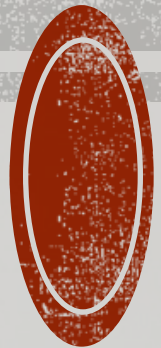


NEOMA BUSINESS SCHOOL

EXCHANGE REPORT FALL 2016

**ROVENA TSOI
(YEAR 3, BBA IN IS & OM)**



MONTHLY ACTIVITY LOG

Late August – September

Before I went to NEOMA Business School, I visited Germany (Frankfurt, Cologne, Nuremburg, Munich and Füssen) with another exchange student who is also from HKUST. There was huge difference in temperature between day and night. So, be prepared of the rapid change in temperature!

We arrived Rouen on 31st August to check in our dormitories. The arrangement was bad that we needed quite a long time to find out where to make the check-in procedure since there was no signs to guide us. After settling ourselves, we went to the nearby supermarket, Carrefour by bus F2 and got off at La Vatin- Centre Commercial.

The orientation day was held on 2nd September. When we arrived the Auditorium, the signs were confusing and helpers there were inefficient. Still, we got to know more about the campus and the courses. After that, we all went to the castle to make our bank card and to the HUB to get our student cards. Again, I was disappointed about the administration of NEOMA. They did not manage the queue well and there were only 3 staff from the bank to complete all the applications of the exchange students. It took us very long time to get all the things done.

Before classes started, we got familiar with the neighborhood and subscribed the phone plan. Most importantly, we found some Chinese Supermarkets that we could buy some Chinese food to cook.

My classes started on 7th September. Although I have 6 classes, I only had lessons from Monday to Wednesday.

For travelling, I went to Paris, Netherlands (Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Hague) , and UK (London) in September.

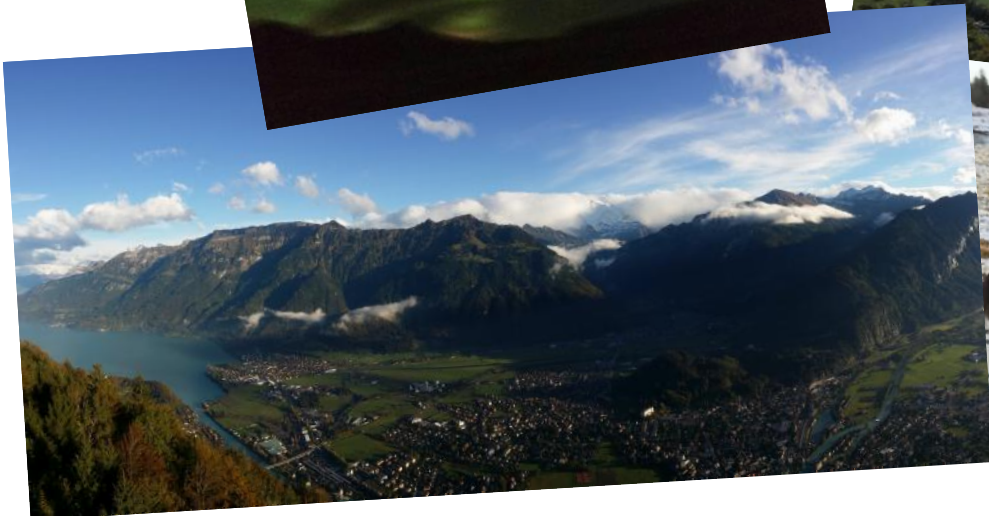
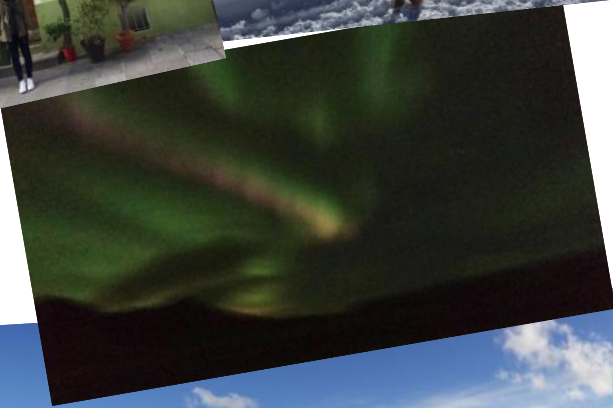
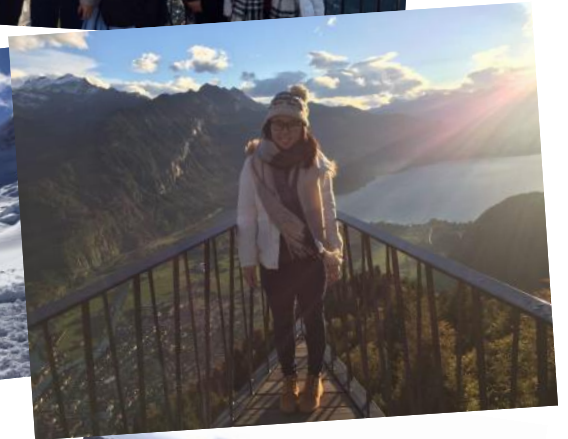
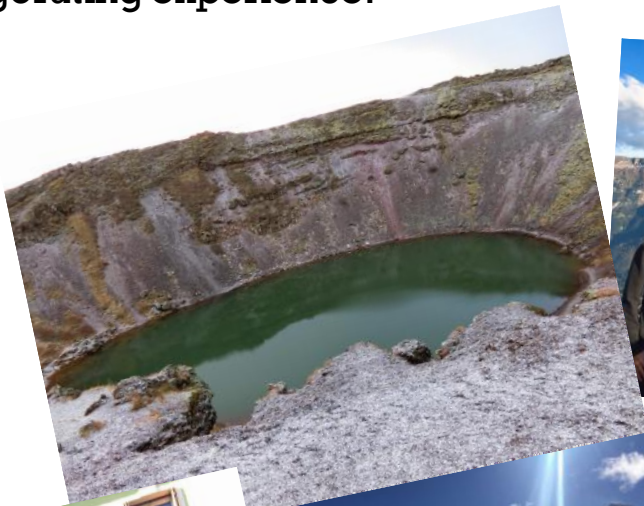


MONTHLY ACTIVITY LOG

October

I have already adapted to the environment in NEOMA and Rouen after one month. The workload in NEOMA was not really heavy. There were not many assignments to do compared with HKUST. However, there were more presentations than UST for sure. Sometimes, I was grouped with some French students to prepare for the project or presentation, many of them were reluctant to discuss in English. So it was quite hard to blend in.

In October, I went to Paris again, Switzerland (Jungfrau!!!) and Iceland. I was really amazed by the view of snow mountain in Switzerland. The Geysir hotspring and waterfall Gullfoss in Iceland were stunning too. Blue Lagoon was another invigorating experience.



MONTHLY ACTIVITY LOG

November

I joined the buddy program organized by the Culture Co.. In the programme, I met a French girl named Yolène and we sometimes had lunch together. She also helped me with my French presentation. Besides, I went to a fun fair to play the rides and tried the local food with some of my Chinese friends, exchange students from HKUST and buddies from NEOMA.

The exam schedule was released quite late. So it was hard for me to plan for the trips after exam beforehand. Also, don't trust the proposed exam schedule posted in the Facebook group by the administration officer. They stated that the exam period would be 6th Dec – 23rd Dec. However, the French final exam was actually on 2nd December so I cancelled one trip in order to attend the final exam. Therefore, think twice before you book the air ticket!

This month, I had 4 final presentations and some projects so it was a tough month. Still, it did not stop me from travelling. I went to Poland (Warsaw and Krakow), Spain (Barcelona), Italy (Venice and Rome) and Greece (Athens and Santorini). Among these places, I love Santorini in Greece the most. However, it was not the peak season for travelling in Santorini, many shops and restaurants did not open at that time.



MONTHLY ACTIVITY LOG

December

This is the month of examination. After my trips, I went back to Rouen to do my revision. After finishing all the exams, I went to Belgium (Brussels, Gents and Bruges), Czech Republic (Prague) and Austria (Vienna and Hallstatt). I checked out my residence on 30th Dec.



GENERAL INFORMATION

1) Visa Procedures

Since we stay in France for more than 90 days, we need to apply for Visa before leaving Hong Kong. First, you have to send an email to make an appointment for an academic interview. Bring all the required document stated in the website. You will be asked about some simple questions like your level of French and why did you choose France to go for an exchange. After that, you need to make another appointment to submit the visa application to the visa section.

<http://www.consulfrance-hongkong.org/Study-long-stay-more-than-90-days>

2) Orientation

Do not expect too much from the orientation activities! As I mentioned in the September monthly activity log, the management for the orientation day was bad and it took us long time to complete all the administration issues.

3) International services & Social club activities

I joined Culture Co. by paying 10 euros on the orientation day. So, I can participate in the events organized by the club in discounted price later. It is good to join their trips to Mont St Michel and Etretat since it is difficult to go there by yourself. They also organize buddy programme that you may join if you want to know some French friends.

4) Sports and Recreation facilities

There is one gymnasium behind Ango. You may go to the Sports office at the beginning of the semester to pay 50 euros in order to enter the gymnasium.

5) Food

I usually cook the food by myself since I don't really like French food and it is quite expensive to dine outside. However, if you would like to enjoy some affordable buffet, you can go to the restaurant next to Carrefour. You only need to pay for the main dish (9-11 euros), then you can enjoy all other appetizers and desserts. Also, if you miss Chinese dishes and sushi, you may go to another buffet restaurant between the Cathédrale Notre-Dame de Rouen and flunch(a restaurant). It costs you 19.9 euros for buffet dinner.

6) Accommodations

I lived in Ango with another girl from HKUST. We shared the toilet and bathroom. For me, I actually prefer living with a friend. But, if you want more privacy and a spacious room, Pleiade would be a good choice for you. For checking-out, you need to make the check-out appointment with the cleaning lady a month before you leave. Also, you need to close the bank account (Remember to bring your passport and fill in the required documents before going to the bank) and cancel the phone service by post (I sent the letter to FREE Mobile for 3 times to cut the phone service on 31st Dec and they still charged me the monthly fee in February and I really did not know why!).

7) Courses Registration

The online registration for the courses took place in mid-August. NEOMA sent me the course catalog in May so I had plenty of time to plan for my study and the credit transfer.



GENERAL INFORMATION

8) Teaching & Assessment Methods

I took the following 6 courses in my exchange.

- French A1-1 (1 presentation, 1 mid-term, 1 final exam)
- Strategy, Purchasing Procurement SCM (1 presentation, 1 final exam)
- Supply Chain Management (3 presentations, 1 final exam)
- Sustainable Business (1 presentation, 1 case study)
- Leading Change (1 presentation, 1 essay)

9) Finance & Banking

I opened the bank account in Societe Generale on the orientation day. It takes 1-2 weeks to activate the account.

10) Transportation

If you go to the CDG airport, you can directly take Flixbus from Rouen and do not need to change any transportation. Also, you may take train or bus to Paris first, then change to metro and RER.

If you go to the Orly airport, you can either take the train or Flixbus/Ouibus to Paris first. (Flixbus is more flexible in terms of changing or cancelling the bus ticket. You can cancel the bus ticket up to 15mins before the departure. Then they will send you back a voucher code to use next time, though 1 euro will be deducted. For Ouibus, rebooking of a bus ticket needs 3 euros administration fee. They will also charge you money if you want to change the passenger name. So I usually chose Flixbus instead of Ouibus.)

In Paris, you can either take metro to Villejuif-Louis Aragon station then change to another tram to the Orly airport. This is the cheapest way (3.8 euros for 2 metro tickets). You may also choose to take the Orly bus at Denfert-Rochereau station (8 euros). The Orly bus ticket can also be bought from the automated machine in the metro or the counter just next to the bus stop.

If you go to the BVA airport, I would suggest you to use blabla car. It is better to download the app in your phone so it will be more convenient for you to use it. Although the app is in French, you will get familiarize yourself with it very soon. The blabla car app is much cheaper, more flexible and less time-consuming for you to go to the BVA airport!!

Apart from the methods mentioned above, there are also other ways to go to these 3 airports. However, I only tried the above methods. If you are interested, you may search more information online 😊



GENERAL INFORMATION

11) Finance

Items	HKD (\$)
Plane	6500
Hall Fee	11000
Visa	2000
Health Insurance	2000
Living and Travelling Expenses	60000
Total	81500

12) Health & Safety

I was once twisted my waist in France. It was too painful that I decided to see the acupuncturist. I just searched online and there was one doctor nearby named Monlouis Joysyane. Their whole treatment costed 25 euros and I think it is really useful. Also, it was mandatory to pay the 215 euros for the health insurance. Since many of us did not know where to pay for the fee at the beginning of the semester so we eventually forgot about it. However, in December, there was an email asked us to pay for it in HUB otherwise we would not be able to access the transcript later on.

13) Climate

Since I went there during Fall semester, the weather was still hot in September. It is totally fine to wear summer clothing. However, it got cooler since October. I think it is better to bring more winter clothes as it was freezing in November and December.

14) Items to bring

Clothes (for both summer and winter), HKID card, Passport, Cash & credit card, laptop, adaptors, chargers, power strip) medicines, umbrella, stationary, cup noodles/snacks, hair dryer (cost around 16 euros in Carrefour), rice cooker

15) Communication

I think most of the French are either reluctant to speak in English or they really don't know English. It is better to learn some French before going. That might help you a bit.

I hope you will enjoy your exchange journey!! If you have other questions, feel free to ask the SBM office to get my email address 😊

