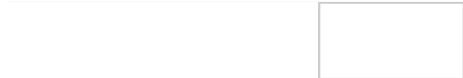


**MBA**

## Hong Kong offers chance of rapid career advancement for MBAs

MBA students, graduates and a professor share their own views on Hong Kong



SEPTEMBER 28, 2017 Jonathan Moules

**2 comments**

The former British colony of Hong Kong offers unique opportunities for MBA students. It is one of the busiest ports in the world. Global banks, consultancies and other multinationals have large offices in the territory. It borders China's special economic zone of Shenzhen, China's hardware manufacturing hub. The territory is rightly known as the gateway to China.

From a personal point of view, though, MBA students report that it is relatively easy to obtain a student visa and to stay on and work after completing their degree. This means they are better able to achieve the rapid career advancement that can be on offer in such a fast-moving environment.

MBA students, graduates and a professor associated with two of [HK's top-ranked schools](#) share their own views about what it has been like to live and study in this special administrative region of China.

### Gerardo Salandra, MBA graduate, CUHK



Gerardo Salandra. MBA graduate, CUHK

Moving to Hong Kong to study for an MBA was a good decision for Gerardo Salandra. After graduating from [CUHK Business School](#) he has taken advantage of the city's ambitions to nurture

high growth start-ups by launching Rocketbots, a tech venture building AI-powered chatbot systems.

“Something that Hong Kong has that is special, is a mix from east and west,” he says. “In Hong Kong, people work hard but are innovative. It is a mix of two extreme poles in one place and that’s fascinating.”

## Ishita Dikshit, MBA student, CUHK



Ishita Dikshit, MBA student, CUHK

Ishita Dikshit has just started on the MBA programme at [CUHK](#), having moved to Hong Kong from her home town, New Delhi. The biggest shock was the cost of living in Hong Kong, with travel and food more than double the price she would pay in India’s capital city.

“The cost of living is definitely high, compared to India,” she says, but adds: “If you end up working in Hong Kong you’ll end up earning more, so maybe that will compensate for the expenses at the moment.”

## Sam Dash, MBA student, HKUST



Sam Dash is midway through the full-time MBA course at the [Hong Kong University of Science and Technology \(HKUST\)](#), having moved from London to Hong Kong to find work in corporate finance. He studied chemistry as an undergraduate at Imperial College, and is seeking a business education to improve his chances of promotion in financial services.

Although he has moved between two cities that both have an international outlook, Mr Dash says his Hong Kong experience has made him more aware of how people in Asia might hold different views on economics and politics compared to the opinions he encountered in UK.

He also values the lifestyle offered by his new home, and says he enjoys hiking in the mountains that surround the city centre and has joined a dragon boat team.

One other advantage to Hong Kong, he says, is that it truly is a 24-hour city. The university library never shuts during term time, and you can order food at any hour of the day or night when studying late.

“Here you never have to worry about a place being closed,” he says. “It does enable you to be a bit more flexible when trying to get work done.”

**Stephen Nason, professor, HKUST**



Stephen Nason moved from Los Angeles to take up a teaching post at [HKUST](#) shortly before the UK handover of Hong Kong in 1997. He planned to stay for three years, imagining at the time that this could make him a Chinese expert as an academic back in the US. He remained, he says, because he finds his work as a teacher and researcher stimulating and because enjoys the Hong Kong way of life. Having said that, he also has concerns about Hong Kong's future in the wake of the Hong Kong democracy protests in 2014 and the China's subsequent tightening of control.

"When I came I was impressed by the dynamism here," he says, adding that "Hong Kong has always been ranked as one of the freest free-market societies in the world. This is a place where businesses come to do business. And I think that is largely still the case, but now there is more concern about how much is Hong Kong being governed for itself and being governed for the mainland."

Mark Wise, MBA graduate, HKUST



Mark Wise always intended to build his career in Asia and studied for his MBA at the [business school of HKUST](#), having completed an undergraduate degree in finance, with a minor in Chinese. Since graduating he has remained in Hong Kong, taking a strategy job with one of the big four consultancy firms.

It has been easy to meet and make friends in Hong Kong, partly because the city is home to so many expats, he says. However, learning the language has been critical, helped by the mandatory mandarin classes for all MBA students at HKUST.

“Anyone who comes to new place and makes an effort that’s appreciated,” he says. His best piece of advice? “Immerse yourself.”

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