



## Living in Asia during the Corona Virus Pandemic

### Before departure

I applied for exchange studies because I really enjoy learning about new cultures and languages. I chose to study in Thailand primarily because the courses matched my study plan as well as it seemed like the complete opposite of Sweden which I would like to experience. I like to have low expectations going into a situation, so I was of course pleasantly surprised with the living situation I could afford in Thailand. I prepared the courses I was going to take, visa application, vaccines, housing and insurance for the semester.



## Upon arrival

I arrived one day before start day. My faculty had a welcome trip for the international students where they took us snorkelling and coral planting on the coast 3 hours away from Bangkok together with a bunch of other activities. They also had a thorough introduction answering all questions that we may have during our stay, which was very useful. There is a student club for each faculty that you are automatically in where you get to attend events and trips.



## Financials

I received a scholarship from KTH for my studies abroad. Living costs in Thailand were generally speaking, less than in Sweden. There were no mandatory fees. Many students travelled on the weekends to the islands or to other countries in Asia, less travel would mean saving money. Staying in BKK was like saving money since food and living was so cheap.

## **Accommodation**

I talked to students from KTH that had been on exchange in Thailand prior to me and they recommended me to stay at Nonsi Residence, which is a big place with apartments/dorms for all international students with a shared swimming pool. The university has accommodation on campus that can be rented if desired. I lived 10 min car ride to school, the residence had a school bus to Chula every morning for free. The housing conditions were satisfactory and much cheaper than housing in Stockholm.



## University and studies

Chulalongkorn University is massive and located right in the city center. They offer subjects in all areas from engineering to economics to arts. The school system was slightly different as we had lectures during the same time and day every week and we had to wear a school uniform to school. Other than that, the school assignments did not differ greatly from what we would have at KTH. The scheduling system was good because it gave good incentive to plan trips for the weekends. The study language was in English.





The Chula school uniform.

### **Courses**

The choice of courses is firstly determined by the courses that are eligible to replace the mandatory courses you may have at KTH during the period that you are away. Thereafter if you have no more mandatory courses, you may choose whatever course as an electable. The credit transfer process is a clear but time-consuming process.



### **City and country**

I had never been to Thailand before, so I perceived the destination as wonderful. It was especially nice to leave Sweden in January and arrive in a warmer climate. The culture is very respectful but also very susceptible to tourists. I mainly experienced culture shock due to other international cultures rather than the Thai one.



### **Leisure and social activities**

There was always something going on in Bangkok every single day, so it was easy to fill out your spare time. Flight tickets from BKK were also exceptionally cheap which was a good incentive to travel as much as possible to the islands and other countries. Sports culture is big in Asian universities as they have an impressive gym and swimming pool for training purposes which can be utilized by students. The university also has sports teams which international students are more than welcome to join.







**Other recommendations and observations**

I recommend international students to live at Nonsi Residence as it is the biggest (and arguably the best) residence to live in since most students living there go to Chula and in the same class as you will! Living there will give you a good probability to make many friends easily.