

Dear Mr. van der Lee,

Ever since I first met a person from a totally different culture I have always had a strong interest in other cultures. I was thirteen back at that time, and my neighbours housed a 17-year old student from Hong Kong. We became friends and by talking to him I got a totally different perspective of the world. He inspired me to think about inter-cultural differences, and how those differences could influence my future life. In addition to that, having a great interest in the subjects Economics and Management & Organization in high school I did not have a hard time choosing my study: I wanted to study International Business Administration, keeping in mind that this would give me the exciting opportunity to study abroad in my third year. The time that this dream becomes reality is coming closer, and by means of this letter I would like to apply for an exchange placement at The Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Why should I be selected?

In my opinion, an exchange is an amazing once in a lifetime opportunity, which will contribute to my development in many ways. First of all, becoming more independent is a main goal for me. Wherever I have been in my life, my parents have always been relatively nearby, ready to help me if problems would occur. When living far beyond Dutch borders this obviously is not the case, which challenges me to take care of myself. I know I will face this challenge full of enthusiasm, as I am always determined to get the most out of myself and out of life. Secondly, going on exchange gives me the chance to further improve my English. Even though our study is fully in English, when there are no internationals participating in conversations between students, most students unfortunately tend to talk Dutch all the time. As a result of this I have not yet developed my English to the level I desire, since one learns a language best by speaking it a lot. My destination is a former British colony where the official languages are Chinese and English, and therefore English is the language me and most students share. We are thus forced to talk English all the time, which enables me to further develop my English skills. Furthermore, experiencing the educational differences on exchange compared to here will allow me to get a different view on the learning process, and makes me able to work with future international colleagues more efficiently. Last, but certainly not least, by going on exchange I can get deep insights into another culture, which enriches my life and gives me a different perspective of the world. I have thought a lot about which culture would be the most valuable for me to get well acquainted with regarding my study plan and career plans, on which I will elaborate later in this letter.

Why Hong Kong?

In Asia, economic growth is accompanied by major investment in scientific research and a growing role in international science. Hong Kong being one of the Asian Tigers has reached a highly developed economy, and placing three universities in the Top 50 of the 2013/2014 QS World University Rankings, Hong Kong has reached a prominent place in international science. As I am always striving to get the best out of myself, I am very keen on the fact that Hong Kong offers me universities with such excellent educational opportunities. Furthermore, going on exchange to Hong Kong builds on what I plan for my future and is of high additional value to my study plan. The universities in Hong Kong offer me the opportunity to take courses which give me insights in business in China and the Chinese economy. Regarding my thesis, I would like to write about cultural diversity in business between China and Western cultures related to supply chain management, in which the experience obtained on exchange will be of great use. After I graduate I want to apply for an internship at a multinational in China before proceeding my studies with a master in Supply Chain Management. Ultimately, when looking at my career plans, I would like to work at a consultancy agency combining my knowledge of Western business and Chinese business, advising Western companies expanding to the enormously growing Chinese market and advising Chinese companies expanding to Western markets. Thus, based on my planned thesis, internship, master, and career plans, going on exchange to Hong Kong

builds a strong foundation for what I plan for my future, as it will give me direct insights into the Chinese culture and can help me making contacts in China which might provide me with an internship opportunity and further career chances.

Why those three universities?

Being very enthusiastic about Hong Kong, I am delighted that Tilburg University has partnerships with four prestigious universities located in Hong Kong. All universities offer what I seek, but for me *The Chinese University of Hong Kong* really stands out, and thus is my first choice. The main reason I chose The Chinese University of Hong Kong are the specific courses that it offers, as those perfectly fit my study plan. Amongst the courses I would like to follow are ‘Business Environment of China’ and ‘China Business,’ which are perfect to gain insights into the Chinese business culture. I furthermore would like to follow the course ‘Global Logistics Management,’ which I think is a valuable addition to my expected master in Supply Chain Management. In addition to the wide range of interesting courses The Chinese University of Hong Kong offers, it is also a top university in Hong Kong and Asia which combines modernism with time-honoured traditions. Therefore this university exactly offers the excellent education I am seeking for. Furthermore, as I am a sportive person I am very enthusiastic about the numerous sports this university offers at their sports facilities. Additionally, The Chinese University of Hong Kong’s location appeals to me very much. Due to its location quite far away from the city centre the air is less polluted, and the green surroundings both on- and off-campus make the campus of The Chinese University of Hong Kong simply astonishing. Another big advantage regarding its location is that it is situated in the mainland part of Hong Kong relatively close to China, which is much influenced by the Chinese culture, whereas coming closer to Hong Kong Island the culture is more Western influenced. Since I want to gain deep insights in the Chinese culture, this by location determined aspect is very important to me.

Hong Kong being the city that I am very enthusiastic about also determined my second choice. *City University of Hong Kong* also offers a great range of courses which perfectly fit my study plan, and its location also appeals to me, in a different way than The Chinese University of Hong Kong though. Since City University of Hong Kong is located quite central in Hong Kong, studying at this university will give me the opportunity to live in the middle of a city which is alive 24/7, which makes a great experience. Additionally, at City University of Hong Kong people have a high motivation to do academically well as well as the will to participate in social life outside of the university, which I think makes a good balance. My third choice is *Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST)*. HKUST Business School provides world-class business education, and the courses offered are also very valuable for my future plans. Furthermore, because of its location somewhat out of the city centre HKUST has an amazing campus with great surroundings and great sports facilities.

What makes me a proper representative of Tilburg University?

I will be a great ambassador for Tilburg University as I am very satisfied with the level of my BSc and its lecturers. As I had solely positive experiences with my program and Tilburg University, I would like to share that with the people I meet on exchange. Furthermore, as an active member of Asset | International Business Management, playing sports at the Tilburg University sports centre, and being actively involved in Tilburg’s student life, I will be able to give a lot of insights to other students in Hong Kong about everything studying at Tilburg University has to offer.

To conclude, I truly believe that the experience I will gain on exchange adds an enormous value to my personality and will build a strong foundation for my career goals.

Yours sincerely,
