

National ChengChi University IMBA Dual Degree Report

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1. Applying to ESCP Paris

For applicants who wish to go for ESCP Paris, the most important thing to keep in mind should be the English ability prove. Unlike the rest of the dual degree partner schools, ESCP Paris required us to registered as Master in Management student 2 school years. This also means the application ESCP Paris dual degree started around summer vacation and the decisions will be out by September. Students will have to be able to provide their English ability to prove before they can have a decision. In my case, I provided my Bachelor degree from the USA as my evidence of English ability.

Students should go online to ESCP Aurion system to fill out the online application with their basic information and provide necessary documents for the school. The system available time is usually around mid-August and IMBA office will also have notice for you. Applicants who are interested in ESCP Paris are suggested to keep in touch with the office to keep track. After they have exam your online application, the school will contact the IMBA office to schedule an online interview with their staff from their international affair office. They mainly wish to know the reason you wish to go to ESCP and your ability to adapt to life in France. It is okay for students who do not know French. However, I personally highly suggest students must prepare themselves at least some basic French before going. This is going to smoothen the living experience a lot.

After you have received the admission decision from the office, ESCP will then contact you via email and provide you for the admission fee payment. Students must wire the money to ESCP and confirm with the school staff on this matter to confirm your admission.

You must keep in contact with both the IMBA office and the ESCP Paris staff. The regulations and rules are changing all the time with ESCP Paris and sometimes flexible based on the situation. Students who act aggressively to negotiate with

the school will have a higher chance of getting the result they wish.

2. Before Departure

Before leaving for Paris, I highly suggest students go take some conversational French class. In France, very few people speak good English except for the tourist site. Most of the people refuse to talk in English even if they are capable of doing so. Therefore, knowing some basic French conversation and showing them the appreciation from you by speaking little French is very helpful.

There are several things you need to prepare and plan before you leave for Paris. First, applying for French long-term student visa (VLS-TS). A long-term student visa is for students who will be studying for longer than 3 months in French only and students with this visa is not subject to a tax refund in the whole EU district. For the first year of your staying, the visa along with the OFII will be working as the residence permit in France. After making sure the documents needed for applying for a long-term student visa, you will have to go to the France-Visas website to submit the online application and pay for the application fee. The system will notify you when the application is accepted and the payment is well received then you can make a reservation for your interview with the Campus France.

At the interview, students are required to bring the necessary documents including admission letter from ESCP Paris, a transcript from NCCU, certificate of enrollment from NCCU and the application fee payment receipt to the Campus France. The interviewer will then be questioned on the reason of going to France and the length of staying as well as the plan after finishing the degree. If you pass the interview, you will then send to the office next door to submit the required documents and the visa fee. Photo for the visa will be taken on-site when they collect your passport.

If you are renting accommodation in France, you are then entitled to a benefit from France government called CAF which is a subsidy for renting accommodations. Before you can apply for CAF in France, you will need to apply for your birth certificate from the household registration office and have it notarized by the court and Bureau of Consular Affairs. The birth certificates are only valid for 3 months so students are suggested to do this before you leave Taiwan but leaving at least 1 week for the whole notarization process to be complete.

Note! Cash is very difficult to use in France! You can't just bring all your cash to the bank and wish to deposit them. In France, they are highly aware of the money laundry issue and are actively preventing it. All the deposit cash including money wiring are required to show the evidence of sources. Otherwise, they might lock your account until you can prove it.

Before the official class starts with ESCP Paris, students are suggested to communicate with the MiM office on the course they are required to take and pay attention to the pre-requirement course. Those courses are usually given as intensive course during summer vacation time before official class starts. Students who are requested to take the course must check with the MiM office on the date before booking your flight. Proactive communication with the MiM office staff is essential for students and it will influence the class choice and your stay with ESCP Paris.

3. Living in Paris

The most troublesome part of living in Paris will be the housing problem. It is regulated by the government of France that landlords can request a guarantor. Especially in Paris, the housings are very popular so the landlords will usually host an open house and have all the people who are interested in the house for an interview. He or she will then choose one candidate who they wish to rent to. To have a guarantor for an international student is extremely difficult when the guarantors have to show evidence of income in France as well as other documents to prove their ability to pay the rent for you. Students can try to go on the housing search website like Logis, Leboncoin or even the housing source platform from ESCP for information. There are also WeChat groups serving for Chinese speaking people in Paris which students can facilitate. Rent is varied based on the areas of the property. For areas like 15, 16th districts are higher in price due to the areas tend to be the secure areas. Students are probably looking at 700 to 1500 EUR per month on their living expense excluding electricity.

The living expense in Paris is very high as everyone knows. Each meal will cost around 10 to 50 EUR at the restaurants. For students, I suggest finding a property with a basic kitchen so you can cook for yourself and save a lot of money from this part.

After getting yourself a place to stay, opening a bank in France requires many

efforts as well. Unlike Taiwan, the system between the bank branch is not connected and some of them don't even speak English. I suggest students go to the banks around schools since they tend to expect international students there more than other branches.

The fun part of living in Paris is that you have all the tourist attractions around you within minutes. Paris is relatively small compared with other famous cities. It is also very convenient for you to go outside of France when you have the CDG and ORY airport ready to take you anywhere. Many of the budget airlines are in high competitions in Europe now so pay attention to the information since we have so many vacations in France. That get your chance to explore Europe will be an important must-do suggestion from me.

4. Studying with ESCP Paris

As mentioned above, students must actively contact the MiM office students on their course plan. Providing the syllabus and transcripts from your previous study (university and graduate schools) will help them to define and exclude the pre-requisite courses.

In ESCP Paris, the core courses are 5 ECTS and each takes 30 hours per semester. Electives are only 4 ECTS for a 30 hours class and 2 ECTS for 15 hours (half-semester). The maximum hours for each semester are 180 including core course.

Class is usually taught in a small class around 20 students and based on a lot of case study and discussion. Professors in ESCP Paris highly rely on case studies to identify the critical thinking ability of the students. Presentation and reports are also common to see as a way to assess the students. All of the class are scored in 20 points system and students must receive above 10 to pass the class. Exams are all essay questions and graded in 20 points as well. Students are required to finish the exam within 1.5 hours and received 8 or 10 points (based on the professor) to pass the exam.

5. Leaving

It's not easy to say goodbye to France. Just when you finally feel like everything is getting controlled and settling down, you are coming home! It's sad but true that France doesn't like to say goodbye so they make it extra hard for you. Closing the bank will usually take 1 month to do so and not to mention electricity account

and cell phone accounts. The problematic thing is you can never find a SOP from French to solve those issues. The only suggestion I can give is to do it early. Starting to ask 2 or 3 months before your departure is probably safer and will bring you less stress.