Crossing cultures and generations…

Overseas Mentorship Programme

Since 2000, more than 240 alumni and friends have participated in the Overseas Mentorship Programme, guiding and supporting more than 1,500 students during their time on overseas exchange. HKU alumni offshore chapters have greatly contributed to supporting overseas mentors and mentees, living up to the spirit of one big HKU family.

If you wish to know more about mentoring students on exchange in your country, please contact the HKU Mentorship Programme Office (mentor@hku.hk).

LONDON

Mentor: Winnie Mak (BEng(EComE) 2003)
Mentee: Darren Wu (BEng(CivE) Year 3)

“My mentor, Ms Winnie Mak, is the founder of Chinese Viewfinder in London. It took me two hours to get to London from my host university, the University of Nottingham. Although I was not able to meet my mentor that often, I cherished the time I spent with her.

Every time I was in London, my mentor took me to different places such as Tower Bridge, Shakespeare’s Globe Theatre, and St. Paul’s Cathedral. She was willing to share with me her experience in life. She also took me to a meeting of The London Business School Public Speaking Club. She hoped to raise my interest in public speaking, and so improve my speaking skills.

I am glad to have a kind and generous mentor like Winnie. She always shares her opinions and gives me valuable advice about my career plans. I am sure that every mentee could learn a lot from her!”

“I really admire her ability and courage to start a business in London. I appreciate the enthusiasm she has towards her career. Her experience encourages others to pursue their dreams and make plans for their future.”
SINGAPORE

Mentor: Travis Lee Darrow 戴華斯 (MBA 2011)
Mentee: Stanley Pang 彭世昌 (BBA(IS) Year 3)

“I have never expected to have such an active and energetic mentor. Travis has helped me a lot in both my career plans and my personal growth. When I was still on my exchange in Singapore, we met up every week, sometimes twice a week. During the meetings, he introduced me to a spectrum of professionals and also assisted my internship-seeking process through which I got to know professionals from Google and other multinational companies. Thanks to him, I started my exploration journey on LinkedIn - the adult Facebook. It was a really great breakthrough for me to put myself forward and meet strangers on LinkedIn. Throughout the learning stage, Travis gave me substantial support and thus I have had amazing experiences. Now, I can stand on my own and expand my network by myself. I am really thankful for the Mentorship Programme through which I met my best possible mentor. He is active, thought-provoking and friendly. Although I have left Singapore, we remain in touch and I look forward to his next visit to Hong Kong.”

TOKYO

Mentor: K Y Ho 何國營 (BA 1984)
Mentees: Oswald Law 羅健業 (BA(Literary Studies) Year 3)  Helen To 陶曉彤 (BSc Year 3)

“The importance of the Mentorship Programme is that it offers an interactive platform for mentors and mentees. I have also learnt a lot from mentees from different disciplines. This is not only a transition of heritage and tradition from seniors to juniors, but also a channel to hear and accept creative thinking from new generations. Oswald Law and Helen To recently became my mentees. They come from the disciplines of Law and Japanese Studies respectively. Helen was also a member of the Hong Kong SAR Figure Skating Team.”

VANCOUVER

Mentor: Vince Ko 高愷琳 (BA 1981) (centre)
Mentee: Sarina Ng 吳翠玲 (BSocSc Year 2) (right)

“She helped me realise there are many possibilities in my future.”

“I have been a mentor with the Mentorship Programme for more than eight years... this is an excellent way to enrich the lives of both mentors and mentees.”

“She helped me realise there are many possibilities in my future.”

“I have never treated you as an immature youngster. On the contrary, we are friends.”
SCOTLAND

Mentor: Professor Sally Stewart  
Mentee: Alan Poon 潘焯匡 (BA Year 3)

“A week before I visited my mentor Professor Stewart, the former Prime Minister and a giant of the Conservative Party, Mrs Margaret Thatcher, had died. This stirred up intense discussions in the UK. In Scotland, the discussions were pretty fierce because generally the Tories are not welcome there due to their contradictory policies in the 1980s, and when a lot of Scots lost their jobs.

Before I went to the Stewarts’ home, I had already sensed the hostility from some Scots towards the Iron Lady and the Tories, which made me pretty uneasy. Mrs Thatcher’s funeral was scheduled during my visit to the Stewarts’ home. Professor Stewart’s son, Rory, is a Conservative MP so he had to go to St. Paul’s Cathedral to attend the funeral.

That morning my mentor woke up very early to watch the live broadcast and in her study there lay lots of newspapers, from the left-wing to the right-wing, all reporting on the coming funeral and commenting on the life of the Iron Lady. Samson, an HKU student who came with me, and I were both immersed in the solemn atmosphere. That night Rory was on the radio to talk about what he felt at the funeral. Professor Stewart was so eager to listen to her son that she simply “invited” everyone into her study. Rory made some interesting yet balanced comments, which made his mother very pleased. I think this was the great way to learn about Scotland, as I was able to experience first-hand one of the biggest issues in the UK in 2013 and I could hear the points of views of the left and the right. I feel very lucky.

Mr and Professor Stewart have a lot of energy and they are very eager to learn about and talk to youngsters. Professor Stewart uses a tablet and Kindle even at her age and Mr Stewart, 92, drove me all the way from his house to the train station. He was so cool! It was only me who was nervous. I was worried about him so when I was on the train, I called Professor Stewart to make sure he made his way home safely.”

HONG KONG

Mentor: Philip Fan 范仁鶴  
Mentee: Sara Zimmermann (Arts, German exchange student)

“I am really very thankful for the experience with my mentor. Mr Fan is a very gentle, warm-hearted and impressive man. Every time we meet he smiles and is very generous in terms of time and about sharing his experiences. He always asks what time would suit me and is very attentive. When he heard about my bachelor thesis, which is about Hong Kong International Airport, he immediately offered me help and arranged a meeting with the famous author Dr Philip Chen 陳南祿 (BA 1977; DipManStud 1983; MBA 1984), who wrote "Great Cities of the World". From this meeting I was able to take so much input, advice and directions that I could only wish for. I feel the project has a very good start now and I look forward continuing work on it.

My mentor even introduced his family to us and I can tell they are all very inspiring and happy people. He talks with me a lot about historical and cultural topics, and I am always learning something new. Every meeting is very joyful and funny as well. Thank you very much for being my mentor, Mr Fan!”

“Although he has been active as a mentor for many years, he maintains contact with every mentee and treats everyone of us as someone special.”
“We came to be like a big warm family and will unite to face challenges and embrace success in the new year!”

HONG KONG

Mentor: Ir Anthony Kwan 關肇芳 (MSc(Eng) 1991)
Mentee: Winds Zhang 張文翥 (BEng(CivE) Year 3) (centre)

“Over the winter break, our mentors Anthony Kwan 關肇芳 (1st right), Chen Kin-wah 陳健華 (2nd right), Albert Lee 李欽恩 (3rd left) and the four of us visited Tai O fishing village together. We explored the unusual structure of the stilt houses, the new manually operated drawbridge, the local specialty market, and the shops decorated with traditional Chinese painting and calligraphy that have the feeling of the ages. Perhaps decades later, the shops will still be there while the mentees have gone on to become mentors. Though it was quite a cold day, the gathering was very warm because mentors cared for us like fathers.”

December 13, 2013
Private Viewing Party of Botticelli’s Venus (ca.1482)
An exclusive private viewing and guided appreciation of the Italian Renaissance masterpiece for mentors and mentees at HKU’s University Museum and Art Gallery.

February 20, 2014
Visit to CoCoon
Co-Founder Mr Theodore Ma 馬衡 (MSc(ECom&IComp) 2009) gave mentors and mentees an exclusive tour of CoCoon, an entrepreneurship exchange platform, and the chance to witness the fighting spirit of start-ups at the Pitch Night Semi-final that followed the tour.

www.mentorship.hku.hk