The research was done with the help from Prof. Ng and his post-doctorate students. We met to discuss schedules and results every morning. Based on the progress, work was allocated and carried out under the supervision of one of the post-doctorate students every day. After laboratory work was completed for the day, my teammates and I would go out for dinner, shopping or visit local attractions. Most of the days, we ended work late and would just go back to the hostel and had dinner together in the dining hall. We did most of the written work like laboratory reports and posters together in the university library where we could access a variety of resources to facilitate work. The whole team comprised friends from UK, US, Canada and Singapore. We had meaningful interactions that deepened our understanding of each other’s cultures and backgrounds and promoted inter-disciplinary exchanges as we were all studying different degrees.

I have gained an understanding of the academic and social environment in Hong Kong, a very traditional and densely populated Chinese city that is full of opportunities for tertiary education and career progression. The research programme allowed me to explore advanced laboratory work, which I would not have encountered in my course and acquired both soft skills and hard skills. I observed how people in Hong Kong worked and communicated during daily life and improved my Cantonese. Now I appreciate inter-cultural interactions more since working in a cosmopolitan city like Hong Kong requires one to mingle with people of different backgrounds on a daily basis. I may consider to work or study in Hong Kong in the future as I feel this city combines the best from China and the West.

The SURE Programme Scholarship certainly offset a large portion of my financial burden when staying in Hong Kong. I felt very motivated when I knew that I got this scholarship. This scholarship prompted me to work harder and put in a greater effort as I felt it was an honour to be selected as a recipient of the SURE Programme Scholarship; I must grasp this opportunity to further my scientific knowledge. I have had a deep insight into how graduate research is like and realised what to do to better prepare myself for the next level. This programme ignited my interest in biomedical research and also prompted me to explore academic opportunities outside of Singapore. I made a lot of friends from Europe and North America during the programme. Through our interactions, I found out that there were a lot of career opportunities available in other countries that offered greater prospects. I will research on job and academic opportunities in other countries in the next two years. This certainly highlighted to me the importance of early career planning during undergraduate studies which I will benefit from greatly in the future. I also got to visit Hong Kong Science Park which was home to many start-ups, and I was very inspired by speeches of a few start-up founders who introduced us to the world of new opportunities that await after we graduate. I understand the concept of start-ups, its associated challenges and opportunities better now.