
2024 FALL SEMESTER EXCHANGE PROGRAM REVIEW

※Please complete all fields in the application form.

STUDENT NAME	██████████
STUDENT ID NUMBER	██████████
MAJOR	Information and Communication Engineering
NATIONALITY	German
PERIOD OF STUDY	Fall Semester 2024
NAME OF HOME UNIVERISTY	Hochschule Karlsruhe University of Applied Sciences

■ NOTICE OF IMMIGRATION

- Student visa:** At first, I had to apply for an exchange semester at my home university and get nominated as an exchange student at Inha. Then I had to submit an application at the Inha portal. After the application period, I received the documents I needed to apply for the D-2 visa from the Inha International Office. It's important to mention that financial proof of at least US\$5500 is required to get a visa for one semester. It could be from my own bank account, or I could ask my parents to help. It's better to contact your bank as soon as possible to get the required document. It has to meet certain criteria in terms of content and language. Because most bank employees have never processed such a request before, it's likely that some mistakes can happen, which can lead to considerable delays.
- Flight ticket information:** It's best to buy a flight ticket about 2 months before planning to leave. This way the price can be cheaper than buying it shortly before, or several months in advance. I waited until I had my visa, just to make sure that I can definitely spend an exchange semester at Inha, so I bought it about 6 weeks before leaving Germany.
I used flight comparison sites and incognito mode in my browser, so I could see what airlines offered the cheapest tickets, but it's necessary to check if luggage is included in the price. If not, you might have to add luggage additionally and it will be more expensive.
- Money exchange:** I didn't exchange any money in my home country because the exchange fee would be very expensive. When I arrived at Incheon airport I exchanged some cash for

emergency, but other than that I only use my credit card and mobile payment methods like Samsung Pay or Kakao Pay.

If someone comes to Korea for an exchange, would recommend them to apply for a credit card in their home country that doesn't charge any fee for foreign transactions. This way they don't have to pay anything extra at all for paying in Korean Won.

4. **Residence Card (Alien registration card):** Once arrived in Korea, it's required to report to the Immigration Office within 90 days in order to receive the residence card. Inha International Office offers the opportunity to apply for the residence card on campus, and you only have to go to the Immigration Office to register your fingerprints. If someone is unsure about the required documents and would like to be accompanied through the registration process, I think it's a good idea to choose this option.

Otherwise, it's also possible to make an appointment with the Incheon Immigration Office yourself, by applying on <https://www.hikorea.go.kr/>. In that case you must submit the documents and register your fingerprints at the Immigration Office on your own. It can be much faster to get the residence card this way, but the appointment has to be booked way in advance, otherwise there will be no time slots available in time.

I booked an appointment immediately after I got my visa and while I was still in my home country. This way I was able to go to the Immigration Office and apply for my residence card about a week after I arrived in Korea. It can take around 1 or 2 months before receiving the ARC.

■ INHA UNIVERSITY COURSE EVALUATION

1. **Course registration:** As an exchange student it's possible to register for courses during the prior course registration period. This way exchange students don't have to compete with most other students at Inha to get into a course. If someone doesn't get in during the prior course registration, they can try again during the main registration period, but it will be on a first-come-first-serve basis. If that also doesn't work they can try again in the first lecture week, during the add/drop period, or directly reach out to the professor of a course and ask if they can join the class.

For some reason I was unable to sign-up for some of my courses, even though there were enough spots and I tried to apply in time, so I had to ask some of my professors to add me manually. I was very stressed about it at first, but in the end, everything worked out and I could join the courses that I wanted.

2. Course formats: (?) Normal classes

3. **Assignments:** Some professors give assignments, some don't. As we never get assignments in university in my home country, it's something new to me. Even though assignments can be stressful, I actually like them, because it's easier to stay on top of a course and studying before exams isn't that stressful, as I did continuous work during the semester.

Submission is usually always through iClass, which is very convenient and works well! I can also easily see the deadlines and how much time I still have left to submit your work.

4. **Exams:** Exams are exams; it was not much different from what I expected. It was interesting for me though, that there are many more exam formats than I'm used to (like multiple choice, free text, calculations, presentations, etc.).

It was also new for me that students get several grades during the semester (mid-terms, finals, quizzes, assignments). At my home university we only have one big and usually very difficult exam at the end of the semester, which is quite burdensome and puts a lot of pressure on students. I like having the opportunity to show what I learned during the semester several times, and also appreciate being able to make up for a bad grade by studying harder to prepare for next time.

5. Course list that you took in this semester:

- A. Embedded System [202402-ECE4445-001]
- B. Advanced English Discussion & Presentation [202402-ENG3404-001]
- C. Digital Marketing [202402-IBT3206-001]
- D. Mobile Communication [202402-ICE4010-002]
- E. Information Security [202402-ICE4020-002]
- F. IoT Application System [202402-ISE3138-001]

6. **Course evaluation:** During the semester there is an evaluation where you can rate the courses and give feedback to the professors. I think it's a good idea, but I feel like professors don't really change a lot, even if they get feedback that students wish for some changes.

I wish it could also be easier to access the evaluation. I only received one email this semester and many people I know forgot about it too. Especially because everyone is stressed about mid-term exams during the evaluation period. It would be helpful if the evaluation could be accessed through iClass or something like this, where students can see it and be reminded of it easily every day.

7. Main language of courses: English

- 8. Courses that you would like to recommend:** The course Information Security [202402-ICE4020-002] taught by Professor Yongwoo Lee and the course Technical Writing by Professor Jordan C. Wise. The last course I took during my first exchange semester in fall 2023. This fall semester 2024 is my second exchange semester at Inha. Both of the courses are very interesting, and you can learn a lot.

Information Security made me more curious about that topic. Before, I thought Information Security was a little bit boring, but now I want to learn more about it and do some projects in my own time, even after the course ends.

The Technical Writing course felt very inspiring beyond just the syllabus and made me think a lot about important topics in life. I feel like I learned way more than just writing in that class. I'll definitely remember my time in that course for my whole life and think about what I learned there fondly.

■ TRANSPORTATION

- 1. Type of transportation:** Subway and bus, walking
- 2. Fees:** About 1.200-1.600 won for a one-way ticket.
- 3. T-money card:** I use my student ID as T-money ticket, or the Kakao Pay functionality.
- 4. Some tips for saving money:** If you want to go somewhere you can check on Naver Maps about what routes are possible. Sometimes you can save a little bit of money, but in general the fees are pretty similar for all modes of transportation.

It's important to tap out with your T-money card when you exit from public transportation, especially in buses. This way you can transfer to other subways or buses within 20 minutes without paying the full fee again. If you only drive a few stations, you can also avoid paying the full fee when you tap out, as it is cheaper.

■ SCHOOL LIFE AT INHA UNIVERSITY

1. **Buddy program:** I applied for the buddy program, but unfortunately it seems like I didn't get a buddy this time... :(
2. **Student clubs:** There are a lot of student clubs at Inha, which I think is really cool! Nevertheless, I feel like it's a bit difficult to join them, as there is not much information available for exchange students. I can also feel that some Korean students feel burdened by the language barrier if an international student joins. It's a bit sad, but I can understand it at the same time too. I wish there could be more information about clubs that are in English. I wasn't very interested in going out and partying, so the only club for international students I knew about (Azit), wasn't a good fit for me.
3. **ISN field trips:** I didn't join as it was expensive sometimes or I didn't have time. The fieldtrips seem cool though, and I really like the ISN Instagram page.
4. **Cafeteria:** I didn't go to the cafeteria at first, because I didn't know how it worked. But after I went for the first time with my Korean friend and he could help me to figure out how to buy meals, I came more often by myself too.
It's quite affordable and the food tastes good! There is also the 1.000 won breakfast, but it's too early for me so I never tried it.
5. **Recommended restaurants near Inha:**
 - A. [우리소참한우정육식당 인하본점](#) which has very good 갈비탕 and 육회비빔밥.
 - B. [가메이](#) which has very good fish and rice bowls
 - C. [어벤더치 인하대점](#) where you can buy very cheap but good coffee. It's even cheaper than Mega Coffee, but only suitable for take-out. There are no seats inside, and the interior is not very pretty.
6. **Library:** The library is very big and modern, and it even has a piano room that can be rented for playing the piano. I usually study at home, but it's a good place to prepare for exams. At the beginning of the semester there was a Zoom meeting that I could join, where they explained how to use the library. You can check on the library website when the opening hours are too, and if you want to make sure to get a seat, you can also make a reservation. The library also has a place where students can print out some documents for a small fee. Whenever I went to

the library, I just stayed on the ground floor, which has places to study too. Don't forget to bring the student ID, as it's necessary to check in with it at the entrance.

7. **Gym:** I don't know what offers they have and how to use it, so I never went there. But I know that it's right next to the cafeteria, so it seems very convenient for students who want to work out. If there was more information available in English, I would probably check it out.
8. **Student ID card:** I picked up my Student ID card at the International Student Lounge a short while after the semester started. It can be used as a T-money card to pay for public transportation, and also as a debit card if you charge it at the subway stations.
If you want to make a bank account at the Hana bank on campus, they will also connect your student ID to your bank account and make it into an actual debit card. I made a Hana bank account, but I never used the Student ID card to pay, since I have my own credit card connected to my bank account abroad. It's also still necessary to charge it if you want to use it as a T-money card. The transportation fee cannot be deducted from a debit card if you are a foreigner.

■ ACCOMMODATION

1. **Accommodation type:** Off-campus housing
2. **Cost:** ~450.000 won per month
3. **Rules:** No specific rules
4. **Foods:** I cook by myself, eat outside or at the cafeteria, or order delivery. When I cook by myself, I usually order ingredients from Coupang, because it's cheaper than buying in a supermarket. But the Homeplus near the Inha front gate has very good deals at the end of the day where you can get fruits and vegetables with a big discount, so it's worth it to check it out!
5. **Tips for choosing accommodations:** Definitely the cheapest option is to choose on-campus housing in a dormitory at Inha. However, I felt like I couldn't share a room with 3 other people, so I decided to live off-campus. Inha also offers the option for off-campus housing, which I chose during my first semester in fall 2023. The apartment was a bit old, but everything worked fine, and it was very convenient. Everything was included in the price, so I didn't have to worry about finding an apartment and utility costs like gas, electricity and Wi-Fi.

But after I came here for the first time, I realized that the price was quite expensive, so I chose to find an apartment by myself this time in fall 2024. I asked a local Korean friend who helped me to find an apartment. There are also real estate agents that offer international service to find an apartment. I think the easiest way though is just going with an option provided by Inha or asking a local Korean friend to help you out.

6. **How to check-in and out:** I just met the building manager on the first day when I arrived and signed the contract. Before checking out the building manager will check that the apartment is in good condition. Other than that, there is no special procedure to check out.

■ PICTURES/VIDEO (Introduce your life in Korea)



I went to Songdo G-tower!



Homeplus at Inha front gate where you can find basically everything to buy

(More below! :))



Board game cafés are really cool to spend time with friends!!



I went on a bike tour with friends to 신도, 시도, 모도 islands close to Incheon



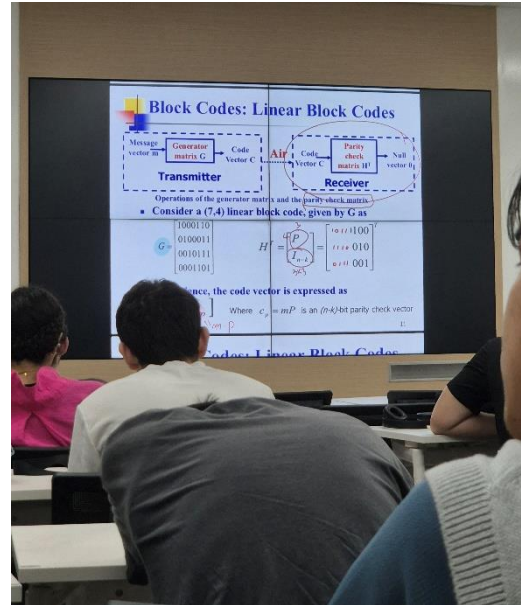
At first, I couldn't believe that there's a whole airplane on campus ground!



View of the main building from the library



Salmon bowl at one of my favourite restaurants that I mentioned earlier (가메이)



Picture of my professor's notes during the last class before mid-term exams... TT