

- **Preparation of applying ESCP Europe**

To apply a dual degree at ESCP Europe, you have to meet with two essential requirements for the application. These two requirements are the foreign language proficiency certification and the minimum average grade of 85 in the first year at NCCU. The rest of the requested documentation is similar to those applying for IMBA, which you can leverage. Regarding the language certification, I took IELTS instead of TOFEL, considering the schedule that I could be sure to obtain the result before the deadline of dual degree application. Besides, if the applicant has the French proficiency certification of B2 level in DALF/DELF would be a plus. Not to mention, it would be easier to adapt the lifestyle and culture, there are more options on course selection in ESCP Europe.

Once you satisfy all the prerequisites, the last qualification is to take minimum credits of 24 at IMBA. I suggest to take all the core courses in the first year at NCCU. The primary reason is the candidate must satisfy the course requirements in both schools. The second one is the core courses in NCCU may waive the core course in ESCP Europe. The more you waive, the more flexibility and freedom that you can take different electives in ESCP Europe.

Furthermore, due to the difference of course selection regulation, there is a rule of maximum hours/credits of course selection each semester. In other words, there is a limitation of courses that students can take in a semester. Hence, it is substantial to satisfy the required courses in ESCP Europe as the top priority.

- **Bureaucracy procedures of receiving a French visa and residence permit**

The candidate has to visit Bureau Français to apply visa, including interview and paper material submission. The detailed rundown of administration procedure is listed on the official website. The total application fees in 2017 is around NTD 9,300, including interview fees of NTD 7500 and visa fees of EUR 50. However, the visa application has changed to the online procedure. For the detailed information, you can find the announcement of online visa application on the official website.

In addition to the visa, the candidate needs to prepare a birth certificate for administration purpose of living in France, such as bank account and CAF application (rental subsidy provided by the French government). Firstly, household office, Bureau of

Consular Affairs, and district court to get the material ready before departure. The documentation mentioned above shall be verified by Bureau de Représentation de Taipei en France after arrival.

- **Accommodation in Paris**

Accommodation in Paris is the biggest challenge to dual degree candidates in ESCP Europe. Because the school does not provide a dormitory, students have to find accommodation on their own. There are several online platforms, such as Lodgis, Studapart, PAP, Taiwanese community on Facebook, and so on. Generally speaking, the rental cost per month ranges from 600 euros to 1,000 euros, varying by the location, the floor area, and other factors. However, the French governments provide CAF to reimburse tenants, which amount of 200 euros of maximum. The subsidy varies from different conditions, as well.

Because the rental procedure is quite different from Taiwan, several things shall be noted. The first one is the system of Guarantee. In practice, the lessee shall find a guarantor to ensure the lessee is capable of paying the rent. The guarantor would carry out the duty to the owner when the lessee is failed to carry out the contract terms. Secondly, in general, the rental agreement does not include the telecom (Internet) and utility (electricity). Therefore, it would be a challenging task for exchange students, exceptionally not proficient in French. To solve this situation, the department of international student affairs of ESCP Europe provides services to assist exchange students in settling down and adapting to a new environment.

- **Studying at ESCP Europe, Paris Campus**

The strength of ESCP Europe is in finance and consulting fields. The school provides abundant resources to support student's learning, such as the trading simulation lab, cooperative education with well-known enterprises. Apart from this, there are various options in different fields. During the second year, students have to choose one to two specializations to enhance professional competency amongst marketing, consultancy, accounting, and so on.

ESCP Europe provides both programs in English and French. The English track is more concentrated on the international students, such as exchange students and dual

degree students. Compared to the English track, there are more options and opportunities in the French program. Hence, it would be an advantage for dual degree students planning to apply ESCP Europe with proficiency in French. For most of my course track, one case study is assigned per week for every class. Also, the assignment after class is a case study. Not to mention the exams, all the exams are presented in the form of a case study. Because the case study is like a daily routine training, there is less pressure than imagined during the exam.

In ESCP Europe, there is another experience in teaching style different from Taiwanese education that the students lead the class, and the professor acts as a supervisor. To be more specific, the student would be assigned into groups and designated with different topics and case studies to lecture other students. Meanwhile, the professor concludes and provides advice at the end of the class. By doing so, the students have the opportunity to cultivate their presenting and communication skills as a future manager. Outside the classroom, there are many student associations, including startup club, shuffle program (buddy program for international students), sports clubs, and so on. It is also an excellent chance to meet with local and other international students.

- **Everyday life and leisure time**

The transportation network in Paris is intensive and integrated that Paris city is with the highest density of stations in the world. However, it is also the problem to Paris city hall in the management of this mass transportation systems because of the enormous maintenance cost and transportation dispatch. As a result, you may encounter an unexpected stuck in the middle of the way when taking the metro. It is an exciting experience and also a culture shock for me. However, the sightseeing spots and the historical sites are within walking distance. If the potential trouble in taking metro bothers you when visiting the city, walking and shared-bikes are good alternatives for you. Plus, the weather is cooler and less humid compared to Taiwan. Hence, wandering in the town would be a joy. The only thing to be aware is to be alarmed to heatwave in summertime. Otherwise, taking a stroll and having a picnic are my new hobbies I picked up during my stay in Paris. Moreover, there are discount ticket offering to students under 26, including museum tickets and monthly metro pass. It is a great incentive to motivate you to discover the city. Also, because of the geographical advantage of France, it is very convenient to visit other European countries with a sophisticated cross-countries transportation system.

- **Conclusion**

As Hemingway said, "If you are lucky enough to have lived in Paris as a young man, then wherever you go for the rest of your life, it stays with you, for Paris is a moveable feast." This saying has been quoted by million times. The truth is that it is worthy to explorer the city and immerse yourself in the culture for a year that you will have in-depth experience than others. If you are an art or history lover, the student life in ESCP Europe will be an extraordinary life experience to you. You have the chance to meet young talents from all over the world and enjoy the French teaching style. Also, the culture shock is inevitable. However, it is an excellent opportunity to improve your individual growth and broaden your horizon. After this fantastic journey, you will be capable of treating things with a free mind and thinking in different perspectives.