approval of applications is subject to changes in government policies
  - Processing Time

TIPS

- Check immigration authorities for entry and exit policy and requirement
- Bring a hard copy of your Admission Letter and Decision Letter from Migration Agency to show the airline and immigration officers if needed
Beware of Potential Scams

- Scammers might try to take advantage of students looking for exchange opportunities.
- Suspicious organizations might request substantial payments be made to designated bank accounts in support of exchange applications.
- Be wary of any programme that requires payment upfront or promises unrealistic benefits.
- If you suspect a fraudulent call, report it directly to the HK Police by calling the 24-hour consultation hotline at 18222.
- Report any suspicious activity to IAO, Faculty/Department office, and Hong Kong Police Force.
Prioritizing Safety and Mental Health

➢ Always follow the safety guidelines
➢ Report any suspicious behavior or concerns
➢ Recognize the signs of stress, anxiety, and depression
  ❖ Maintain a healthy work-life balance
  ❖ Engage in self-care and stress-reducing activities
➢ Seeking Help and Support
  ❖ Reach out to friends, family, or institutions for support
  ❖ Utilize available campus resources and counseling services
  ❖ HKU Cedars Counselling and Person Enrichment Section (CoPE): [Counselling & Psychological Services](#)
Prepare Yourself

➢ Prepare yourself as an ambassador of **HKU** and **Hong Kong**
➢ You are the representative
➢ Know HKU and Hong Kong through you – **window**
Upon Arrival
Upon Arrival

- Update your loved ones
- Report your arrival to IAO and the host university
  - Submit Confirmation of Arrival to IAO – (required for scholarship)
- Book your Residence Permit appointment (if applicable)
- Discuss any changes to course selection with your home Faculty
- Check orientation activities for international students
- Check the local emergency number and the location of health centers
- Open a bank account if needed
While Abroad

➢ Familiarise yourself with your new environment and embrace the new culture

➢ Get a feel for the academic culture

➢ Obey the laws of your host country and respect local customs. Note views and attitudes towards alcohol, drugs, smoking, sexuality, etc.

➢ Keep valuables close to you

➢ Stay healthy, Work hard and Enjoy!

Report any urgent matters or emergencies to your family, host university and IAO immediately
3. Leaving Your Host Institution
Before Leaving your Host University

- Settle all the outstanding fees with the host institution and accommodation
- Apply for your official transcript – for credit transfer and postgraduate studies (if applicable)
- Show your appreciation of your host institution

Returning to Hong Kong

- Submit your exchange report to IAO to receive your deposit refund
- Join our activities and share your experience with others
• Expect the unexpected
• Be flexible and resilient
• Don’t hesitate to explore
• Take every opportunity, be brave and step out of your comfort zone
Pre-Departure Notes for Outgoing Students from Cedars

https://www.cedars.hku.hk/nonlocal/publication/Pre-departureNotes2024.pdf

• HKU Mentorship

https://www.mentorship.hku.hk/daao/
Hong Kong Immigration Department - Assistance to Hong Kong Resident Unit (AHU)

- ways to seek assistance
- Loss of Travel Document/ Mainland Travel Permit
- Travel Advice & Tips

GET IN TOUCH

EMAIL

goabroad@hku.hk

WEBSITE

https://intlaffairs.hku.hk/

Address

International Affairs Office
9/F, Knowles Building,
The University of Hong Kong
Pokfulam, Hong Kong