



2017/2018 FALL UNIVERSITY OF EXETER

Exchange report

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MONTHLY LOG

September

I arrived London on 9th September to catch up with one of my old friends before semester started. We then went to Scotland for travelling. The trip in Edinburg and highland marked the start of my exchange journey. The scenery in highland is the most impressive and memorable part. I woke up every day surrounded by mountains and seas. It's truly a relaxing vacation and a good time for a break before school started. I joined a local tour in highland where I am lucky to meet several Taiwanese solo travelers who I have been constantly contacted with even after the trip ended.



After my one-week trip in Scotland, I took national express coach from London to Exeter. I arrived there a bit earlier to get myself prepared with the accommodation registration, module selection, student ID verification, bank account opening and more. The above mentioned are trivial but should be taken great care of.

September is also the best time to meet friends during which everyone is eager to reach out to others. The “fresher’s week” in University of Exeter (UoE), also equivalent to orientation week helps new comers get settled into the new environment. There are different societies promoting their activities. It is also common for them to offer “taster sessions” before we decide whether to join them or not. They



are worth going even though you may not join the clubs eventually because societies have all the equipment and trainers needed. Examples would be horse riding, climbing and crickets etc. There are city exploring groups where local students would bring a bunch of freshers around to tell them the best places we can get our necessities from. Lots of help from school staffs and students are available especially during the first month of school. To conclude, September is a month for me to establish the initial connections with other students,

identify what I want to achieve in the coming few months at school and get myself settled with the school admin work as well as other living commodities.

October

After attending all the orientation talks and introduction lectures, I am able to get an overall idea of what UoE requires us, as a student to commit. School workload is light in October. I managed to balance my studies and social life with friends. I also spare several days during the end of October for a short trip in Paris.

I became a member in the climbing society which offers regular climbing trainings twice a week. We also have outdoor bouldering trip every Monday.

My friends I met earlier invited me to her home for some authentic Dutch pancakes. I joined bunch of Hong Kong exchange students from other universities for dinner. Many short trips within UK targeting freshers are organized by school such as trips in Bath, Cambridge, Oxford, Bristol and more. I went to Oxford and Exmouth with my flat-mates. I also went to Teignmouth with several Hong Kong friends.

Graduation job hunting is another focus across October and November during which most of the deadlines lied on. UoE offers a very comprehensive career services for students. They have all kinds of employability trainings and events; interviews mocks, career fairs year-round. I leveraged these activities greatly to get myself equipped before I applied for jobs.

November

Workload isn't as heavy as expected. However, the focus is brought back to academic studies in November. UoE emphasizes a lot on reading habits and good essay writing manner. Students are given a long reading list to complete in our personal time. I read quite a lot to catch up with what I missed previously. There are several assignments and projects to be submitted this month. Thus. most of the group meetings are arranged in November as well. I have a filming project and a financial modeling



assignment that have to be done in group. There are some individual summative essays to be handed in. Academic work is a bit hectic but manageable. At the end of November, I travelled to Dublin though budget airline.

One thing worth mentioning is the black Friday period in the last few days of November that offers at least 30% discount in most of the items sold instore and online. I did some online shopping with my flat mates. For shopaholics, it would be a good time to look for great deals.

December

The second half of December is a holiday for students before the final examination. It is also the highlight of my exchange journey because many of my European travelling are done in December after I cleared most of my schoolwork.

The first country I visited in December is Spain. Barcelona is an enchanting seaside city with boundless culture and fabled architecture such as the La Sagrada Familia or Gaudi's masterpieces. Afterwards, I went on a solo trip in Venice. I can never forget the unique city landscape with the whole floating city built on a lagoon. The next stop is Salzburg. I took the cable car up to the top of a snowy mountain. I visited the film location of the Sound of Music as well. Trip in Austria is followed by Vienna which is well known with the artistic and musical masterpieces alongside its coffee-house culture. I watched an orchestra performance in a church in Christmas and visited the backstage of an opera house in Vienna.

After all, I met up several friends who came all the way from Hong Kong to spend the last few days of 2017 in Berlin. Studying history in high school. I am very eager to visit places such as Berlin Wall, concentration camp and Memorial to the Murdered Jews in particular. We then went to a relatively



smaller city, Hamburg. The musical, Les Miserable, I watched in Queens theatre London marked the end of my travelling.

Christmas market originated from Germany is very popular in December across Europe. These markets make the atmosphere lots more festive along with the freezing weather. Some of the popular attractions at the market include carved Nutcrackers, candied toasted almonds, Bratwurst, mulled bear and so on. Lots of regional food is available and they are usually crowded with people.

January

January is the finale of my exchange. I went back to Exeter for my final examination preparation. I can't forget the time staying up late, studying with my flat mates in the kitchen common area together every night. Stress is well coped and within control.

I left Exeter one day after my final examination and took the flight back to Hong Kong on 15th Jan.



GENERAL EXCHANGE INFORMATION

Visa Procedures

We don't have to worry about the visa procedures. As long as we bring with us the official acceptance letter issued by UoE, we will be approved to cross boarder within Europe within the exchange period if we are studying there for no longer than 6 months.

Orientation Activities

“Fresher’s week” is held in the first week before school starts. Lots of taster sessions will be available for students to look for the activities they are interested in. Student groups will proactively organize gatherings for members to meet friends having common interests. There are city excursion events that help students get familiar with what they can get around the city center. School also organized orientation talks to give freshers an overview of what the student life is like as well as things to be paid attention with.

International Services & Activities

Airport collection service

Students can opt for transportation provided by UoE upon arrival in Heathrow Airport in various timeslots. Coach ticket can be pre-ordered prior to September. Please find its detail below:

<http://www.exeter.ac.uk/internationalstudents/prearrival/orientation/airportcollectionservice/>

Essential Pack delivery service

Students can pre order essential pack including bedding and individual cooking & eating items and have them delivered to their accommodation prior to their arrival through click 2 campus website. Please find its detail below:

<http://www.click2campus.com/store/All-Essentials-Pack.html>.

Career zone service

Students can login “My Career Zone” to gain access to relevant resources. There are workshops about presentation skills, interview techniques, CVs and Resume checking which students can register to participate. Business school offers business students linked-in photo taking session. Several big career fairs are organized by school as well.

Accommodations

International students will be sent to James Owen Court. However, students have to apply for a place as early as possible due to the high demand. Or else, students might have to live in private apartments or student studios that would incur higher costs.

James Owen Court where I lived is a self-catered hall. An approximate of 6 students share a kitchen common area. All rooms have single beds and toilets inside. Students can use the laundry facilities (1.3 GBP for drying and 2.6GBP for washing). It takes a 20minutes walk uphill to campus. However, it is perfectly situated in Exeter city centre where students can get basically everything they want within a 10minutes walk. There is a cinema right beside. If students purchased goods online, James Owen Court reception will collect the goods on behalf and asked students to collect through email acknowledgement.

The wireless network/internet is provided by StudentCom. However, I personally found the wireless network quite unstable. It will be better for students to bring their own router to fortify the wireless signal.

Courses Registration

Course registration is done through online portal before arrival. However, it is not finalized until September. Students have to go to the “module clinic” in person for course add, drop or modification. The manual process is a bit annoying. Thus, it will be better for students to confirm with the courses they plan to take as much as they can through the portal and emails to prevent queuing in the Clinic.

Teaching & Assessment Methods

Financial Modelling (BEA 3026)

The course equips students with the knowledge and tools to implement financial models using Excel. Topics include finance drawn from investment analysis, corporate finance, fixed income analysis, risk

management and international finance. This course focuses more on application rather than theories. We are given different scenarios correspond to the lecture materials in every tutorial practical class in which students will work through real world problems using Excel. There are weekly online quizzes for students to test their understanding on topics.

50% of the assessment goes to individual computer-based test which is open book. The remaining 50% goes to a group assignment of a report about the development of new trading model. The credits taken in this course can be transferred as FINA 4000lv in HKUST.

The Economics of Financial Crisis (BEE 3051)

This module enables students to explore the causes of 2008 financial crisis as well as the lesson learnt from the Crisis. Students will gain an understanding about securitization, CDOS, Swaps and economists' views on the Crisis. This course is all about reading and understanding the story behind. The convener will arrange tutorial sessions to talk about essay writing skills. There are guest lectures about the Crisis from a first person perspective. Unlike traditional Finance course, BEE 3051 is more like a story telling course that requires students to put the pieces back together for a holistic picture of the Crisis.

The assessment is 100% based on an essay written in final exam. Students have to choose 2 out of 5 questions to answer. In October, before the real exam, students can voluntarily work on a mock essay as revision. The credits taken in this course can be transferred as FINA 4000lv in HKUST.

Network and Computer Security (ECM 2426)

The module helps students create awareness of the need for security and introduce security mechanisms in modern computer systems. For those who have no computer or technology background, it could be quite difficult because some programming language and basics are required in the laboratory sessions. Also, lecture slides are too brief and lots of reading is needed to fully understand the topics. However, the content material is intuitive.

50% of the summative assessment goes to a practical security assignment coursework. The remaining 50% goes to a closed book written exam. The credits taken can be transferred as ISOM 3000lv n HKUST.

Managing IT Projects (ECMM 417)

This course is for master students. It aims to introduce students the fundamentals of project management applied by organizations in information systems projects. Another focus of this model is the employability skills for applying IT jobs. There are only 16 people in class and we form groups to do in-class discussions. Lots of interactions in class and collaborations outside class are needed for this course.

Since I will not be here in the second semester, alternative assessment is arranged for me. I have a project management exercise that counts 50% and a team-based professional skills exercise that counts another 50%. The credits taken can be transferred as ISOM 3010 in HKUST.

Sports & Recreation Facilities

Fitness classes and sports facilities are available in campus. However, you have to pay for the membership in order to enjoy the facilities. There is also a society called body club that offers yoga or stretching classes. You have to be ready to pay if you want to join them. There is also a Campus Cinema that has been running for 60 years. Tickets cost around 3.5GBP for non-members.

Finance & Banking (including currency / expenses)

<i>Items</i>	<i>Approximate Amount (HKD)</i>
Airfare	\$8,500
Accommodation	\$25,900
Living expenses	\$15,000
Travelling expenses	\$20,600
Total Expenses	\$70,000

Social Clubs & Networking Opportunities

Climbing Club

I decided to join the climbing club in fresher's week. Students can rent all the equipment from society during training sessions that are scheduled twice per week. The climbing center is located somewhere in the Quay side that is a 25 minutes walk from James Owen Court. Regular outdoor bouldering is also scheduled every Monday. Climbing is new to me and I am glad that I gave that a try.

Local day trips

Many day trips are organized by school. It would be a great opportunity to meet some friends there and spent a day or two together. I went to two day trips with my flat mates, one in Exmouth and one in Oxford.

Health & Safety

Students can get most healthcare services free of charge under the National Health Service upon registration at a Health Centre with a doctor called GP (General Practitioner). Students will be entitled to free immediate necessary health care from GP, at a hospital Accident and Emergency Department or an NHS Walk-in-Centre. I am required to be vaccinated in the first week of school by school nurses.

Food

There are wide choices of restaurants available in city center, including Asian food. However, Sainsbury, Tesco and Iceland are supermarkets within 400 meters distance from James Owen Court. An alternative to eating in restaurants would therefore be cooking yourself.

Transportation

There are city coaches available if students don't want to walk. I went to school on foot. It takes about 20 minutes from hall to campus. National express and MegaBus are great deals if you want to travel around UK or even to France. There is a small airport in Exeter which offers flights to limited destinations. You can also take the train. The 16-25 railcard will help you save much more money if you are taking train.

Climate

The temperature is not that low in September. However, it gets cooler since October. Weather is unstable, and temperature fluctuates throughout the day. It is particularly much cooler in the early morning and at night. It rains quite a lot in England that can make you feel even colder. Students have to be mindful not to catch cold especially at night because heater is automatically switched off from 12am to 6am.

Communication

I used the pay as you go plan provided by Three. The 20 GBP plan includes 12 GB mobile data per month that is also available for roaming in other European countries I travelled to. At the end of each month, students can top up the value of SIM card by online payment using debit card. Students can also check their data usage through Three mobile application. There is free wifi available in James Owen Court and school area as well.

Items to Bring

- Hoodies; Sweaters; Jackets; Shirts
- Scarfs
- Gloves
- Heattech underwear
- Jeans; Trousers
- Earmuff
- Pajamas
- A formal suit for interview
- Shampoo; Skin care products
- Thick coat

- Acceptance letter
- Flight ticket
- UST official transcript
- HKID; Passport
- Cash
- Passport-sized photos
- Laptop and charger
- Camera and charger
- Phone and charger
- Hair dryer

If you want more information from me, feel free to get my contact from SBM Exchange Team by emailing at bmugexch@ust.hk