

Faculty of Law, The University of Hong Kong (People's Republic of China)

1. Overall impression

The University of Hong Kong is a prestigious University in Hong Kong as well as in mainland China. The offered classes have an international focus - but students with a high interest in Chinese law will also have many options. Especially the Corporate and Financial Law program does often include subjects with a strong Chinese focus.

Hong Kong as a city is amazing. The mixture of a dense city life with around 7-8 million inhabitants and the beautiful nature that Hong Kong has to offer does shape and improve your daily life in and around Hong Kong. Hong Kong broadens one's intellectual and cultural horizon.

2. Making preparations (e.g. administrative matters, finding information)

What you have to check, organize and be aware of before you fly to HK:

1. Visa (that needs its time; be aware that Hong Kong will send you your visa confirmation and the visa which has to be put in the passport per post - that needs its time)
2. Confirmation of residence/ Wohnsitzbestätigung (to open a Hong Kong bank account - cannot be older than 3 months, preferably HSBC)
3. Book your flights in advance and look for cheap offers (discounted prices up to 50%) from Swiss and Cathay Pacific (an HK Airline that also has a direct flight from Zurich to Hong Kong and departures around the same time as the Swiss flight)
4. Make some passport photos (used for MTR card ("octopus card"), Visa applications for other countries, etc.)

3. Contacts/Responsibilities (e.g. important contact persons at the Partner University and Faculty)

Pauline Wong: plwongjp@hku.hk; Academic Services Office; administrative matters such as transcripts etc. All important contact information can be found online via HKU Moodle (the web program the University of Hong Kong uses)

4. Housing / Finding accommodation

on the campus (1 or 2 bedroom apartments) - they are very small, but very cheap (for Hong Kong)

with a personal agent - finding an apartment on Hong Kong Island is often very expensive and the flats are not too big. Students have to be prepared to pay between 7000 HKD and 20'000 HKD (900 CHF-2500 CHF)

5. Arrival

flights can be bought for a reasonable price via Swiss or Cathay Pacific (direct flight ZRH-HK).

Every month Swiss uploads special offers to fly to HK, during this time flights are the cheapest (around CHF 400-600).

At the airport there are several paths that lead to Hong Kong:

1. MTR Express; straight from the Airport to Kowloon and HK Island (approx. 120 HKD)
2. Buses: they can take you up to HK Island, Central for approx. 50 HKD

6. Telephone (e.g. costs, carriers)

Pre Paid sim card (e.g. China Mobile; CHK) - unlimited internet for 100 HKD per month (10-12 CHF).

7. Bank account

there are several international banks in Hong Kong available to open a bank account. I recommend HSBC. The account should be opened at the big/main HSBC building in Central (on Hong Kong Island). To open a bank account as a non-HK citizen you have to be prepared. Passport, Student / Visa confirmation, confirmation of residence (Wohnsitzbestätigung) from Switzerland which cannot be older than 2-3 months.

You should tackle this issue as soon as possible after your arrival in Hong Kong (because of the validity of your confirmation of residence)

To open a bank account can be a struggle and takes its time. Some students do not open a bank account in HK and use their Swiss debit card - this results in several additional fees.

8. Transport (e.g. from Switzerland, to the University)

from the HK Airport to Hong Kong (Island) - take the bus for around 40 HKD or the MTR Airport Express (120 HKD; fastest way - 25 minutes).

in HK itself students always use the MTR (even though taxis are also really cheap). the MTR is the metro line of Hong Kong where you need to get a so called "Octopus Card". Students should apply at the beginning of the semester at an MTR station (information counter) for a "Student Octopus Card" - so they can profit from a discount of up to 50% (every second ride). This is highly recommended. (to

the best of my knowledge the deadline to hand in the application for a student octopus card is around end of October).

9. General information about the Partner Faculty and student life

The faculty and the campus itself is very nice and modern. there are many libraries which have long opening hours. There is a starbucks, subway and many other canteens that are often opened until 21.00-22.00.

10. Teaching and studying at the Partner Faculty

(e.g. program structure, methodology, exams, etc.)

You can choose from a wide variety of programs; specialized LLM programs such as Corporate and Financial Law, Arbitration, Human Rights, IP/IT, Chinese Law or the general stream. Due to this wide variety of programs HKU can offer many different classes. Students should be aware that not all listed classes will actually be held (due to a lack of interests from students, health conditions of professors, other duties etc.)

I recommend to choose the CFL (Corporate and Financial Law) program is very good. Mainly chinese students attend these classes and there is not such a huge variety of classes to choose from. Even though the online lecture overview (for CFL) shows many possible lecture that are held in the first as well as in the second semester, students have to be aware that it is possible that some classes will not be held due to a lack of interest from students, or that classes have a limit (between 15-30 students per class). Therefore, it is not sure that a student can attend the classes he/she wishes to (definitely an argument in favor of the general stream).

11. City (e.g. cultural activities, sports, discounts, nightlife, must-sees, short trips, etc.)

there is a lot to do in Hong Kong. You can go hiking, swimming, to the beach, surfing, wakeboarding, etc. the possibilities are endless. While going for a hike or an untouched beach you feel like you would be on your vacation somewhere in Asia. The city itself is filled with pubs, clubs, karaoke bars, restaurants (endless opportunities).

The food is my favorite attribute of Hong Kong. You find the best Asian and European food there. from very cheap (3CHF per meal or even less), to three Michelin Star restaurants.