

## Dual degree report

School: Audencia Business School

Program: Master in Management Grande École

Double Major: Management Consulting & Marketing for Product Managers

Term: 201909-202005

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Audencia Business School founded in 1900, which located in the west of France, 6<sup>th</sup> biggest city in France called Nantes. (Pays de la Loire). I decided to choose this school because of its Grande École program in France is worldwide renowned and also a historical business school with 120 years experiences. This school has attracted students globally with high proficiency in English and high competence, moreover, it's International, professional faculties and competitive and rich alumni networks made my experiences unforgettable and highly recommend! Though my 2<sup>nd</sup> semester unexpected encountered the COVID-19 and experienced both quarantine and distance learning for 2 months, I was still grateful this experiences has enriched me to become a more independent and mature individual and proudly living in Audencia's way--- "Never Stop Daring!" to continue explore my life and spread the positive impacts to the world.

### I. Preparation

<Before apply your dream school>

- ✓ Fulfill the pre-requisite credits (at least 20 or 60 ECTS). In my case, I took all the require courses in the 1st year in IMBA.
- ✓ Prepare for the English exam requirements (IBT 95, IELTS 7.0 or TOEIC 850.) It's better to have TOEIC score 850+ before you heading to school, because there's also an on-site obliged TOEIC exam to take before graduation if you didn't fill the requirements upon arrival.
- ✓ Weather: Nantes is a city close to the Atlantic ocean, therefore it rains a lot. You can prepare the umbrella beforehand. I suggest not to bring too much summer/new clothes, as it start getting cold quite soon around the end of September. It normally don't snow but still quite freezing in the winter (for Taiwanese) around 10-18 degrees.

#### <Apply for student VISA>

- ✓ Please check Campus France's website for clear instruction to finish the application of student VISA (Suggest to do it at least 3 months before your departure), it also included the time of application and interview
- ✓ Audencia requires foreign students over 29 years old hold the certificate of health insurance before arrival

#### <After Arrival>

- ✓ It's suggested to join the 2 days orientation day that provide you a whole picture of all the suggested administration stuff (i.e. Open a bank account—Audencia has cooperated with BNP with student discount; Mobile plan, CAF...) If you have any questions, you can simply consult in campus with professional support.
- ✓ Obtain your OFII by going online and submit the admin fee ASAP.

### II. Accommodation

- ✓ I was lucky to have the chance to live in the France public dormitory called CROUS, it's way cheaper (< €400/month) than normal rental, very close to school and is well equipped (a studio for example). If you would like to apply for it, you need to pay attention to school's mail and apply for it before the deadline (They first announced around April, 2019). It's very competitive and with limited space for all the students in Nantes to apply for it, so all I can say is to wish you good luck and apply earlier! I received the draw lots result at almost at end of June, so I suggest to have a plan B if you didn't get the chance to enroll in it.
- ✓ Audencia will also provide their own housing intranet for students to look for private residence (including normal rental option and homestay family...etc.). Please refer to the housing booklet sent by school.
- ✓ Apply for CAF housing subsidy (it's eligible for all the students in France) upon arrival, and keep your eye on the lengthy procedure. It often cause lots of waiting time, so be patient and keep tracking the online/postal for further notice to follow-up.

### III. Studying at the host institution

There has different majors you can chose for 2 semesters, I selected Management Consulting (Spring) & Marketing for Product Managers (Fall). All the lessons were conducted in English, but will highly suggested to learn basic French to help you integrate more smoothly in both studies and life in France.

**Marketing for Product Managers** included a broad range of marketing concepts (Digital, trade marketing and the start-up business.....etc.), you may check for the syllabus available on the website before applying the majors you prefer. In my opinion, I felt the courses itself are diverse and interesting but not deep enough if you want to be more specific or dig deeper, for example, you cannot really have a full practical experiences in digital marketing but a general concept of it. There were many experienced international instructors from industry who provided great quality of teaching method, and many team work opportunities to finish the assignments and presentations. The class schedule was quite different, unlike it's scheduled and planned already in Taiwan, you need to check Tomorrow (Audencia's intranet) every day to check for any changes of the class. Please be aware of all the projects and courses might come together in the intensive semester. If you got any travel plan in mind, you may check the calendar to arrange it beforehand.

During the semester we got opportunities to work in a LIVE marketing competitions that cooperate with the big French cosmetic group —Marionnaud, to help them rebranding the brand image. It provided great opportunity to work in teams and went to the retail store to diagnose the problems and provide the creative solutions directly to the C-levels. In the end of the mission, the high executives of Marionnaud came from Paris to school to be the judges and providing feedbacks. There was another class cooperated with P&G Pampers brand that we need to come up the launching plan in a designated case, the projects were quite intense with many ongoing projects together, therefore, it was a good training to manage your time and the capabilities to work with Internationals as well.

**Management Consulting** was my 2<sup>nd</sup> major. In general, it was very intense and almost every project was team project. This major can highly train your logical thinking, presentation skills and how you multi-tasking with different people and projects in a limited time. Interestingly, the courses shifted online due to the serious pandemic issue in the mid-March, while the school Nationwide were closed, there was another chance to practice work-from-home every day. It was not easy as it seems while the 95% of the assignments were team projects, some of the classmates back to their own country with different time zone. How to remain the deliverables qualities and communication skills, and to keep concentration were another challenges and learning I gained from the experiences.

There were several highlights of this major, including the high competitive peers (many from engineering school's double degree students), structured yet intensive courses delivered from the top consultancies current employees included Capgemini, One Point and CGI...etc.

If you compared with marketing major, I think it was much heavier, however you can learn the big picture of consulting job's daily look be like.

Campus life (cost, canteen, working opportunities, etc.)

#### /Dining/

During the lunch time, you can either go to the cafeteria inside the main campus or go to the CROUS restaurant with student discount. (Remember to bring your Audencia student ID with you to the reception, and apply for the CROUS card.

Noted: the receptionists are normally not good at English. So kindly bring your translation tool or ask students to help you if you have some problems communicate with them. PS. That's why I say basic French ability is super useful here.) ;)

There are not as much options to eat out like in NCCU/Taiwan, so many students bring their own lunch box to the cafeteria for microwave, nearby campus area, there are also some Kebab restaurants/bistro that offer some sandwiches on the go around €5-10.

#### /Printer & ATM/

Audencia's ID has top-up option on Tomorrow.com for you to print the documents or buy a coffee in the Starbucks machine besides students clubs. (Kindly check the booklet or ask the senior students if you don't know how to do it)

There's one ATM (not BNP) close to the school and the tramway but if you want to go to the BNP Paribas, there's one branch in commerce station (City center).

#### /Job opportunities/

Unfortunately, IMBA didn't have an internship contract with Audencia, therefore, you cannot conduct an internship during the academic year. (The internship contract require to issue by the school and company.) Furthermore, there are limited job opportunities for English-only speakers to find a job (CDD/CDI) after graduation, the suggested French level is B2 for basic qualification for foreigners in France.

#### /French Courses/

By a simple online questionnaire, there is a basic level test in the beginning of the semester, for Grande École students, you may have a free 3 hours French class/week. Honestly, if you

would like to learn French, it's not enough but if you just want to experience the culture casually, I think it's a nice opportunity to learn from.

#### IV. Everyday life and leisure time

##### /Transportation/

Nantes have one of the oldest Tramway system in France, called TAN. You can reach almost most of the places by tram, and you're recommend to download the app called "TAN" (official app, or you can check at <https://www.tan.fr/> for any strikes notice in real time.) or download Moovit app.to replace the Google map since it's not that efficient to track the routes. If you're over age 26, and already got CAF, then you can apply for Libertan card for free taking tram.

There's also bus and public bike system called Bicloo or rent a bike for one semester at Vélocampus. (I heard for student is about €50/semester and €200 for warrant fee, please double check the information just in case.)

There are strikes from time to time and yellow vests movements every Saturday, so be aware and tracking the notice often. Be prepared to walk to school if you experienced any above mentioned "unique French culture experiences".

##### /Shop in Nantes/

I believe that you can get almost everything you need in Nantes as there are different sizes of IKEA, several supermarkets (Carrefour, U-express, Monoprix, E-Leclerc....) and also 3 Asian markets (Ex: Chatâux Express) near center.

The most busiest and hustle place is the center called Commerce (tram stop), where you can get bubble tea (I recommend the one called Uncle Pho) and go shopping or watch movies with friends. Nantes is well known for its art and cultural festival, like Jazz festival around September and some exhibitions or orchestra performances in the Opera. Don't missed the authentic crêpes/Irish bar for Karaoke and seafood in local fish market (Talensac), there's also X'mas market in the center during whole December!

You can also follow Audencia's IC Team (in charge of International students activities) for party and travel plans!

/Travel /

If you're below 26 years old, congrats! You got many student discounts including train and some tourism special offer.

If you're not, you can still travel with limited budgets like using ISIC student card to Disneyland Paris or taking Flixbus, LLC airlines (Ryanair, EasyJet....etc.), carpool or even visited museums in the first Sunday of the month without tickets. (I went to Fountainbleau for free once.)

/Safety and tips/

I would say before coming to Nantes, I assumed it's a safe and peaceful place. However, compared to Paris, its much safer of course, I still witness or heard many horrible robing, thieves and even stalking students happening!

So, be more attentive when you're nearby city centers or nearby île de Nantes area (with many clubs and bars in the night), don't stay too late when you're alone or bring too much cash with you.

Last but not least, enjoy the ups and downs during this fast 10 months! Nantes is a beautiful city with vibrant vibes and energy, if I can give one piece of advice that I wish you not limit yourself and always be open-minded, try to hang-out with the locals, knowing different culture and also let more people know about Taiwan and you, because you're the best ambassador to represent IMBA and Taiwan!

Feel free to contact me if you have further questions: [yu.tseng@audencia.com](mailto:yu.tseng@audencia.com)

Bon Voyage! ☺

