

Charlie 0:00

My name is Charlie and I'm from a little city in the south of China. I was going to take part in the arts exam to get in an art university in China. But then I realised that's not really what I want to do. And I start to learn about other university in other countries, because I really like other cultures. So I've been wanting to go to another country to study. And then I came to London in 2017. And I really liked the culture here. It's like the combination of old cultures and modern, it's full of young people's voices. And I decided to apply for arts university in London, and I got in other universities as well, but then I think UAL is the best, and is the most, it's most me. You know, it's something that I really want to do. So, that brought me here. Yeah.

Sissy 1:02

I'm from the same country with Charlie. We are from the south of China. And I love the foreign language, too. And I really like to living in a European atmosphere because I think it have a quite good art atmosphere. And also some gorgeous galleries and museums. And a lot of interesting things here. My name is Sissy.

Academic Support 1:34

So your school friends?

Charlie 1:36

No, we're not from the same city. We didn't know each other before. Yeah. Okay, I'm doing level three international introduction. It is like a preparation course for BA courses. This course helped me to have the idea of studying in London, studying arts in UAL. So yeah.

Sissy 1:58

I have the same foundation courses as Charlie. And I would like to prepare for illustration next year. And I would like to get the offer from the Camberwell. I think the illustrations in Camberwell is the best in UK.

Charlie 2:16

I feel like before coming, you know actually coming here, I have zero idea about what it will be like to study here. Because I didn't come to open day or anything because I'm in China. And all I know about UAL is some YouTube videos that people from UAL put on the website. I don't know, I don't really have any expectations. I know it's going to be cool, of course.

Charlie 2:49

So we usually go to school studio practice on Mondays and Fridays. We have three teachers. And we have projects like they give us a topic and we have to produce an outcome in probably one and a half month. And for Mondays and Fridays we just go to the classroom in the tower block. And the tutors will give us advice and check our progress. And the lesson is from 10 to two o'clock in the afternoon. And after that we're free but I will stay in the library and do more research about it. And Tuesday we have English classes, but we are divided into three groups depending on our level of English. And I go to the lessons in the afternoon from three to five I guess. And on the English course on the English class, we will ... we will also have projects as well. For example, the first one is writing personal statements for BA courses, then the tutors will give us advice and read our essay or personal statement as well.

And sometimes we play little games to help us study better. And yeah, we also have English presentation. It's basically like practice our English writing and talking skills. And then we have Wednesday's off. And during that time, I usually work on my projects, or go to galleries to do research or just relax at home, sometimes. And Thursday, we have contextual and theoretical studies, in short it's called CTS. And I think it's really interesting course, to let us discuss and do research about. And yeah, come to Friday, which is the same as in Mondays. And at the weekend I just relax or just continue my research towards the projects or go to galleries or explore other places in London.

Sissy 5:07

I remember the first few weeks when we started our foundation courses. It's before the undergraduate students started their course. And that two weeks we meet in groups to experience the different workshops in LCC and they introduced we a lot about like the screen printing, the letterpress, the 3D workshop, the digital places and after that we have the first project about the letter. Tutor leave me to do some primary and secondary research. I remember they took us to walk around Elephant & Castle and to find many different letters in the street or in the buildings and try to teach us a lot of different ways to

Charlie 6:02

...to develop our idea. Yeah,

Sissy 6:06

Yes, that's cool. Yeah.

Charlie 6:07

Yeah, I think it's really busy. I don't know about BA courses, but our foundation course is so busy, especially for the first and the second project because we kind of just got to London. And we didn't know anything about living here and studying here. And it's kind of overwhelming a bit at the beginning, but then it just get better. And yeah, the project is always there. There's always something to do. Yeah, I think that's our life now.

Academic Support 6:38

So what skills do you think you need to really do well here? What sort of qualities does this sort of course demand?

Charlie 6:49

I think for me is one thing very important is that you have to be willing to communicate with other people. It's like, art is not, it's not something that you keep in your mind and just do on your own. I collaborate with other artists in our course, for example her. And then that really, that really gives me like fresh ideas and then inspire me sometimes. Yeah, and also improve my English skills.

Sissy 7:21

Yeah, I think be curious is also very important. And be curious about different places you have never tried before. And be brave to you know, ask questions with our tutors and classmates. Also be brave to communicate with students from different countries because they have different culture contexts. It's a very good places for us

to develop all the skills, whatever, the living skills, or the studying skills, or when you living in our students' accommodations, you have different flatmates from different schools in UAL. So I think it's a quite good time.

Academic Support 8:13

How do you deal with stress and difficulties and times when things aren't going well?

Charlie 8:19

Well, actually, I called the students service because there was a time that I really I had a hard time with my flatmate that we kind of have had a fight. And that really stressed me out. Especially, there's so much work to do as well, at the same time. When the lady from the Student Service, I think she's a therapist, when she called me, I didn't get a chance to talk to her because I've been busy with other stuff. But yeah, it's really nice, because you know, there's, there's someone that you can talk to. And also, I think just go out to any park and have a chill relax day. It's really important, you know, take a little break from your work. And my mom always told me that you can't just get any idea from sitting in the library and staring at your work, that's only going to give you stress. Yeah, I think just go out and do different thing and just free yourself from the thing that you are doing is kind of help you with the stress.

Academic Support 9:29

What do you think, coming and studying in art and design what you want it to give you?

Charlie 9:35

For me, I've been trying to express myself better. And I'm really, I'm not that kind of person who's really good at words. And that's why I want to do film. I really loved painting when I was young. And then I fell in love with writing, but I can't really write very well so that's the form that combines like visual art and also storytelling, which is film. And yeah, I think film is a really powerful way to express yourself and also tell stories. I guess that's why I come here, yeah,

Sissy 10:13

I think I like to learn more, because I like to learn more which I become more creative.

Academic Support 10:25

Give some examples of how different cultures have influenced you being here. Where you've got to know new things about people's backgrounds as a result.

Charlie 10:37

Yes, so one of my friends from Belize, it's like, a Caribbean country, I think, I'm not sure. Yeah, so she lives in Belize, but her family's from India, and she said that Belize is a very multicultural country. And then that gives her the idea of not to judge people from their cultural background. And I remember what she said that really leaves me deeply impression. She said that when she think of her friend, the last thing that she will think of is their nationality. So we always have different stereotype about like, German people really like beer, that kind of stuff. I mean, sometimes they're real, but we can't, we shouldn't be judging them just based on this stereotype.

And we should treat them like, just like individual, like a person. And yeah, but I think that's one of the most important thing I learned from the people I met here.

Sissy 11:46

Yeah, I also have friend, and she is an undergraduate student, which is from Oxford. And she's very warm hearted. And she usually told me a lot of skills, which we will learn in undergraduate courses. And she also helped me to prepare my interview, which is a very good way to talk about questions with the local students in UK.

Academic Support 12:17

Do you get assessed, do you have assessments, do you have marks on on the foundation course?

Charlie 12:23

We only have pass or fails. I have friends who are doing... doing BA courses, and they have like really marks instead of pass or fail. But one thing I like about the assessment here is that they will give you very detailed... how the two tutors think your work is and how they think you have to improve. That really makes me feel that they are taking my work seriously, instead of just giving a grade or a mark, or pass or failed. I really love to see other people's thoughts towards my work. And that's one thing I'm really happy about.

Sissy 13:05

Yeah, Charlie said very in detail. I think

Academic Support 13:08

Some people get very offended by feedback. They take it very personally, what would you say to them?

Charlie 13:13

Well, a lot of people think, when people say something not really nice to their work, they think, oh it's my work, what do you care? You don't understand me? That kind of stuff. And what I think is, for me, art is a form of communication. And you have to, you have to consider about other people's opinion. I mean, sometimes they can be very extremes, of course, but you don't have to take their words like it's just a personal opinion. I can get a little bit upset when people say I don't think that's working very well. But I also get, I also learned my lesson. And I also start to see what parts work well and what part doesn't. Because I know that I'm not like a world top artist and even world top artists make mistakes. So I think other people's criticism is helpful. Yeah.

Sissy 14:12

Yeah, criticism is important. But the teachers and students always give me encouragement. And they usually talk about what you can do next. Maybe they don't tell us what you must do or what you mustn't do, they just improve your ideas.

Academic Support 14:34

What else, about coming here?

Sissy 14:36

We have many student sports clubs.

Charlie 14:39

Yeah, I didn't know that. That you can come to UAL, not just for study, you can also join some clubs and also other activities, other workshop. And that's a way to meet other people and also experience more. Yeah.

Sissy 14:57

Yeah.

Charlie 14:59

And also LCC is very busy. You have to book everything in advance, or you won't get it. That's the tip for new students.

Academic Support 15:09

Be prepared.

Charlie 15:10

Yeah.

Academic Support 15:10

And manage your time.

Charlie 15:13

Yeah, definitely. I didn't my last projects in the last two days before the deadline.

Academic Support 15:21

Never again?

Charlie 15:23

Well, actually it worked well in the end. But I don't think that I can live with that much pressure, like always. So yeah, I'm doing my film now, a month before the deadline, because I just don't want to have that pressure again.

Academic Support 15:41

You'd recommend being a student here?

Charlie 15:44

Absolutely. It's like, the most, the best choice I've ever made. It's a big choice, of course. But, up to now, I haven't regretted it ...come here.

Sissy 16:02

Yeah. Maybe we have many worries before we came to London. Yeah. When we come here, I feel this city is quite amazing.

Charlie 16:15

Yeah, London is really is a really nice city and everyone's friendly. And I get a lot of question, you know, from my old classmate, they will ask, is people here racist? And do you get insulted because you are Asian? And I haven't got any things like that,

yet. There's so many foreigners in London it is a really, really multicultural and open minded city.

Charlie 16:44

Yeah, I was going to register in a library in Camberwell. And then they asked me why I didn't put my real name, Pinhui, which is in Chinese, in the form, and because I put Charlie and that Charlie is not the same name as what I had on ID. So they asked me, and I was like, because people can't pronounce Pinhui right, and I just want to make it easy for all the people. And then the lady just said that "my name is"... her name, sorry, I don't remember.. "and it's hard to pronounce, but people just have to get used to it." So yeah, if you can't really speak English, like English people, they will just have to get used to it. Because that's you.

Academic Support 17:33

I agree. Thanks very much.

Charlie 17:35

Thank you.

Sissy 17:36

Thank you.