

# SEP Report

## 1. Student Information

Faculty/Major	School of Design and Environment / Project and Facilities Management
Host University	Tongji University
NUS Semester and Year of Exchange (eg. AY14/15 Semester 1)	AY 15/16 Semester 2 / 2016

## 2. Study at Host University

Please provide information on the academics at your host university:

- Studying or learning culture at your host university. How were classes conducted?
- What did you like most or dislike most about the academics at your host University?
- Advice on module registration and module mapping

Classes at Tongji University only included lectures that were conducted in classrooms, and run for 1 hour and a half. Lessons there were all conducted in Chinese. We are graded through assignments, class participation and examinations. For assignments, we are required to write in Chinese but for certain modules, foreign students were allowed to submit in English. Certain modules also included field trips, and we were allowed to visit different companies and learn more about their operations.

There were no soft or hard copy versions of the lecture notes given before or during the lessons, only a few weeks before the examinations, so classes were a little difficult to follow, especially when they entirely in Chinese. There seems to be no instructions for foreign students regarding the school portal, on how to access certain features (e.g. downloading notes, lesson details) so it was rather difficult to navigate around. Teachers do not use the school portal to disseminate information, instead some modules may have a common email or common social media account (e.g. QQ, WeChat), so it was rather confusing at times to check all the different accounts every time for information or notes.

Module registration could only be done a week before actual lessons commence, so in our case, we arrived in Shanghai more than a week earlier, so it was difficult to do module registration because we had no access to the school Internet. We had to purchase the access to the school wi-fi while were there but we had to wait for a week for it to be activated. We did the module registration in the Starbucks café on campus. Module mapping was not an issue because we had our seniors' advice, and we just had to take the modules that were already mapped by the seniors. Module information was not available online, so if there are other modules that were not taken by seniors before, we had to send an email directly to the teachers to request for it.

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Please list the courses that you took during SEP. (Please take note that the list of modules available to exchange students at the host university are subject to change. This table merely serves as reference.)

Host University			NUS Equivalent		
Module code	Course title	ECTS Credit	Module code	Course title	Modular credit
02028301	Green Building	1.5	PF4305	Green Development	4.0
01086301	Corporate Strategy and Risk Management	2	PF3204	Project Risk Management	4.0
01090601	Quality Management in Public Service	2	PF2203	Quality and Productivity Management	4.0
08013501	Special Building Materials	2	PF2303 /PF2504	Materials Technology	4.0
46002102	Sustainable Development with Ecotourism	2	Dummy code 2741		4.0

## 2. Accommodation

**What kind of accommodation did you stay in during your exchange (eg. on campus / off campus)?**

**Would you recommend this accommodation to future outgoing students?**

**Do you have any other suggestions?**

I stayed on campus, I believe it was a building where most of the foreign students live in, and we were allowed to choose between staying in a one-person room or two-persons room. I chose to stay in a single room, and although the dormitory is located rather far from the classrooms, the facilities provided in the room were adequate. The room was equipped with a personal bathroom, so it was very convenient. There is no refrigerator or kitchen in the building and cooking is not allowed in the room. I would recommend this accommodation to future outgoing students because it is one of the better ones on the campus. Laundry can be done in the common room and is on a pay-per-use basis, the machines only accept coins, so it's advised to keep RMB 1 coins.

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## 3. Activities during SEP

**Were there any activities organized by school/student group/external organizations at your host university which you would like to recommend to other students?**

There were several activities organized by students, like to help foreign students interact with the local students and it is recommended to participate in those, to help to adapt to the local culture.

## 4. Cost of Living

**Please provide an estimation of how much money you spent during your SEP?**

**Please list travel expenses separately.**

SGD\$5000 not inclusive of travel expenses

## 5. Challenges

**Did you face any challenging issues during your SEP stint? How did you overcome it/them?**

It was rather difficult to adapt to the local culture at first, especially when everything had to be done in a different language. For example, administrative matters such as setting up a bank account and purchasing a mobile SIM card. Even though reading and understanding is not a problem, communicating in Chinese was something to get used to. However, interacting with the local students and staff would help also, so it is recommended to.

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## 6. Overall SEP Experience

**Please write one paragraph about your exchange experience and attach some photos that represent your exchange experience.**

The programme allowed me to travel to Shanghai to attend school there and I have benefitted both personally and academically. I feel that it is a valuable chance to be able to attend a school overseas, to get to be immersed in and experience a foreign culture. It was a great learning experience to be able to spend around 5 months there. Not only the lessons were important in the experience, to be able to gain cultural knowledge from living in a foreign country is also beneficial. I gained a lot of useful experiences and valuable knowledge from the local students there and from travelling around in China. Apart from spending time in school, I can also spend time discovering new areas and learning interesting things. I feel that studying in a foreign place will make me more independent and responsible in managing my student life as I am living away from the comforts of home.

## 7. Suggestions for future outgoing students

**Please share any other suggestions for future outgoing students.**

There will definitely be a period of culture shock at the beginning but I feel that it would get better as you live and understand their culture better. It would also be very helpful to make friends with the local students as this would aid in getting yourself more adapted to the local environment.

As my SEP period is from March to July, there is a huge weather shift, but it's recommended to bring more winter clothes, as it is still very cold from the March to May period. However, since online shopping is very convenient in China, students can just purchase of the internet.

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