A Year of Exchange program
2017
At Macquarie University, Australia



By

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Background

My name is Nutcha Hankamolsiri. I am a fourth year student at Thammasat University in year 2018. I am majoring in accounting under the faculty of commerce and accountancy. In 2017, I have accepted the offer from Macquarie university, Australia to participate in a full year exchange program, which started from July 2017 to July 2018. Prior to the commencement of the program, there are three main achievements I expect to gain from the experience. Firstly, I would like to improve my communication skill, especially, in foreign language. Secondly, I aim to learn more about different culture and build up my ability to adapt to new environment. Thirdly, I want to further explore about my field of study in the country in order to gain a wider insight of the industry. I would discuss more of my experience in the two areas as shown below.

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1.Language and learning

The program allowed me to utilise my English in a more practical manner with better accuracy. I am required to make contact with many international and foreign agencies using professional language in English. I have improved my reading, speaking and writing skills tremendously. Moreover, I found that people including friends, coordinating staffs and professors in both Thailand and Australia are very encouraging and supportive. Therefore, you are motivated to practice your communication skills without the fear of failure. I have learned that making failure is another way to learn about your mistake and improve. Another extremely important skill that I have learned from the program is the skill of living.To many people, they may have never lived by themselves due to various reasons and I am one of them. Being an international student, you may have to be away from your family and live on your own. I have learned skills like cooking, living with others respectfully and being more responsible for my own matters. Lastly, learning skill is one of the most important skill. In any situation, the ability to learn and response are highly useful not only for personal but professional life as well. The program helped me learning to learn and not limit myself from the new opportunity.





2.Environment

Australia is a multicultural country. Although, culture difference is bigger than I thought it would be, however, it is not significant. With many international students of multiple backgrounds, fitting into the environment was not too challenging. I found myself fitting into the culture and people including both native and international ones very well. Educational institutions in tertiary level in Australia does not require students to wear uniform. Furthermore, online lecture and systematic enrollment platform are provided. These make studying experience more convenient and easier for students to conform. However, I found that some values in Thai culture among university students are more prominent than my experience in the program.These values include the upper-lower classmen system and the general Thai values of being mindful of others. They establish stronger bond and teamwork among students, especially, in the context that students have to work with others. At Macquarie university,there are many clubs and associations that you are welcomed to join, including Thai club as well. Furthermore, students and staffs are very attentive for your well being. You are encouraged to seek for help or support whether for physically or mentally matters at the university.





In my view, I found the lifestyle in Australia very convenient, considering the transportation and systematic management. The cost of living is largely different, however, I managed to get a job which supported my financial situation. Coming into the country with a student visa, I am allowed to work with the limit of 20 hours per fortnight. Working while studying have taught me time management, professional interaction with others and work-life balance. With the opportunity provided for me, I was more encouraged to explore this beautiful country, with new friends who make my journey super amazing. The semesters in Australia are planned out differently from Thailand. However, it does not affect much of the overall study experience. Being an exchange student in Australia allows you to receive benefit that normal international students do not. Concession discount in stores, transportation and other students' privileges are examples of this.





In my study field, accounting, the differences in principles and concepts of the accounting widen my vision and give me a bigger picture of the business and industry in global scale. Also, I learned more about the unique business setting in Australia. I find this very advantageous as to learn the differences, especially, in business field where you may have to deal with those distinctive aspects areas of business in your career in the future.

Travelling in Australia was very enjoyable and there is so much more I have not explored. I will definitely explore more if I had a chance.I would recommend the exchange program for everyone. Not only for learning but breaking your limit and searching for possibility. I have grown so much as a student and a person.I can say that my exchange experience have changed my life and the way I see the world and myself. I have learned to learn, experience and take a big step out of my comfort zone. I would like to thank you everyone, my friends, coordinating staffs, professors and family that help me achieve so much with an awesome experience. My tip for others who is interested in doing exchange program in Australia or anywhere, I would say, “ Life time experience is here, grab it”.

