

Exchange Report

Spring Semester 2017



Cass Business School
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Year 3 Marketing and Information System

Monthly Activity Log

Jan 2017

I arrived London with three other exchange students from HKUST on 13th Jan. It was snowing when we arrived the Gatwick Airport. The semester commenced at the end of January so we got some time to hang around London and other UK cities. We couldn't wait to visit the City, University of London and Cass Business School. Cass Business School is near Moorgate Tube Station while the City, University of London is a 10-minute walk from the Angel Tube Station. There are lots of restaurants near the station. Later on, we found that all our lectures took place at the buildings in City University of London as Cass Business School is mainly for postgraduate students. Since I was not assigned to any official dormitory, I had to rent my own private accommodation near Tottenham Hale Tube Station. After we settled down, we visited Oxford, Harry Potter Studio and some famous sightseeing spots in London. As soon as the semester began, I went to Paris with my friends to celebrate the Lunar Chinese New Year.

Feb 2017

Since I took 5 courses, I only got a day off on Monday. My dormitory is quite distant from the campus so I have to spare an hour to get to school by Tube or bus. The weather was still cold and I got a presentation at the end of February so I mainly stayed at my accommodation during holidays. For the weekends, I went to Cambridge and Newcastle with my friends. Cambridge was a bit similar to Oxford, yet it got less places to visit. My friend was studying in Newcastle and she brought me to casinos, popular restaurants and some famous sightseeing spots.

Mar 2017

I went to Scotland over the first weekend of March. My friends and I joined a tour to Isle of Skye organized by an Asian travel agency. The tour guide is from China and he lives in Edinburgh. We visited some famous sightseeing spots at Highland and Isle of Skye, including Glenfinnan Viaduct, Glen Etive and Fort William. The way to Isle of Skye is filled with natural sceneries. We saw double rainbow on our way back to Edinburgh. If we were lucky enough, we could even see aurora at Isle of Skye. My friends visited me in London mid-March. We watched Les Miserables musical, visited Greenwich and watched Jay Chou's concert together. We also went to night club and watched parade to celebrate St. Patrick's Day. I visited Cardiff the week after as my friend was an exchange student there. March was a presentation month and I had to prepare the information and slides for LA2017 Performing Arts in London with my groupmates. I went to Iceland as soon as I finished my presentation. Iceland was a great place to enjoy natural beauty and learn about different landforms. My friends and I joined several local day tours during our Iceland trip. We went snorkelling and visited an ice-cave, the black pebble beach, the Golden Circle and the western side of Iceland. Since we visited Iceland at the end of March, the weather became warmer and the ice-cave melted when we got there. Therefore, I recommend you to visit Iceland in colder months. It would be even better if you know how to drive and go on a road trip at Iceland so that you can have a more flexible and wonderful trip.

Monthly Activity Log

Apr 2017

As soon as I returned from Iceland, I started to work on my projects and exams. Since I took alternative assessments to substitute final exams, the deadlines were set at the end of the semester. I was busy working on the academic stuffs on the first 2 weeks of April after returning from Iceland. As soon as my exams were finished, I went to Italy, Norway, Denmark, Sweden and Finland to go on vacation with my friends. I was sick during my Scandinavia trip. I tried to seek for medicines from the drug stores in Sweden. But I found that they do not sell OTC medicines so please remember to carry your own medicines when travelling around Europe.

May 2017

After returning to London from my Scandinavia trip, I travelled again to Majorca, Barcelona and Lisbon with the friends I met during exchange study. The weather was mildly hot and we could finally wear short sleeves. We enjoyed the boundless beaches, beautiful architectures and tasty cuisines. After taking a short break back at London, I flew to the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg with my friends. Last but not least, I went to Dublin as my last travel destination in Europe and as my first solo trip. The city looks pretty similar to London. I think it is a safe city for solo traveller and it is perfectly fine to stay at hostels. It finally came to the end of my exchange life and I spared some days to wander around London. I had picnic with my friends, watched the Phantom of the Opera (It was a great show!), went to Brighton and visited some sightseeing spots at London again. Time flies and it is time to return to the reality. I came back Hong Kong on the last day of May. Everything in my exchange life was amazing despite all the little flaws. It was a really really good experience to have had my exchange life at Cass Business School and London.

General Exchange Information

Visa Procedures

For Hong Kong Passport holders, you do not have to apply for a visa if you are going to stay for less than 6 months and you are not planning to work in UK. You have to bring your acceptance letter (and return ticket after your semester ends) whenever you leave UK. You are required to show it (them) to the officers with your passport and landing card when you return to UK.

Orientation Activities

The orientation activities consisted of an orientation talk, a campus tour, a city tour and a cocktail party. The talk was mandatory and gave lots of useful information in studying in Cass Business School. Other activities were free to join. It was a great opportunity to meet other exchange students. I strongly recommend you to join since there were not much activities for exchange students later on.

International Services & Activities

There are not much societies or activities for exchange students. We joined the Erasmus Student Network organization and there were several activities during the semester, but most of them were clubbing and parties. Another organization was Weekend Trip and it organized trips to other cities of UK regularly.

Accommodations

Hall places are not guaranteed to exchange students. Another exchange student and I were not assigned to any official dorm so we rent two private ensuite at North Lodge operated by a private student accommodation agency (the Unite Student) near Tottenham Hale Tube Station at Zone 3. It takes about half an hour to school during non-peak hours and around 50 minutes during peak hours.

Courses Registration

The course registration system is very different from the one at HKUST. We just have to fill in a course registration form and email back to the university indicate our preferred modules before add-drop period ends. I am not sure whether only exchange students do their registration in this way or not.

General Exchange Information

Teaching & Assessment Methods

I took a total of 5 courses during my exchange study.

Course code	Course title	Credit Transfer
BS2208	New Venture Thinking	ISOM 4020: Innovation Management and Technology Entrepreneurship (3 credits)
	This course aims at helping students cultivate an entrepreneurial mindset. Every lecture consists of conceptual learning and case analyzes, followed by a tutorial which requires students to complete an in-class exercise to apply what they learn. The alternative assessment was in the form of data-based questions. Coursework weighting: In-class assignment (25%), personal journal (25%), final exam (50%)	
BS2215	Branding Consumer Behavior for Management	MARK 4000LEVEL: 4000-level Course in Marketing
	This course talks about some basic branding and consumer behavior concepts. It mainly focuses on a case - Kirobo Mini Robot. The alternative assessment was a 3000-word essay. Coursework weighting: Group project (50%), final exam (50%)	
BS2217	Public Relations and Corporate Communications	MARK 4000LEVEL: 4000-level Course in Marketing
	This course examines the theories of public relations and corporate communications with case studies. Students have to analyze and come up with new campaigns for the assignments. The alternative assessment was a 3000-word essay. Coursework weighting: Group report (40%), final exam (60%)	
LA2017	Performing Arts in London	HMCC UCORE: Common Core Course in Humanities (4 credits)
	In this course, students can enjoy 5 performances (two drama plays, a musical, an opera, a ballet show) by contributing £50. It is my favourite course as the instructor will conduct discussion and analysis with you so you can have a deep understanding of the shows. The exam is mainly based on those 5 shows you watched during the semester. The exam is easy if you attend the exam review session. Coursework weighting: Group presentation (50%), final exam (50%)	
LA2018	Historic London	HMCC UCORE: Common Core Course in Humanities (4 credits)
	It is a very special course since the format of the lecture is a two-hour city tour on some famous sightseeing spots in London. If you would like to understand more about the history and culture of London, you should join this course. The exam is easy since all information is discussed in the exam review session and uploaded to Moodle. Coursework weighting: Group presentation (50%), final exam (50%)	

Sports & Recreation Facilities

You can pay for the City Sport membership so that you can enjoy gym facilities and enrol in sports skills classes there. There are also some paid gym services such as The Gym scattered around London. For recreation facilities, the United Kingdom is famous for musicals and football matches. The tickets for musicals are easier and cheaper to get if you do not mind to enjoy the show with restricted view. However, the football tickets are way more expensive and harder to get than the ones for musicals.

General Exchange Information

Finance & Banking (including currency / expenses)

Items	HKD
Flight ticket	8000
Accommodation	32000
Transportation	7000
Living expenses	10000
Entertainment	3000
Travel	40000
Total	100000

I brought £3000 to UK and deposited it later. I opened a Santander bank account when the semester started since there is a Santander branch at the campus. I was given an ATM card and a debit card. My parents transferred money to my current account after a month. I often used debit cards for the purchases because of the convenience. I could transfer money from my current account to the debit card anytime and anywhere once I opened the online banking service. However, I think it is more worthy to use HK credit cards when you travel outside the UK since the transaction cost is lower and the exchange rate is better.

Health & Safety

There are nursing service at the campus. But it is better to bring your own medicine from Hong Kong. To prevent pickpockets, it is important to keep an eye on your personal belongings. There are lots of homeless and drunk people at night so you better avoid staying out late. Always be aware of the nearby environment so that you can escape to safe places in case there are any terrorist attacks.

Food

To save money, I often cooked my dinner at the dormitory. I usually purchased the ingredients from Lidl since they are cheaper and located near my accommodation. Dining out is relative expensive. There is a large variety of good food in London, especially at the Soho district. If you prefer food delivery, you can order food from Deliveroo or Uber eats.

General Exchange Information

Transportation

The transportation system in London is not as convenient as Hong Kong. There are several ways to travel from one place to one place, including Tube, buses, National Rail and cycling. The Tube is the most efficient transport in London as well as the most expensive one, despite the fact that it often has minor delays or suspension. You can purchase an oyster card and use it for all kinds of transport in London (except cycling, you will need a debit/credit card for renting a bike). Since I take early assessment, the term of study does not exceed 3 months so I could not apply for the student oyster card.

Climate

London was snowing occasionally during my first 2 months of exchange. The weather is cold in Winter so please bring lots of long sleeves. You will expect a lot of showers so please bring a waterproof jacket and/or umbrella to London. The temperature starts to rise when May comes. Since most accommodations do not have air-conditioning, you should prepare some short sleeves and shorts for the relatively hot weather.

Communication

I used the Giffgaff £10 monthly plan for 2GB data, 500 minutes of calls and unlimited text messages (for same service provider). However, Giffgaff is only available in UK. When I travelled to other countries, I used the £20 monthly plan from 3 for unlimited data which can also be used in many other European countries.

Items to bring

Passport

Acceptance letter

Proof of living place in London (e.g. hall acceptance letter)

Cash

Credit cards

Multi-adaptor (For travelling outside UK)

Laptop

Medicine

Small bags for storing emergency cash and identification cards under your clothes

Other notes

1. Skyscanner is a good website for searching budgeted tickets. Most budget airlines such as Ryanair and EasyJet release very cheap tickets on Tuesday and/or Wednesday afternoon and/or night. I once saw a £9 one-way flight ticket from London to Luxembourg offered by the Ryanair.
2. I strongly recommend Airbnb as your designated accommodation in Europe. The price is fair and economic if you are travelling with a bunch of people. You can choose those with higher ratings and more reviews to raise the safeness.
3. I suggest you to bring more euros for travelling so that you do not have to exchange pounds for euros and pay for the transaction fee again.