

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Introduction:

I am Aashish Murali. I was born in Palakkad, Kerala and brought up in Chennai, Tamilnadu, India. I hold confirmation of enrolment for Master of International Tourism and Hotel Management from Southern Cross University, Melbourne, Australia. I belong to a well settled family. After having worked for a Supply Chain Management firm for around 2 years, I now manage two restaurants in Tamilnadu, owned by my father who is a retired government official. My mother, an energetic and enthusiastic home maker, lends us a helping hand in managing the business. I have an older brother who holds a master's degree from Purdue University, currently working for a very successful IT firm in Michigan, USA.

Academics & Employment:

I completed my Secondary Education from SBOA School and Junior College, Chennai affiliated to Central Board of Secondary Education with 72.6% in May 2009 and I passed my Senior Secondary from SBOA Matriculation Higher Secondary School with 70.16% in May 2011. Then I accomplished Bachelor of Engineering in Electronics and Instrumentation from Jeppiaar Engineering College affiliated to Anna University with 6.9 CGPA in May 2015.

After graduating, I worked full-time for an Event Management firm involved in organizing Government events, corporate events, Medical Conferences, outdoor ceremonies and parties, etc. I was an integral part of organizing travel, food and accommodation for the All India Medical Conference, a high profile four-day event attended by doctors and their families from all over the country. This was my first major large-scale exposure to the world of event management and hospitality, where I got to interact with prominent people, understand their varied requirements, and serve them with sincerity. I realized that the major driving factor in the Service Industry is the happiness and satisfaction that our services bring to the customers' faces.

My second professional experience was with a Supply Chain Management/Logistics MNC. I worked as a Documentation Expert in Customer Service for Air Freight Department. A good amount of smart work and high productivity from my end received positive reviews, and within a span of 6 months I was promoted to work with international customers directly. I got the opportunity to handle the global movements of Dell International Pvt. Ltd., and Apple India Pvt. Ltd., the two most important clients of my company.

Interacting with the same set of people from across the world, but with a varied set of requirements each day, was a novel experience for me. This helped me to learn to plan and prioritize tasks of utmost responsibility, thus catering to all customer needs equally and satisfactorily.

After earning two years of valuable experience in logistics, I approached my father, who had just retired from his services, to invest in my dream of building and running a chain of restaurants. I had by now proved that if I could do very well in any job profile thrust upon me, I shall do my very best in the field that I actually loved and cared deeply for.

With my parents' financial and emotional backing, I quit my job and started working on my dream. With no prior experience in running a restaurant, starting from scratch was a Herculean task and required a thorough research and understanding of all the nitty-gritties of the business. Customer comfort and happiness was my prime motive. I was successful in working towards the same with many cost-effective ideas. With smart advertising and a carefully chosen location, menu and staff, we had a good opening.

No business is devoid of setbacks, and ours too faced initial difficulties, which turned out to be a great learning experience. I had an eye-opening experience in interacting with the customers, from young students to elderly couples, trying to understand customer wants and needs on a first hand basis. Working on the customer feedback regularly did the trick, and soon enough, our little restaurant was bustling with happy customers who gave us very good online and offline ratings for our food, ambience and services. Within a short

period, we started our second branch as well. Now I am managing both these outlets. I also feel delighted to have coached and enabled my staff to handle the services and run the restaurants successfully in my absence.

With my brother working for a successful firm in the US for about 5 years, and my parents being actively involved in running our restaurants for 15 months now, I found myself in a very financially secure position to take time off work to study and explore the Hotel Industry and related businesses. Thereafter I undertook IELTS exam on 27th April 2019 and achieved overall 7.0 bands with Listening- 8.0, Reading- 7.0, Writing- 6.0 and Speaking- 7.0.

Why Australia rather than any other developed countries?

Reasons for choosing Australia as my study Destination are relatively strong. Australia is third most preferred study destination for International Students in the world behind United Kingdom and the United States despite having a population of only 23 million. Australia with world's 13th largest economy with the second-highest human development globally ranks high in quality of life, health, education, economy and freedom with civil and political rights. In Australia education system has a great learning methods enriched with globally ranked universities, technically sound equipment's and well trained professors. It encourages one to be innovative, creative and think independently. Besides this, Australia is dynamic, vibrant country with energetic, friendly people. Qualification acquired from Australia is recognized worldwide by all the employers and organization. Australia's international exposure makes it as one of the most preferred destinations for the international students. Opting for Master's in Australia increases the chances for self-development, diverse knowledge and practical skills, where I can make best of what I will be studying and implement in future and make my career better. Most of the courses and training offered by Australian Universities and Colleges to the international students is covered by Australian Qualification Framework (AQF). The four of the top 10 most livable cities in the world are in Australia.

I have also searched for institutes offering this course in other developed countries like Canada, Switzerland and UK. Firstly in Canada I have checked a few universities - Centennial College and fee \$14080, Royal Roads University and Thompson Rivers University and fee structure is between \$25800-\$ 32000. And duration of these offering program is less as compare to Australian Universities. After that in UK and some universities which are offering this course is The University of Central Lancashire, Oxford Brookes University and University of Derby . Some of the Swiss universities offering this course are The Glion Institute and the Swiss Hotel Management School.

Why not India?

I looked up related graduate programs offered by universities in India first, few of them being: Welcome group Graduate School of Hotel Administration, Institute of Hotel Management, Catering Technology and Applied Nutrition (IHM), Chennai c. Department of Hotel Management - Christ University, SRM Institute of Hotel Management. Having spent all my student and professional years in India, I craved for some global exposure. Universities in India offer good education, but the competition and exposure, networking opportunities and hands-on experience in the said industry here is a rarity.

Global ranking and recognition of a university was also one of my priorities. And that is not sufficient; their selection procedure does not allow everyone to pursue their dreams as the seats are limited and the applicants are more. It is also hard to seek admission in India due to the reservation system because of which very limited seats are left for students from other category. But in my opinion Indian Institutes are not able to deliver deep practical training along with theoretical knowledge. However, I will not be able to get well qualified and experienced teaching faculty due to the same and old education system of India. Moreover, I will not get international exposure by doing this course in India which can only get by studying and working in an international environment.

Why The Hotel School, Melbourne - Southern Cross University?

I converged my choices to Australia as it seemed to offer some of the best high-quality education opportunities, with an excellent value for money and a lovely standard of living. The fact that many universities in Australia offered options for paid internships while studying was also a huge extrinsic motivation. Narrowing down on the universities to apply for was no easy task.

Some of the universities that caught my attention were; Torrens University - Masters in Hotel management is 2 years program which is offering, and fee structure is 22458 – 30000 AUD, University of Queensland - Masters in Hotel Management program duration is 1.5 years and fee is \$42272 annually. Victoria University - Masters in Tourism and Destination Management James Cook University - Masters in Tourism and Hospitality fee structure is between \$25000 - \$31200 AUD.

I had to choose a place that would help me adapt seamlessly to the curriculum, build on my existing knowledge of running a business (probably unlearn a lot of things too), and enable me to grow as a successful entrepreneur. A detailed study and comparison of the course structure, lecturers, course fee, student body, campus environment, co-curricular and extracurricular activities, and other miscellaneous facilities of multiple universities later, I narrowed down on The Hotel School - Melbourne (Southern Cross University). The positive reviews and testimonials by successful alumni across social media and professional blogs were also quite encouraging.

Why Master of International Tourism and Hotel Management?

The duration of my chosen course is of 2 years with an annual fee of AUD 26,000. The core subjects here are Accounting for Managers, Industry Research Project (Double Weight), Marketing, Leading and Managing People, Tourism and Hospitality Management, International Tourism Systems, Management Communication, Tourism Planning Environments, Managing Information Systems, Contemporary Hotel and Tourism Issues, Entrepreneurship and Innovation. I am thrilled by the sheer variety this program offers, opening up new pathways for me to grow as an entrepreneur. Over the course of my Master's program and the initial learning curve in my career right afterward, I am keen on working towards Managerial training, Tourism planning, Marketing, Leadership training, Industry Research and Entrepreneurship. I have always dreamt big, dreamt of working for reputed hotel managements, dreamt of passionately building my own successful hotel chain. Though parental and peer pressure eventually saw me through as an Engineering graduate, I took it upon myself to prove my passion towards Tourism and Hospitality/Hotel Management. The field of Tourism and Hospitality has seen a vast growth in the past few years. It is only going to grow more and more, never come down.

Career Plans / Future Aspects:

I aspire to graduate in International Tourism & Hotel Management, gain more industry experience until my visa expires, and come back home to India, enriched with worthy academic knowledge and exposure, and extend my family business further to a national level, and, eventually make a mark for it globally. I am all geared up to invest an insane amount of smart work and dedication to this dream. I strongly believe that The Hotel School - Melbourne will enable me to fall in love all over again with my passion for hotel management, consume knowledge from learned and experienced academicians, learn alongside and compete against efficient peers from around the globe, and help me grow as a strong willed and skilled person, and a passionate entrepreneur.

The salary package offered at the end of a Master's degree from a globally acclaimed foreign university is way higher than the ones offered for graduates in India. The average salary for a hotel management

post graduate student in India ranges from INR 3-7 lacs per annum, whereas the same Master's degree from reputed foreign universities shall most likely fetch a starting package of INR 20 lakhs or more per annum.

Financial Capacity:

My parents are sponsoring me for my further studies in Australia. We have access of INR 22,42,500 (AUD 46,178) in our saving accounts for my 2nd year fee, living and travel expenses.

Accommodation:

I will look for accommodation that suits my needs and budget. There are few options like - share- house, home stay etc. One option of accommodation is home stay, and it cost around 335 \$ per week. There is also an option of sharing a room with friends and it costs around 180 \$ per week. I will be applying for my chosen accommodation through Australian Home stay Network (AHN), which charges placement fee of \$ 290.

Student Visa Conditions:

I will be issued a visa under subclass 500 higher education. To maintain this visa I need to fulfill following conditions:

- I can't work more than 40 hours per fortnight.
- I must maintain satisfactory attendance in the course.
- I must maintain OSHC during my stay in Australia.
- I must tell the Education Provider if there is any change in the address.
- I must follow all rules and regulations prescribed by Australian Immigration.
- I must not involve in any crime throughout degree course staying in Australia.
- I must return to India on the completion of my Visa length.

Sincerely,
Aashish Murali