

Case Example from HKBU

Programme: BSocSc (Hons) in European Studies (German Stream)

In addition to learning everything about Germany, from language, history, culture, economy to international relations, students of the four-year BSocSc in European Studies programme (German Stream) are all entitled to a mandatory exchange year in Germany in Year 3. The teacher was eager to add value to the signature study-abroad experience by designing pre-tour and post-tour interventions.

To prepare students for the journey, all Year 2 European Studies (German Stream) students were enrolled in the “Giessen-Hong Kong Telecollaborative Language Learning Project”. It connected the HKBU students with native German student teachers in Germany for intercultural exchange and language enhancement. Rather than treating native speakers of German as the “language tutor”, the Project encouraged both sides of students to investigate some challenges in German teaching and learning through discussion of a global issue: What makes a city healthy? The teacher observed that by grounding language and cultural exchange on the exploration of common social issues, students could communicate in a more natural manner with less negative influence from the tutor-student hierarchy.

Upon returning from the exchange, the Year 4 students were offered a course to practise and sharpen their intercultural competence and get them ready for the global job market. They were arranged to meet a dozen of top leaders of German businesses in different sectors in Hong Kong either at their workplace or in the classroom setting. The teacher further enabled students to have a better preparation for the guest lectures and field visits by assigning them relevant readings beforehand.



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