

National ChengChi University IMBA Dual Degree Report

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School: ESCP Europe (Paris)

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Before departure

Several things need to process before departure, and there are many resources on the internet.

The most important is to apply for the visa, you may refer to this article (in Chinese) 法國留學簽證辦理 <https://renathought.blogspot.com/2019/05/blog-post.html>

A birth certificate is crucial to apply for it when you are still in Taiwan. Please refer to <https://www.roc-taiwan.org/fr/post/2014.html>.

This birth certificate is for you to apply for a housing allowance when you are in France. When you arrive in France, you need to ask a certified translator for notarization. Their prices have a considerable difference. In the beginning, I asked a translator in Paris, but the price is over 100€. Later I found a translator in Lille who charge me about 35 euro. You don't need to find the translator in your city because they process it online.

Many people choose to arrive earlier to find accommodation. I searched through the agency (Lodgis) website before I go abroad. Here is my experience:

<https://renathought.blogspot.com/2019/08/blog-post.html>

https://renathought.blogspot.com/2019/08/blog-post_31.html

Living in Paris

● Bank account open

There are many banks to choose from and many resources on the internet. I decided to open a BNP account. My experience:

<https://renathought.blogspot.com/2019/12/blog-post.html>

Usually, I paid by credit card (Taishin Flygo credit card). The student bank account has limitations to withdraw money, 600€ per week, and 1000€ per month. If your rental is over 1000€, you cannot pay it by transfer from the French student bank account. Honestly, you do not need to have too much cash.

● Free Mobile

I bought an Orange (the biggest mobile company in France) prepaid card in Taiwan.

When I arrived in France, I applied Free mobile online with my address. The process took about 5 days to ship to your address. You could also buy the sim card in-store (could buy from machine and sales). Usually, all the companies have a poor connection in their Metro, train, etc. Even somewhere in the ESCP campus has a poor connection. So, don't expect too much.

- Traffic

Because I lived close to the campus, I usually go on foot or by bike (Velib). I had a Velib V-plus youth one-year subscription. https://www.velib-metropole.fr/en_GB The monthly payment is 2.3€, the first 30 minutes without additional charge. Some bikes are in good condition, remember to check the condition before you ride it. When Metro is on strike, it would be complicated to find available bikes. What's worse, the bus would be very crowded to get on, and the traffic would be a mess.

I bought the Navigo Easy card, which is similar to our Taipei Easycard(悠遊卡). It could use on Metro and bus. City mapping is an excellent APP to download, search the route from it. It's better than Google maps. For the traffic information, you may refer to this webpage: <https://insidr.co/zh-hant/best-tips-for-using-public-transport-in-paris-cn/>.

- Food

Paris is easy to get food around. Many supermarkets, bakery around. You won't be starving to live in Paris if you have enough money. There is an area of Chinese restaurants and supermarkets near campus, located in the Belleville metro station. On Tuesday and Friday, that street also has a market in which you may purchase cheaper vegetables, fruits, meat, seafood, etc. However, that street market is often crowded, be aware of the pickpocket. I would more recommend shopping in the Bastille market on Thursday and Sunday.

My personal cooking experience is to purchase some Asian ingredients in the Chinese supermarket (中國紅) at Belleville. I could get a bag of bones for less than 2€ to cook soup. I bought eggs, vegetables, shrimps at the Bastille market. I bought snacks, drinks, some food in supermarkets. I bought some cooked food (mostly meats) in a small Chinese restaurant.

ESCP has a cafeteria, a student canteen, a bar, and some vending machines.

The cafeteria opens from morning until afternoon. You can get coffee, drinks, a variety of bread, cookies. Usually, it would be a long line during the class break. It

cost a bit cheaper than the bakery outside of the campus.

According to my French classmate, the ESCP student canteen was rated the best in France years ago. It only opens during the lunchtime (11:30-13:30). There is a salad bar, fruit area, fries (burger meat) area, main dish station, pizza station, drinks, dessert area. Before you check out, you could get a bun (without additional charge). The cost depends on how much food you get. It cost me 3€ on average. ESCP bar is operated in the evening.

At the end of September, there is a two-week Food event (Tous au restaurant). Many restaurants have discounts – such as buy 1 get 1 free – during those weeks. I was lucky to get a chance to eat in a Michelin 1 star restaurant, which cost me 135€ for two people.

- Entertainment

If you are under 26 years old, you can get free entry to most of the museums. Many museums have offer free entry on the 1st Sunday of the month, you may refer this link to find it.

<https://en.parisinfo.com/discovering-paris/themed-guides/paris-for-free/free-museums-and-monuments-in-paris/free-admission-and-good-deals-in-museums-and-monuments-in-paris>

Take advantage of visiting museums, you would not regret it!

Paris has two opera theaters, which are Palais Garnier and Opera Bastille. Their tickets usually release two seasons ahead. Some show has a special discount for students or youth. Watching art performance is considered as not expensive when compared to the price in Taiwan.

The football game often holds very late (start at 9pm), and the venue is far away from campus.

School

2 ECTS = 15 hours; 4, 5 ECTS = 30 hours

- Required core courses

In mid-April, ESCP would send you an email to discuss your studies. They would check regarding your transcripts to waive your courses. If you were major in business in your bachelor's, you might waive more classes.

Core courses usually have many sessions with different professors. Those professors are generally young. (Some of them even not official professors yet). The classmates are often studying hard because they are in M1 (first year of Master) students. Many

Chinese and Italian. The failure rate for core classes is very high (maybe it's their policy). In my class, half of the class has to take the resist exam. The exams are all essay questions. However, the grade might be negotiable with the professor (explain your reasoning on your answers, they might adjust your grade). I've listed my feelings/what I did in the classes I took in the following:

➤ Strategy (5 ECTS)

Write a monography report (30 pages) with a partner.

➤ Management control (5 ECTS)

Pick up a company and have two interviews with different supervisors.

A mid-report for two pages. A final report for 20 pages.

A-20-minute group presentation.

➤ Operation (5 ECTS)

A mid-report for plant visit report (before visit), and a final report for plant visit (about 20 pages). However, our visit canceled due to COVID-19.

A concept (assigned by professor) group presentation.

➤ Tax (5 ECTS)

Final exams count as 100% of your grade. Big session in an auditorium, which is a really sleepy class, in my opinion.

➤ Design thinking (4 ECTS)

This class is elective; however, IMBA is required to take this with the strategy to waive. This class is demanded to have many assignments. You have to have some minor tasks to do every week during class time and outside of class time. The teacher teaches really well. This class has an outstanding reputation, and it is indeed highly recommended if you don't mind taking a demanded course.

● Electives

Usually, you won't be class with French people if you choose the courses taught in English. Courses taught by French have better quality, faculty, reputation, and more choices. There are many Indians in the school as exchange students, and most of the classmates for electives class are exchange students. Be aware of grouping with exchanges, their first priority is "play hard."

➤ Financial Analyst (4 ECTS)

There are two professors, the visiting professors work in the Goldman Sachs. Both of them are very knowledgeable. Great class, but not easy. If you performed well in the financial management in the first year of IMBA, you would use your knowledge to achieve better performance in this course. Professors always require students to dig more to analyze why and what happened to the numbers on their annual report. In IMBA's accounting class, we analyze a company's annual report for a particular year. However, in this course, we analyze a company's annual reports for five years in the first assignment. Except for four group assignments, the group has to select two stocks to purchase in the simulation.

The final exam is difficult. We took online at home because of the strike. Professors shorten the time for us to complete the exam. Exams are MCQ and some simple calculation questions, but it was very hard.

➤ Consulting behaviors (4 ECTS)

Another popular course. Our session has two professors who teach at the same time, so it is somehow disturbing. The class mainly explains what the consultants do and introduce the industry. Only one group presentation on the topic of our choice. Easy class.

➤ Break the code of true leadership (2 ECTS)

The class is only 30 people (It is a small class in the electives). 2 classes for a lecture, 2 classes for group presentation (created and presented in class), and 1 class for final presentation. The final presentation is required to interview a CEO who has at least 30 employees about his/her leadership.

➤ What does the brain do (2 ECTS)

This is a science class. Only 1 final exam which asks what do you learn from class.

● Specialization

Most of the students enroll the specialization when the school sends emails regarding the course selection. I thought dual-degree students could not have specialization. However, it depends on your required core courses. I applied to the specialization on the day before the class registration started. I was lucky enough to get into the specialization of "rethink: social innovation, alternative business model, and sustainability." Our specialization has only 30 students, half of them are French, many of them are Italian. Except for one Russian, I am the only Asian in the class.

Specialization classes are more advanced and more assignments. But I was class with

the same group of people, and be able to learn more on European perspectives.

➤ Field Study (2 ECTS)

We have a group project to work with a company during the semester. Only 1 class meeting throughout the semester, but 3 presentations to present the project process. 1 final written report. It took much time to meet with the team and company.

➤ Alternative organization (2 ECTS)

1 presentation regarding NGO. 1 written report to discuss the company of field study.

➤ Capitalism (2 ECTS)

4 reflection paper (2 pages) on assigned reading (at least 20 pages). Make a presentation from the reading in class, 2 of the reading have to be present. The reading is all about capitalism, which is very difficult to understand. Most of the class time is listening to others' presentations and discussions.

➤ Circular economy (4 ECTS)

A busy class but learn many concepts. One group presentation with a selected concept. A group project which coordinates with a company tutor. The group project should include a final presentation, a final written report, and an executive summary. Due to COVID-19, our final presentation record as a video with PPT. The project does take much time to discuss outside of the class. A final exam which composed MCQ and short essay questions.

➤ The dark side of sustainability (2 ECTS)

The professor is expecting students to finish all reading every week. There are 10 readings in total, 2 of them have to be presented or written.

The lecture does bring new insight into sustainability. Professor showed the documentary in class to have the discussion.

➤ New interactions between business and society (2 ECTS)

Old professor and very knowledgeable. He brought many case studies to the discussion – such as Interface carpet. One group presentation which analyzes the company's CSR report is done in class. A final exam.

➤ Social impact (2 ECTS)

Young professor but passionate about social impact. One presentation.

- Student clubs

There are some student clubs, but I didn't join any of them. There is one consulting club in which you may actually work for a project and get paid; however, you have to have identification to be eligible to work. The international student club, Shuffle, usually holds activities and has the most participants. They might have a day-trip to nearby (they went to Reims) or a 3-day-trip to the Netherlands. Most of the clubs are more friendly to students who speak French.

- Exercise

Register once for 80€ for up to three classes per semester. With the registration fee, you could access to the gym in the open hours.

I took a horse-riding class with additional 150€. Refer to this link to see my experience: <https://renathought.blogspot.com/2020/02/blog-post.html>

I also took the ballet class. Teachers usually speak French. Students do not need to wear professional (no need to have ballet clothes and shoes).

Golf and yoga class is popular as well.

If you are interested in dance (any type), you may check the Studio Harmonic (<https://www.studioharmonic.fr/>). They have excellent facilities, and their reputation is outstanding.

Departure

I hope I would never experience the "escape" feeling again. My initial plan was to stay in Paris until the beginning of June, so I have time to travel around. COVID-19 did break the plan.

- House

France law regulates that the earliest termination of the lease is one month ahead. We need to send a registered mail, which indicates the willingness of termination and signature. The official one month would count when the landlord receives and sign on the letter. Due to the uncertainty, I send the registered mail when I was in Paris; however, my landlord signed it when I arrived in Taiwan. I paid one more month's rent (until mid-April).

In the week of my returning, France government already started to have confinement, which not allowing you to go out freely. Therefore, the housing agency is not able to check out my room, none of my friends could help me deliver the key

and process the checkout. The house key was on my taxi driver's hand (whom I know). He finally helped me deliver my keys to the landlord on April-15. If my landlord does not receive the keys, I would not be able to terminate my contract.

French government canceled the confinement on May-11. After that day, I kept pushing my landlord about the process. However, the housing agency was too busy (?) during that time. The agency and landlord finally completed the checkout process on June-17, and the checkout cost me 434€. Try your best to present during your checkout, or you would lose money.

- Bank

Because my house allowance goes into my bank account, I didn't close my bank account while I was in Paris (I couldn't either). I send a message through BNP online banking system to my counselor and filled forms to cancel it. When we want to close the bank account, we need to transfer back the money (or empty the account). However, there are no updates at all for the past month. I am not sure when I could cancel and get my money back.

- Mobile

The mobile account is easier to cancel. I sent a registered mail through <https://www.resilier.fr/resiliation-en-ligne.php> and completed the cancellation after a few working days.

For other information, you may check my FB fan page or contact me through it.

<https://www.facebook.com/renathought>

Enjoy your DD journey, good luck!