



ESSEC Business School, Paris

SBM Exchange Report

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Fall 2016

Part I – Monthly Activity Log

August 2016

My schoolmates and I arrived France 2 days before the orientation activities started. Upon our arrival, ESSEC arranged our transportation to the campus directly. We checked-in our dorm and settled down on the first 2 days.

There was an 'iMagination Week' organized by ESSEC officially, which was a compulsory orientation session for international students. While there were some optional orientation activities which you could choose to participate. (e.g. Boat trip in La Seine)



September 2016

Thanks to the orientation activities, I met some new friends from Korea and Singapore. We went to central Paris together during weekend.

The classes also began, the workload wasn't heavy yet. During September, I went to Amsterdam with other UST students.



October 2016

In October, I had more workload compared to September because the mid-term was coming. After the mid-term, there was a long semester break (16Days!!!) for me to take some rest and enjoy the Europe.



November 2016

After a long semester break, I backed to school and continued the classes. Thanks to my schedule, when there were weekend and day-off, I could still go to different countries. I usually worked on my school work during my resting time in the trip.



December 2016

The final examination began in 8th December, after the examination, I grabbed every chances to explore France and the Europe. I went to Spain, South of France and also East of France.



II - General Exchange Information

VISA Procedures:

Since I was holding a HKSAR passport, while I was staying in France more than 90 days, I had to apply for a study visa. The first step was to make an appointment on the website of France Embassy. Second, to conduct an Academic Interview with Campus France. After the interview, bring all the necessary documents (important!!!) to apply for the visa. You should reserve enough time for the process (around 2 weeks)

Orientation Activities

There are 2 kinds of orientation activities, one is organized by ESSEC officially while some are organized by student associations like KMT and MELT. The official one is called 'iMagination Week', which included some seminars by some French renowned people and workshops. You must attend the official one otherwise you would get a fail on your transcript. (It was a course!)

The activities by student associations are more relaxing and fun. Although they are not compulsory, I encouraged you to go because you can make some new friends. You should be aware of the email, their official Facebook page if you want to join their activities.



Accommodations

I was living in Les Hauts de Cergy, which required a 10mins train distance to school and 40 mins train distance to central Paris. There are 2 supermarkets and some restaurants nearby.

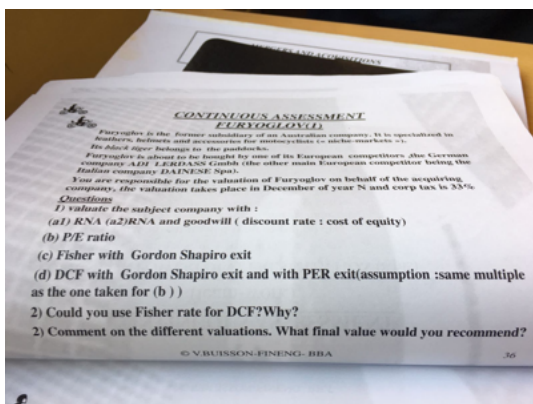
Most international students lived in Les Hauts de Cergy, however, you could choose other school accommodations or rent an apartment yourself.

Course Registration

The course registration priority was given to international students. You could register any course you want during the first round of enrolment. If you want to amend the course after the first round enrolment, you can still do it but the quota was not guaranteed.

Teaching & Assessment Methods

I took some Finance and Marketing courses. The teaching method depends on the professor. Some courses required presentation everyone week while some of them didn't have much workload.



Sports & Recreation Facilities

There are gyms inside the campus and my dorm. However, the scale and equipment are not very satisfying.

Finance & Banking

You will need to open a French bank account as soon as you arrive in France to be able to pay your phone bill and rent. There would be booths set up in Campus during the orientation week.

Health & Safety

You should bring your own medicines for precaution even you have insurance. For safety, you should be more alert if you are in tourist spots / metro / RER / at nights.

Food

I usually cook my own meal because the restaurants nearby are not attractive and expensive. You could buy everything you need in the supermarket.

In the campus, there is a cafeteria, you could have lunch and grab some snacks in there.

Transportation

You can buy a Navigo for Paris transportation. It included bus, metro and also RER. It costed around 70 EUR per month (for zone 1 – zone 5)



Climate

I arrived Paris in August and the temperature was quite hot. The temperature could be high as 40 Degree Celsius. But the weather became cooler and cooler after September. You must prepare both summer clothes and winter clothes.

Communication

Not all French people could speak English. For me, if I went to a restaurant, I always use French to greet with the waiters and ask whether they speak English. You should be polite to them otherwise they won't speak English to you even they do.

Items to bring

- HKID, Passport
- VISA Copies
- Passport photo (you will need it for Navigo card)
- Clothes (Both winter and summer)
- Adapter
- Medicine

Useful links and contacts

- VISA Application
<http://www.consulfrance-hongkong.org/study-long-stay-more-than-90-days>
- Credit Transfer Database
http://arr.ust.hk/ust_actoe/credit.php
- HKUST Study Aboard
<http://studyabroad.ust.hk/>