



Exchange Report
2018 Spring
Yu Kwan Lok
BBA(MARK & MGMT)

Part 1: Monthly Activity Log

January

I arrived at Oslo with some of the other HKUST students on 5/1 because our first day of lesson is on 8/1. We started to acquaint ourselves with the city by exploring the city center (Jerbanetorget) and search for places to buy cheap food. We even went sledding in Frognerseteren and it was so exciting!

Since the weather was quite cold, we did not go out very often. We also took part in the orientation activities and made some new friends. I went to Stockholm with some of the Hong Kong students in Oslo and we had a lot of fun.



February

I planned my trip to visit other parts of Norway, which are quite different from Oslo. I followed the advice of my friend and went on a trip called 'Norway in a Nutshell'. The scenery and the fjords in Gudvangen were stunningly amazing! Besides, I was fortunate to win an online lucky draw, which granted me free cruise tickets to Copenhagen.



Since there were not a lot of Chinese in Oslo, there were not many people celebrating the Lunar New Year. We decided to eat outside and celebrate this festive season. The Thai food is surprisingly, quite cheap and delicious.

March



I spent most of the time travelling in March. First, I visited Reykjavik of Iceland with a couple of my friends. Although I was planning to see the Northern lights in Iceland, the Northern lights I saw was not very strong. However, the picturesque view in Iceland did impress me a lot. I even took a helicopter to a summit to enjoy the panoramic view of Reykjavik!

After that, I went on a trip to Berlin, Brussels and Amsterdam. Berlin and Amsterdam is a bit more urbanized than Oslo with a wider variety of restaurants, which is good news to food enthusiasts like me. Brussels is a city where waffle lovers should definitely visit! There are so many kinds of waffles in the city but I did not eat a lot because I am not a big fan of desserts. The majestic and iconic Grand Place did impress me though. Unfortunately, I was sick during the trip but I soon recovered after a day of rest.



Since the Easter holiday was in late March, my dad visited me and we travelled to Vienna, Budapest, Athens and Santorini. Compared to the places I visited previously during my exchange, these places are warmer. I particularly enjoyed my stay at Santorini because it was very beautiful and relaxing.

April

I visited London, Munich, Frankfurt, Prague and Warsaw in the first half of April. Since the duration of this travel is quite long, I started to get a bit tired during the travel. I also visited the China town of London which made me feel less homesick. I had hotpot with my friends there and I was so glad because I had been missing hotpot since my arrival in Oslo. After that, I spent most of the time catching up the progress of classes and preparing for the exams in the coming May.



May and June

May is the month of exams and report submission. I had one report to submit and two exams. Luckily, they were not as demanding as the ones in UST and I finished the last exam on 15/5. Another day you would not like to miss would be the National Day of Norway. On that day, some Norwegians would dress themselves up with traditional costumes which is an extraordinary experience for foreigners like us.

I stayed behind and visited different parts of France, Tallinn, Stockholm and Helsinki in June. This marked the end of my exchange journey.

Part 2: General Exchange Information

Visa Procedure

First, you have to register an account on The Norwegian Directorate of Immigration's (UDI) application portal (<https://selfservice.udi.no>). After filling out your personal particulars, send the application to Royal Norwegian Embassy, Beijing (the embassy in Hong Kong was not an option at the time when I applied because they just started the new system). After that, call the embassy in Hong Kong and make an appointment for delivery of application. They will then send the application to the embassy in Beijing on your behalf.

Orientation activities

A series of orientation activities were held in early January, which you will be notified by email. Some activities might be announced in the Facebook group created earlier. The activities provide good opportunities for you to familiarize yourself with the campus and make new friends. You certainly don't want to miss it!

International services and activities

Participating in the Blinner is a good chance for you to mingle with other students! Blinner is actually a complimentary dinner held every month. Since it is very popular among exchange students, you have to register it as soon as possible so that you can immerse yourself in this multi-cultural environment while enjoying the delicious meal prepared by the helpers.

Besides, you can join activities in the student bar called Kroa. The beer there is less expensive and you can meet many locals because Norwegians are generally big fans of alcohol.

Accommodations

I stayed at Kringsjå during my exchange. I chose single room with private bathroom and the monthly rent is approximately NOK4,700. Although some of the exchange students said Kringsjå is too far from the campus, I think that it is fine. It takes around 20 minutes for you to go to school. A supermarket (KIWI) is located near my building. One unique advantage of Kringsjå is that it is very near to the Sognsvann lake, where you can go there for a jog. The lake is beautiful in both summer and winter!

Course registration

You are advised to look at the course equivalence system created by UST before you decide on which course to take. An email will be sent to you in early December regarding the course registration in BI. Students are only allowed to take at most 4 courses in one semester because it is the full workload of an undergraduate student there. A course list will be attached in the email with the course descriptions (e.g. course content, assessment methods, schedule of the lecture). All course registration will be finalized in late December.

Teaching and assessment methods

Usually, there are only one lecture per week. The way of teaching is interactive and requires more self-study. I took four courses in total, which are:

1. ELE 3769 Cross Cultural Management

100% Consultancy Report: Students are assigned into groups of three to complete the report. Since most of the students in this class are exchange students, I have gained more insights about cross cultural management by collaborating with people of different nationalities. Overall, the workload is quite light and the report is not too challenging.

2. SPÅ 2902: Business Communication in English: Effective Presentations & Negotiations

100% Final Exam: The exam is conducted in the form of oral exam. Students are required to prepare a 6- to 7-minute persuasive presentation, followed by a 13-minute Q&A section about the negotiation theories learnt during the semester. It is similar to a LABU course but the grading is more lenient!

3. EXC 3632 Corporate Governance

100% Final Exam: It is a written exam which consists of short questions and essay type questions. To me, the course content is not very interesting and a bit hard to understand.

4. ELE 3766 Social Networks and Communities

100% Final Report: Students can form their own group to complete the report. The content is rather interesting and the final report is not difficult. The lecturer is very nice who is always open to questions.

Sports and recreation facilities

There is a gym in BI but you have to pay for it. After you paid for the membership fee, you can have access to 5 gyms in Oslo. If you stay at Kringsjå, it might be a better option to jog in Sognsvann.

Finance and banking

The exchange rate of HKD to NOK is approximately 1:0.9. I only brought cash (Euro and NOK) and credit card to Norway so I did not withdraw any money from the banks there. You can use credit card almost anywhere in Europe, which is very convenient. As far as I am concerned, you can withdraw money from the ATMs in Oslo as long as there is a 'plus' sign on your ATM card.

Expense

	HKD
Accommodation	23,505
Travelling	55,000
Living Expenses	20,000
Air Ticket	8,190
Total	106,695

Social Clubs & Networking Opportunities

Counters will be set up by different social clubs of BI in early January to recruit new members. So make sure to be at school on those days because the vacancy of some of the clubs are limited and it is hard for you to join the clubs after the designated dates for recruitment.

Health & Safety

Oslo is a safe place with low crime rate. There is a medical center and a pharmacy near the campus. Although I did not actually pay a visit to the center, it seems that the doctor will only provide you with the names of the medication and you have to buy it in the pharmacy yourself.

Food

Food in Oslo is extremely expensive. Eating out normally costs you more than HKD100 per meal. The fast food restaurant next to BI is an exception! It only costs around NOK60 for a burger with fries. It's very common for us to cook at our flat. KIWI and REMA1000 are supermarkets where you can find food which is relatively cheaper. Besides, you might find it helpful to download the app

'Mattilbud' because it shows the weekly discount on different supermarkets in Oslo. Vegetables would be less expensive in the market in Grønland.

Transportation

Transportation is very convenient in Oslo. What you have to do is to buy a monthly pass for Zone 1 and it would be applicable for T-bane (trains), buses and ferries (basically everything). The price of the monthly pass is roughly NOK500. Since my accommodation was at Kringsjå, I went to school by T-bane. It usually takes around 20 to 30 minutes to arrive at BI (station Nydalen).

Climate

Since I arrived Oslo in January, it was very cold. Temperature could reach as low as -20 °C in the daytime and it would even be colder at midnight. The ground was sometimes slippery because there was some ice melting on the ground. The sky usually turned dark at around 3pm to 4pm and we did not stay at the outdoors for too long.

It became warmer and warmer after Easter. It is quite apparent because you could see there were no more snow and the ice started to melt. As June approaches, it started to be quite hot because summer has arrived. One bad thing about staying in Oslo is that there are no air-con in our accommodation. In other words, clothes for both summer and winter have to be prepared.

Communication

Unlike the students who went to BI before, no sim card was provided to us. I purchased a sim card from Hong Kong and used it for the first two weeks of my stay. After that, I bought another card from a local company called MyCall.

For Internet connection at your flat, don't forget to bring your own router and LAN cable.

Part 3: Items to Bring

- Passport and HKID card
- Admission letter
- Cash (NOK and Euro)
- Credit card
- Router and LAN Cable
- Travel adapters
- Bedsheets
- Clothing for cold weather

Part 4: Useful Links and Contacts

1. HKUST Course Equivalence Database
https://crtran.ust.hk/credit_instit
2. UDI Application Portal (for visa)
<https://selfservice.udi.no/?epslanguage=en-GB>
3. BI Portal
https://sso.student.bi.no/adfs/ls/?wa=wsignin1.0&wtrealm=urn%3aatbi%3aadfsstd&wctx=https%3a%2f%2fat.bi.no%2fMe%2f_layouts%2f15%2fAuthenticate.aspx%3fSource%3d%252FMe