



Study Abroad Report

The University of Sydney

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Monthly Activity Log

February

I arrived Sydney on 26th February. The orientation week was held at the end of February. I joined the Orientation Day held by the Hong Kong Student Association and met a lot of new friends there.



March

The semester started on 6th March. I had classes on every Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday.

In March, I had been staying in Sydney most of the time. I visited various attractions, including the Darling Harbor, Sydney Tower Eye, Bondi Beach, Manly Beach, etc. Also, I joined BridgeClimb to climb to the top of the Sydney Harbor Bridge. I also explored the surrounding area of Sydney. I have been to the Blue Mountain National Park and Hunter Valley.

At the end of March, I went to Canberra with my roommate for a 2-day trip and visited the Australian Parliament House, Australian War Memorial, Old Bus Depot Market and Lake Burley Griffin.



Sydney Harbor Bridge



Blue Mountain

April

Most of the midterm exam were held on April. Apart from preparing for the exam, I started visiting other cities. There was a break in mid-April. In the break, I went to Melbourne with my roommate and then went to Gold Coast to visit my friend.

In Melbourne, we spent the first 2 days in the city center and visited the Old Melbourne Gaol, Cooks' Cottage, Federation Square, etc. On the next 2 days, We joined a tour to the Great Ocean Road. The tour also took us to the Phillip Island, where we got an up-close look on the little penguins. On the last day, we visited the Puffing Billy Railway. We took the train from Belgrave to Gembrook, passing through the Dandenong Ranges.



In Gold Coast, we visited the Springbrook National Park to see the glow worms. We also visited several theme parks, including the Warner Bros. Movie World and Sea World. On the last day, we went to Brisbane and visited the South Bank Parkland.

May

After finishing all my midterm exam, I have been to Tasmania with my new friends from UNSW. We had a self-drive tour rather than joining the local tour. We had a kayaking experience in the water of Hobart. We also visited the Port Arthur and took a ghost tour there. We also hiked the trails of Freycinet National Park and viewed the beautiful Wineglass Bay. Besides, We went to the Bruny Island to taste the cheese, chocolate, oyster and wine.

In May, there is an annual outdoor lighting festival, Vivid Sydney. I visited several landmarks to see the projected lighting painting on the buildings.





Kayaking in the water of Hobart



Wineglass Bay

June

The final exam period started in late-June. There was a study break before the exam period. I have been to the Western Australia with my roommate for a 5-day trip. We joined the local tour and the tour took us to several attractions. We hiked the trails of Kalbarri National Park and headed up to the “Nature’s Window”. Also, we went to the Monkey Mia for a close encounter with the dolphins. We also went to the Pinnacles Desert to see the limestone spires formed over millions of years. Moreover, we had a wonderful experience of sandboarding at Lancelin Sand Dunes.



The Pinnacles



The Monkey Mia



The Nature’s Window

July

After finishing my final examination, I returned to Hong Kong on 4th July.

General Exchange Information

1) Visa Procedures

The university will issue the eCoE after you complete the study abroad application process. You can then apply your student Visa via <http://border.gov.au>. The Visa application process usually takes a few weeks. Make sure you don't leave it to the last minute. You may need to take a body check after you complete your Visa application process online.

2) Orientation Activities

The university will hold the Introduction to Sydney Week to help exchange students settle into the new city and explore the city and the campus. Some pre-semester trips will also be held to help students get to know new friends here. There will also be an orientation week. An official welcome and enrolment advising session will be held for exchange students at the first day of the orientation week.

3) International Services & Activities

There is a Global Mobility Team in the University of Sydney. The team is responsible for admission, acceptance and enrollment of all international students. Students can contact their exchange advisers if they have any problems regarding their study.

4) Accommodations

The university will offer on campus accommodations. Other suggestions are Urbanest, Iglu Central, Unilodge Sydney, etc. These off campus accommodations are popular among international students. They are located in the Central Business District and near to the university.

5) Courses Registration

Exchange students are allowed to enroll in 4 courses only. You will be asked to fill in your preference (<10 courses) during the study abroad application process. The university will post the result online and you will know whether you are eligible to enroll in these courses. You then need to

submit your choices. But don't worry. You can always talk to your advisor and change your choices before the add/drop deadline.

6) Teaching & Assessment Methods

The teaching and assessment method in Australia is similar to Hong Kong, but the workload in Australia is much lower. For each course, students are required to attend a 2-hour lecture and a 1-hour tutorial every week. Students' performance will be assessed by examination, assignment, quizzes, and tutorial participation.

7) Sports & Recreation Facilities

There are many sports and recreation facilities on campus, including indoor swimming pool, gym room, courts. There are also hubs (Wentworth, Manning House and Holme) on campus.

8) Finance & Banking (including currency / expenses)

The exchange rate is about 6.00 HKD=1AUD. Before your arrival, I recommend you to convert a small amount of Hong Kong Dollar (but not all) to Australian Dollar. You can also open up the overseas withdrawal of your Hong Kong ATM card. You can withdraw money in Australia using your Hong Kong ATM card at the current exchange rate and HKD20 service fee will be charged. Make sure you check the rate online from time to time so that you can convert your HKD to AUD at a prevailing rate!

After my arrival, I create an account in the Commonwealth Bank of Australia. There is a branch of CommBank in the university. You will get your Debit Card after you create the account. You can use your Debit card to withdraw your money, book flight/hotel online. And it just like the Octopus Card in Hong Kong! You can pay your bill by just tapping the card to the reader. You can also download the CommBank app to manage your account.

9) Social Clubs & Networking Opportunities

There are 200+ clubs in the University of Sydney. Some of them sounds interesting to me, e.g. Pokemon League, Disney Appreciation Society, Chocolate Society, Pen Society, etc. Check out the list of societies here (<http://www.usu.edu.au/Our-Clubs-Societies/Our-clubs-societies.aspx>)!

10) Health & Safety

You must arrange the “Overseas Student Health Cover” as required by the Australian Immigration Department. You can either arrange it yourself or arrange it through the university. Allianz Global Assist is the university’s preferred OSHC provider. You will be asked whether you would like the university to arrange it for you during the “respond to offer” process.

11) Food

It is quite expensive to eat outside in Sydney and I rather cook. However, you should also try out the restaurants near Darling Harbour! I miss the pancakes so much in “Pancake on the Rocks”. If you miss Hong Kong food, you can also go to Chinatown. You must try out the Emperor’s puff there. There’s always a long queue lining up!

12) Transportation

In Sydney, you mainly travel by train, bus, light rail and ferry. Exchange students can apply for the Opal Concession Card via <https://www.opal.com.au> to enjoy the student discount. The card will be sent to your address in Australia within 5–7 days. (The opal card only applies to Sydney! It does not apply to other cities!)

If you would like to travel to other cities, I recommend you to choose JetStar or Tigerair, which is cheaper than other airline companies.

You can also download the Uber app. It will be useful when you travel to other cities.

13) Climate

The climate in Australia is different from Hong Kong. In Australia, it is in summer from December to February while it is in winter from June to August. Nonetheless, the temperature varies according to cities. Make sure you check the temperature before you travel to other cities! Also, the temperature difference is huge between day and night. Don’t forget to bring a jacket with you when you go out!

14) Communication

Vodafone and Optus are the most common mobile network operators in Australia. I was using an 8GB plan which costs AUD45 each month. You can go to the store and check out which plan suits you the most.

15) Cautionary measures

For emergency, call 000 or 93513333 (Campus Security).

Items to Bring

DOCUMENTS	TOILETRIES
Hong Kong Identity Card/Passport	Toothbrush/Toothpaste
Student Visa	Shampoo/Conditioner/Soap
Driving License (optional)	Towel
Health Insurance Documents	Hair Brush
Hotel/Hostel Contact Info	Hair Dryer
Airline Ticket	Moisturizer
MONEY	Sunscreen
Cash (Foreign and Domestic Currency)	BAGS
Debit Card/Credit Card	Carry-on Bags
ELECTRONICS AND GADGETS	Backpack/Suitcase
Cell Phone (+Charger)	ACCESSORIES
Digital Camera (+Charger) (optional)	Umbrella
Laptop/Tablet/iPad (+Charger)	Sunglasses
Electric Converters	Belt
CLOTHES	OTHERS
Underwear	Water Bottle
Socks	Stationary
Pajamas	Prescription Medicine (if needed)
T-Shirts/Shorts/Jeans	
Jackets	
Scarf/Gloves	
Cap	
SHOES	
Sneakers	
Sandals	

Useful Links and Contacts

The University of Sydney

<http://sydney.edu.au>

Australian Government Department of Immigration and Border Protection

<http://border.gov.au>

Australia Weather

<http://www.weatherzone.com.au>

Australia Tourist Information

<http://www.australia.com/en>