

Student exchange programme final report



On the 9th September 2019, Sanna, Karen and I embarked on a 105-day exchange programme at Thomas More University of Applied Sciences in Antwerpen, Belgium. This experience was culturally enriching, practical and eye-opening to our practices as speech-language therapists, as well as providing us with the unique opportunity to network with researchers, professors, future and working practitioners in this field.

During the semester, I was able to take up 7 modules encompassing fluency disorders, dyslexia, language and pragmatic use, assessment and intervention of speech and language difficulties in those with intellectual disabilities, speech normal and abnormal development in bilingualism, the speech and language therapist professional context in Europe as well as a course on survival Dutch. The classes were practical and insightful, it was a good refresher on a lot of core principles and models to keep in mind when working with clients with difficulties in these different domains of speech and language development. On top of the comprehensive content in the lectures, we were offered opportunities to carry out standardized and informal assessments, presentation of treatment plans and client-education as well as role-play of therapy sessions in a practical manner which was very relevant to our professional development. It was beneficial to learn from other speech and language therapy students to see how speech and language therapy is taught and delivered in their countries as well as learning from the professors and speakers at Thomas More.



One of the aspects that stood out to me from this experience was the variety of settings we were able to visit in the Professional Context in Europe course offered. To be able to see speech and language therapy applied across primary health care (Sint-Augustinus Hospital), private practices (Tamarin), radio and television stations (VRT) and in special education (Ritmica) was an eye-opening experience and it was great to hear from different practicing speech and language therapists about their journey in professional development, their field of interests, the ins and outs of speech and language therapy applied in their particular settings and to receive advice they offered to young therapists in the field. It was comforting to learn that, although resources and policies may differ from country to country, the principles and practice of speech and language therapy does not differ greatly between Hong Kong and Belgium and the training we have received were comparable to one another.

香港教育大學
The Education University
of Hong Kong

Master of Science in Educational
Speech-Language Pathology and
Learning Disabilities (MScESLPLD)

3 components over 5 semesters:

Background knowledge

- × typical and disordered human communication, learning and swallowing processes in infancy (from infancy to late adulthood)
- × principles and methods of assessment and intervention.

Practicum

- × bridge between classroom learning and the real world of practice under supervision of experienced professionals

Evidenced-based Capstone Research Project

- × individual research on specialised topic

THOMAS
MORE

Professional Bachelor's in Speech Therapy and Audiology

3 training phases over 6 semesters:

Phase 1: Anatomy & function of the vocal tract, Normal and abnormal development, Learning and using diagnostic instruments

Phase 2: Diagnostics, learning at the hearing center, Treatment for different disorders +Electives

Phase 3: Specialization Speech Therapy and Audiology (Or 1 year extra for working with cases and bachelor's thesis) +Electives

Year 1: observe and interview an SLP/ Audiologist in field observation

Year 2: 4 week internship in independent (group) practice, a hearing center, a school, a hospital or a rehabilitation center

Year 3: 2 in-depth, independent focused 7 or 8 week internships



On top of the amazing learning experience during these months, I was grateful for the professional network and friendships built along the way. There were 11 exchange students on the SLT exchange programme and we were the first students to come from outside of EU and I think we brought with us insight in speech therapy in Asia and knowledge in logographic and tonal language to the exchange and local Belgium students. We bonded with local logopedie and audiology students as well as the other Erasmus students which brought with it interesting discussions on cultures, knowledge about the world and a lot of fun times together.

This exchange programme had been carefully arranged by both EduHK and Thomas More, although applying for student visa and other technicalities was not a hassle-free process, this experience had truly been what I had hoped for and more.

Thank you for this unique opportunity!

Leon Wong

