



EXCHANGE REPORT

BI Norwegian Business School, Norway

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Finance and Operation Management, Year 3

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Part I – Monthly Activity Log

January 2018

I arrived Oslo with other UST exchange students on 5 Jan. It was freezing cold and I still remember I could barely walk on the icy road with my heavy luggage. January is a winter season in Oslo and the daytime is short that the sunset there is so early. The sky started looking dark at around 4p.m. BI is a school with many big transparent windows. I could always enjoy beautiful view at school.



Sunset at BI



Sunset at my hall

There are many orientation activities held by BI in the first month, like joining city tour, learning some basic Norwegian, going ice skating for free and having night party. I joined most of them with my friends. I knew more about Oslo little by little through these events.



Ice Skating



Visit Holmenkollen during city tour

I started to join Blinner (a free dinner at BI every month and I recommended to join it so much) to enjoy some Norwegian food and meet friends. During winter, it is a good time to play some winter sport and games like playing sleigh. I also went to visit different tourist spots in Oslo during January.



BInner at BI



Play sleigh

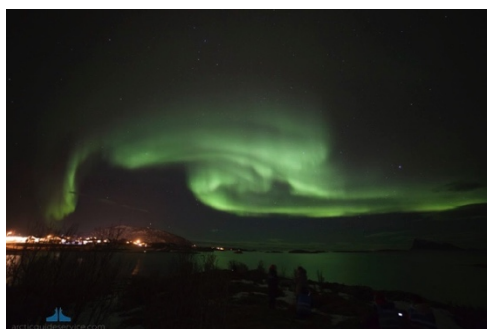
February 2018

The academic schedule is not that tight in February. So I could go for trip sometimes during weekends. I visited other cities in Norway, which are Bergen and Tromsø. The natural beauty was really awesome in Norway. I joined Norway in nutshell, a trip going from Oslo to Bergen with breathtaking fjord and mountain scenery in between. It is a wonderful day trip as I could visit many gorgeous places by taking the scenic railway and cruise.



Photos on cruise

In this month, I also went to Tromsø for the northern light and it was the most unforgettable trip to me. It was cloudy and the Aurora forecast was very low (just two out of nine in scale) on the day of joining Aurora trip so I did not have high expectation to see Aurora. However, after about an hour at the destination, the Aurora started to appear! It grew stronger and stronger. I even saw different kinds of Aurora shape such as tornado, spiral and string shape. It is really amazing that I could even see the Aurora moving! I totally appreciate the power of natural beauty. I would never forget the moment when I see the northern light.



Aurora Trip

March 2018

I visited different places in Oslo cities during free time and discovered the beauty in Oslo. The sunset there is really nice and I tried various places for sunset. National Opera House and Akershus Fortress are recommended good places for viewing. I love the sky's gradually changing colour of blue, pink, orange and yellow during sunset, which is so wonderful.



Sunset at National Opera House



Sunset at Akershus Fortress

There is a long Easter holiday in March (Norway has the world's longest Easter holiday!). So I could go for a long trip during Easter. I went to Brussel, Paris, Frankfurt, Rotterdam and Amsterdam. Brussel is a place which is full of chocolate. If you are a chocolate lover, you definitely have to go there and try the chocolate in every shop! Paris is a romantic city with its iconic magnificent Eiffel Tower. However, it is reminded to be aware of your personal belongings. There are pickpockets and conman especially in a crowd. For Frankfurt, I think is a modern city without many attractions to visit. Rotterdam is a special city with buildings of extraordinary shapes. It is also famous of windmills in Kinderdijk. Finally, I visited Amsterdam for the flower exhibition in Keukenhof to see countless tulips of various kinds in full bloom. Bundle ticket with both exhibition and transportation are available online. This Easter holiday is really fantastic.



Grand Place at Brussel



Euro tower at Frankfurt



Cubic House at Rotterdam



Windmills in Kinderdijk



Tulips in Keukenhof

April 2018

There is an event called “Tourist in your own city” on 15 April. Oslo’s inhabitants are invited to be tourists in their own cities. We can go many museums and have certain transportation for free if we have the “Tourists in your own city pass”, which can be got at City Hall or Oslo Visitor Centre. It is good to visit some museum that are supposed to be charged. I visited Folk Museum on that day.



Photos at Folk Museum

I also travelled to Prague in April. It is a beautiful city with many remarkable red houses. Český Krumlov is considered one of the most beautiful town and I highly recommend to visit this town, which just takes you about two to three hours to go from Prague by bus. Prague’s price level is much lower than Oslo and you can also enjoy lots of food with acceptable price.



Photos at Prague

May 2018

There are exams in May so I did not travel much during this month. However, there are still lots of things to play and discover in Oslo as summer starts coming in May. I found some hiking trails online and went hiking myself. The hiking pathways in Oslo are very favourable that there are always blue marks on the trunks. Just follow the mark will then know the direction. Oslo is a wonderful place which is full of natural environment. The Norwegians like standing close to nature. They love laying on grasslands to enjoy sunshine and love jumping into the sea to cool down in hot summer. Unfortunately, I did not bring my swimming suit and cannot really go to play water. So you may also bring you swimsuit even you are going on exchange in spring semester.



Hike



At top of hill



Blue mark on trunk

On 17 May, it is Norway National Day. At this day, most of the Norwegian would wear Bunad, Norwegian traditional clothing, with National flag in hands to celebrate National Day in front of Royal Palace. Seeing their enthusiasm for country, I also felt excited and therefore went celebrating National Day with friends on that day. For the other days, I mainly studied for exam and after completing all my exams, I finally came back Hong Kong on 31 May.



Photos with a Norwegian family



Part II – General Exchange Information

1. Visa Procedures

You could make appointment with the Norwegian Consulate for study permit application through phone call or email after getting the admission letter from BI. The required documents are mainly application forms, passport, Hong Kong ID Card, BI admission letter, proof of accommodation and photos. It costs \$3194 at my time and the processing time is 1-2 months. Remember to bring your study permit letter when you leave Hong Kong. After arrival, it needs to make appointment with police station for resident permit in BI. (You will receive email from BI in the first month about this). Afterwards, the visa procedure finishes.

2. Orientation Activities

There is an orientation week held by BI during the first month. Events include party night, learning basic Norwegian, bus sightseeing and ice skating, etc. There is a buddy group which is consisted of about 7-8 exchange students in a group with two BI students being the leader. They would introduce and bring you to walk around BI. It would be better to join as many activities as possible during the orientation week as it is a chance to meet some friends and get more information about BI and Oslo.

3. International Services & Activities

There is a Facebook page for BI exchange students join (you would get invitation to follow the page through email). It provides quite a lot of useful information such as reminders for important events, exchange of materials (e.g. books, utensils) and invitation for some activities regularly. So keep yourself updated with the page from time to time. Every month, there is also Blinner, which is a free dinner held in BI with certain theme each time. It is quite worthy to join. The application form releases at the Facebook page or BI website in first come first served base.

4. Accommodations

I lived in Kringsjå Student Village offered by SIO with other UST students. Application is done online. On the first day of arrival, you can pick your key at SIO Customer Service Centre at Blindern station. You can choose your own room so it is possible to

live together with your friends if you wish. It takes around 15-20 minutes to BI and 20-30 minutes to city centre from Kringsjå. Rooms in Kringsjå are super nice and there may be shared cooking utensils in the kitchen depending on students at different floors' practices. There is a "Kiwi" supermarket inside Kringsjå. Next to Kringsjå (around 10 minutes walking distance), there is a lake in Sognsvann, which is so beautiful and is a nice place for jogging and running.

5. Courses Registration

BI will send the course list, details and timetable through email at around one month before the start of semester. At the early of December, you can register the course through filling in online registration form. Each student is allowed to register four courses at most.

6. Teaching & Assessment Methods

Course	Assessment Method	Comment
ELE 3710 Business and Professional Ethics (= MGMT 2130)	60% Written Report 25% Presentation 15% Class Performance	This course just needs little work preparation before lesson sometimes. The presentation is just built on report and the presentation is quite relaxing. Workload is not high.
ELE 3763 Innovative Strategy and Technological Change (= ISOM 1380)	100% Exam	Workload is very low. There is no quiz, midterm and homework. However, it needs quite a lot of memorization for examination.
FIN 3621 Options and Futures (= FINA 3203)	100% Exam	There are quizzes and homework, however, they are not counted for grade. However, the exam requires quite a lot of calculation. So better do the exercise and past paper for practice.

FIN 3616 Financial Decision making with Excel (= FINA 4000-level elective)	50% Exam 50% Homework	This course is practical that it teaches to build up some financial models using Excel. There are both lectures and labs. The homework is done in group. It is not difficult as the questions are mainly talked in labs talked.
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7. Sports & Recreation Facilities

There are fitness centres provided by SIO in different places. However, it is required to join the membership in order to get access to the facilities. The membership fee is 225nok per month. It is applied online in SIO website.

8. Finance & Banking

Remember to activate your oversea account so as to allow you to get money when you are in a foreign country. I personally used Citibank card as it does not require additional charge when getting the money.

Expenses	Amount (HKD)
Visa	3000
Flight ticket	8000
Accommodation	23000
Transportation	2000
Insurance	4000
Food	15000
Travel	35000
Other	5000
Total	95000

9. Health & Safety

I am a person who always get cold easily during winter. However, maybe due to fresher air in Oslo, I feel well throughout these five months amazingly. Anyway, personal medicines are necessary to bring. For safety, I think Oslo is a very safe city with very low crime rate. My friend ever lost her bag on metro on the day of arrival, however, she is luckily to find it back. I think Norwegian are helpful and nice in

general, but still, it is important to be aware of your personal things and own safety when being at a foreign country.

10. Food

Dining out is quite expensive in Oslo (around 150 to 300nok each meals). So I cook myself for most of the time. I usually buy fresh fruits and vegetable in a shop called “Grønlands Fukt Og Grønt” in Grønlands station, where have more choices of food with acceptable price. There are also some Asian shop nearby where you can find some Asian cooking sauces and food. For other food like meat, I choose to buy in supermarket. I usually go to “Kiwi” or “Rema 1000” as things in these supermarket are little bit cheaper comparing to other supermarkets. Things from “First Price” brand in Kiwi and “Rema” brand in Rema 1000 are the cheapest. Lastly, it is safe to drink the tap water in Oslo.

11. Transportation

A travel card (ruter card) can be bought in convenient store, which cost 60nok at my time. Then you can top up the card monthly for 30 days student ticket by 442nok. This travel card allows you to take the metro (T-bane), bus, tram unlimitedly. However, it excludes the train between city centre to Oslo airport. With the card, you can buy the ticket to airport cheaper by topping up the card by 66nok (NSB train).

12. Climate

It is quite cold in Oslo during January to March. Temperature can go below 0 Degree Celsius. It is important to bring some warm clothes but not many clothes! It is recommended to wear heatech to keep warm. The climate is very dry in winter, so better to bring some skin-care products to moisturize your body. In May, summer starts to come. During daytime, it can be quite hot that the temperature can go up to near 30 Degree Celsius. So it is also recommended to bring few short sleeves T-shirts and pants.

13. Communication

Most of Norwegians can speak both English and Norwegian. Their English level is quite good that it is easy to listen. Therefore, there is no big problem in communication.

Part III – Items to bring

1. Passport and HKID card
2. Study permit letter
3. Cash
4. AMT card and Credit card
5. Adaptor and charger
6. Router and Lan cable
7. Waterproof jacket, boots, gloves, scarf
8. Laptop
9. Skin-care product and personal medicine

Part IV – Useful links and Contacts

BI

<https://at.bi.no/EN>

Housing

<https://www.bi.edu/study-at-bi/student-life/housing/housing-options/>

Study permit

<https://www.udi.no/en/want-to-apply/studies/>