



# BI Norwegian Business School Exchange Report

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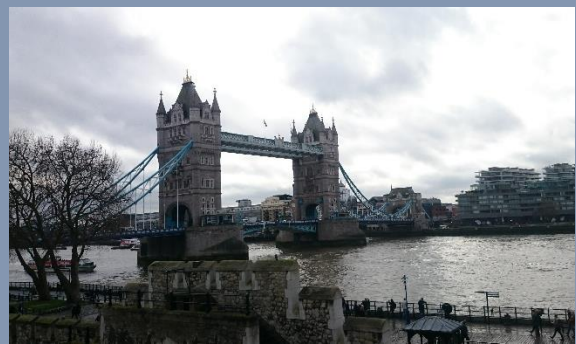
## Monthly Activity Log

### January

My 5-months exchange journey officially started on the day departing from Hong Kong with 5 other UST students to Oslo. With much anticipation and excitement, we finally arrived at Oslo. We quickly checked ourselves in our student accommodations so that we could be settled down and taken a good rest after the super long flight. During the month, we spent most of time exploring and familiarizing with the city, the people and of course, the remarkably cold weather. With the snowy weather, we surely would not miss our chance to be a child again and had some playtime with the snow. Though school had started, most of the courses were still in the introductory stage, so I grabbed some time to travel around in the UK and visit my friend there. We went to some iconic cities, like London, Bath, Oxford, etc., immersed myself into the fascinating British culture and celebrated my first-ever Chinese New Year abroad in London, which was full of festive atmosphere in the China town, to be honest.



Pulteney Bridge, Bath



Tower Bridge, London

### February

Rarely had I had the chance to travel to a country with an astounding freezing and snowy weather before, so I decided to visit various cities in Norway with my family. We went to the picturesque Ålesund, the famous Bergen and the legendary Tromsø in pursuit of the beauty of the local culture, the stunning sceneries of fjords along the route of 'Norway in a Nutshell' and last but not least, the unforgettable Northern Light. I was lucky enough to be able to see the Northern Light there after series of rainstorms and snowstorms. Watching the green light moving mysteriously in the sky was a mesmerizing moment and was a memory that I will forever remember.



Northern Light in Tromsø



River in Ålesund

## March

I went to Iceland and visited many geographic attractions, like geysers, waterfalls, volcanic craters and ice caves, that I had never imagined I would have the chance to see personally. I highly recommend you to visit Iceland as it is truly an once-in-a-lifetime experience and the views are so surreal that you will definitely be mesmerized. After this trip, it was time for me to catch up with my courses at BI as a midterm exam was approaching. However, I also managed to have a trip to Denmark and the Netherlands after the exam.



Hallgrímskirkja, Iceland



A geyser in Iceland



Zaane Schans, Netherlands

## April

Norway has one of the longest Easter Holiday in the world, so I made good use of this almost 3-weeks holiday to visit Austria, Hungary and Greece. The Easter Markets in Vienna and the beautiful small village in Hallstatt were the highlights of the trip in Austria. In Hungary, though Budapest was not as impressive as Vienna, the people there undeniably has the best hospitality which was really heart-warming. In Greece, I visited Athena, where I saw many ancient ruins of Greek temples, and Santorini, where I was at the seaside, luxuriously surrounded by the one of the most beautiful sunsets in the world. After the trip, I went back to Oslo and got prepared for my upcoming presentation.



Hallstatt, Austria



Ancient Greek Ruins, Athens (Greece)

## May

This was a month full of exams, so I spent most of my time on studying and explored more about Oslo. I also celebrated the Norwegian National Day on 17 May by watching the children parade. After the exams, I was busy with the cleaning of my room, packing my luggage and spending my last moments enjoying the city. I left Oslo on 5 June and this officially marked the end of my exchange journey.



National Day, Oslo



Sognsvann Lake, Oslo (Next to Kringsja)

## **General Exchange Information**

### **Visa Procedures**

Non-EU citizens should apply for a study permit and it requires the following documents:

- passport and copy of all used pages in passport
- Application form
- two passport size photos
- Admission letter
- Proof of accommodation in Norway

The admission letter will be sent to your email in early October and all the documents above should be prepared in 2 sets. Moreover, you should call the Norwegian Honorary Consulate to make an appointment for application of permit as submitting the documents in person is required. This application will cost around 3200NOK.

### **Orientation Activities**

During the first week of the semester, there were some information talks and a social event for meeting all other exchange students. Though these events are not mandatory to attend, I still recommend you to join some of them as these are some great opportunities to meet other exchange students and make new friends with them.

### **International services & activities**

Throughout the semester, many different student associations held city tours, travelling trips and party regularly. Also, the school invites exchange students to join their monthly BI-nner, which is a free dinner event for you to meet all other students.

One good way to keep updated with these events is by joining or liking their Facebook Pages, like 'BI Exchange' and 'BI-nner'. I would recommend you to join the BI-nner as it was quite a special event with a monthly theme. During BI-nner, you will have chances to chat with other exchange students and be able to taste new dishes depending on the monthly theme.

### **Accommodation**

You will receive an email from BI about the application of student housing. There are three housing providers(SiO, Diakonhjemmet and BSN) for you can choose. All of us prefer to choose SIO and live at Kringsjå student village. Below are some pros & cons of Kringsja student village compared to the other two:

Pros: cheaper(around 3400NOK per month), quieter, near BI(just a 10-minutes ride to BI), convenient transportation with metro station just a few minutes' walk away

Cons: facilities tend to be more worn-out, washing machines are at the basement of another building, limited transportation if you go back late

I suggest to check-in at the SIO office together upon arrival if you want to live close or even next to each other as SIO allows you to choose rooms, but this also subjects to availability. This way, you can avoid sharing toilets with strangers and it will be more convenient and more fun.

### Course Registration

In early December, you will receive an email regarding the course registration's rules and procedures as well as course descriptions. After choosing the courses you are interested, you can then fill in an online form and the school office will help you enrol into those courses.

At BI, we were only allowed to take four courses, so I took 3 finance's free-elective courses and 1 accounting course there.

### Teaching and Assessment Methods

The teaching styles are more interactive than at UST. Professors there love asking questions and invites students to join discussions. When it comes to assignments, based on BI's rules, professors are not allowed to any questions relating the assignments, so if you encounter difficulties, you should ask other students for help.

BI adopts absolute grading method, so your grade is not affected by the grades of other students in the class. The specific assessment methods varies among courses and you may take the following table for your reference.

Options and Futures (FIN3621)	Finance	This is a relatively easy course with no assignments and midterm exams, so the final grade counts 200% towards the final exam, which includes only multiple choice questions, so as long as you review the past paper during revision, you will pass it easily.
Corporate and Financial Risk Management (EXC3673)	Finance	A course with an assignment, a midterm exam and a final exam. This course is quite challenging as some questions in the final exam may involve topics not taught during the class, but as long as you do well in the midterm exam and the home assignment, you will get a pass too.
Financial Decision Making with Excel (FIN3616)	Finance	I highly recommend this course to you although it can get quite technical over time. It is a very useful course and rarely can be found at UST. It teaches how to carry out financial analysis using Excel and Bloomberg system. Final grade counts towards the group assignments and final exam.
Strategy (EXC3505)	Accounting	Final grade counts 100% towards a group essay. This course involves a group project that is about providing solutions to some Norwegian start-ups.

## Sports and Recreational Facilities

There is a gym room inside BI, but you will need to pay for exercising there. The school building was spacious with a wide variety of facilities, like library, coffee shops, canteen, study areas, etc.

## Finance and Banking

The currency of Norway is NOK. You may apply for an Citibank card in order to use the ATM service there.

Expenses:

	NOK	HKD
Flight Tickets		6500
Food	7000	
Travel		26800
Accommodation	17556	
Transport	3000	
Insurance		3500
Laundry	50	
Visa	3200	
Other	300	

## Social Clubs & Networking Opportunities

There are many different types of clubs at BI. Throughout the semester, there are booths introducing these clubs and events held by various clubs too. You are always welcomed to visit their booths and have a chat with them.

## Health & Safety

It is wise to bring your own medicine to Norway as it can be quite troublesome to buy medicine here.

Norway is a safe city with friendly locals, so robbery or other crimes are generally rare here. However, I would still advise to have common sense just to be in case. Extra attention may be needed in Gronland.

## Food

It is expensive to eat out in Norway, so we cook ourselves most of the time. Kiwi and Rema1000 are some supermarkets selling at a lower price. You should also go to the market at Gronland, which sells a wide variety of vegetables, fruits and pastas at low prices.

## **Transportation**

Upon arrival, you need to purchase a student monthly transport card, which must be topped up every month. Otherwise, you will be fined if inspectors find out during the random checks.

With a transport card, you can enjoy services of all transport means except trains going to and from the airport as well as trains to other Norwegian cities. For trains connecting the airport, you should buy an extension ticket that costs 60Nok per ride.

## **Climate**

Throughout the spring semester, the weather in Norway is generally is cold and snowy. From January to early April, the temperature ranges from around -10 to 8 degree Celsius. Snow is common and thus, it is important to wear water resistant outerwear. As the temperature rises slowly starting from late March, melting of snow and ice will make the ground slippery, so having a pair of good shoes is useful. Also, with such a cold weather, a pair of gloves is very much needed.

## **Communication**

The mother language in Norway is Norwegian, but most of the people there speak excellent English, so communicating with them is easy and convenient.

During the orientation week of the school, you will receive a free sim card for your phone. This sim card allows you to purchase a monthly data plan of a local service provider, like MyCall.

## **Cautionary Measure**

Though tap water is drinkable, I suggest to boil it before consumption to avoid any infections.

## **Items to bring:**

- Snow Boots
- Water resistant outerwear
- Gloves
- Portable chargers
- Study permit letter
- Router & Lan Cable
- Electric Water Kettle
- Adapters
- Cream
- Laptop
- Financial calculator
- Medicine
- Credit card
- Chargers



## **Useful Links and Contacts**

BI Student Portal: <https://at.bi.no/>

SIO Housing: <https://www.sio.no/en/>

NSB Train: <https://www.nsb.no/>

Ruter: <https://ruter.no/en>

BI international Office's email address: [international.office@bi.no](mailto:international.office@bi.no)

## **Final Note**

Going on an exchange is truly a remarkable experience, one that I will never forget. It is not only about learning other cultures but also meeting people from all around the world to learn from them and widen your horizon.

It's your time now to create your own exchange journey!

Good Luck!

