

LSE-Fudan Summer Exchange 2014

This summer a group of LSE students from diverse departments embarked on a Chinese language study trip organized by the LSE language department to Shanghai, China. Many of us, including myself, had the time of our lives. Every summer Fudan University, one of the great universities of China, offer two courses exclusively to the LSE- intermediate and advanced Mandarin. Excellent teaching, a rigorous course structure, and the ability to utilize our language skills outside of class made this experience unforgettable. As a result of 25 teaching hours weekly, all of us were able to significantly improve our speaking and listening skills and managed to complete our final exam with excellent grades. The feeling of applying what you learn during the day in class to real life situations in the afternoon is one of the most rewarding feelings I have ever experienced. Many of us have even mentioned that they felt like this trip was a kind of summer-camp. This is because everyone got along well with each other and we were able to build friendships for life. In the evenings we usually ventured out to explore Shanghai's excellent nightlife scene. Seeing the skyline of Pudong from a rooftop bar on the Bund is perhaps one of the most magical things you will do. Before we left for China most people thought it would be impossible to travel during the intensive course at Fudan University. On the contrary, we managed to travel almost every weekend. In the span of 8 weeks I visited Beijing's Great Wall, Hangzhou's West Lake, Suzhou's beautiful gardens, Xi'an's Terracotta Army, Nanjing's WWII massacre memorial and climbed the famous mountains Huashan and Huangshan. There are two things I can warmly recommend at LSE: taking a language degree course in Mandarin, and going on the study-exchange to Fudan University. If someone offered me the chance to return back to this summer's experience at Fudan, I would get on the next plane and be in Shanghai by tomorrow. The fact that LSE so generously covered the tuition fees made it even better. I am incredibly happy I made use of this life changing opportunity and urge anyone and everyone in a similar position to do the same.

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