
CASS

BUSINESS SCHOOL
CITY, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

— EST 1894 —

EXCHANGE REPORT

Dominic Ho

Global Business, Year 3

Spring 2018

Part I – Monthly Activity Log

January

I embarked my exchange journey to London in early January, few weeks before the orientation held by CASS, City University of London (“CASS”). Before my exchange study, I participated a London Internship Program organized by HKCareers and I worked as a financial analyst in a startup in Imperial College London. As the check in date of Liberty Hall was 16th January 2018, I lived in other accommodation located in Notting Hill Gate. After the check in date, I moved to Liberty Hall. As my internship was until January, I almost spent the whole month to stay in the company and worked with them.



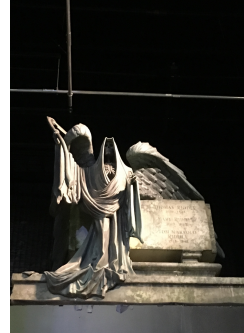
February

One of the major reasons I would like to go for an exchange is to watch a tennis tournament that Roger Federer played, the greatest tennis player of all time. I went to Rotterdam during middle February all in a sudden after his announcement of participation into ABN AMRO tournament. Luckily the workload was relatively light in the beginning of semester, I was able to complete one of my lifetime bucket list without worrying studies and projects.



March

There were deadlines regarding course assignments and midterm due in mid-March, so I did not travel far. I went to Harry Potter Studio straight after my midterm and I found it amazing as a super fan of Harry Potter. I also travelled to some of the places in London such as Leicester Square, Convent Garden and Regent Street.



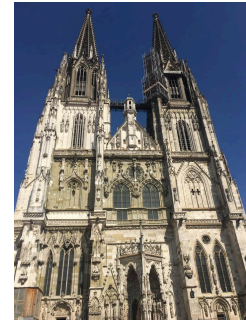
April

The month had significantly heavier workload than the previous months since all the deadlines of the group assignment and final exam were due in April, so I basically spent my whole month staying in hall completing all the group assignments and preparing for the final exam and group presentations. Right after my last deadline, I immediately travel to Italy, the food there was extremely palatable.



May

The semester basically ends after all the final exams and assignments. As CASS had arranged alternative assessment for exchange students, thus exams were held earlier than normal students so that exchange students can travel back to their home town or directly go travelling earlier. I went to Austria, Germany, Brussels and France for two weeks. At last, I went back to Hong Kong on 30th May 2018 to end my exchange journey.



Part II: General Exchange Information

Visa Procedures

HKSAR passport holders are not required to apply for visa if they stay in the UK for less than 6 months. However, you need to bring along the original copy of your school acceptance letter and accommodation proof to the UK border every time you enter the UK. They will generally ask you some questions such as reasons of staying in UK, length of stay and location of accommodation. You might need to be prepared to show your return flight ticket and schedule to the UK border as they will seldom ask before giving you the chop.

Orientation Activities

A few compulsory orientation activities were held to introduce exchange students about CASS. Exchange students first collected their student ID, then a Moodle induction to introduce their online system and finally a mingling session with other exchange students. The orientation activities provides you the opportunity to meet other exchange students all over the world and make some new friends.

Accommodations

I lived in Liberty Hall, which is an off campus and third party accommodation for CASS. My room was an en-suite room, which is very cozy and comfortable as the room is very big. Although it is 15 minutes walking distance to Angel Station, the closest London underground station, the location is very convenient as it is in Zone 1 of London. In other terms of words, it is very close to the major attractions of London. Liberty Hall is 5 minutes walking distance to the campus, thus it is very convenient. However, it costs GBP4,185 (approximately HKD42,000) for 6 months living period.

Course Registration

CASS exchange program advisor will send you email to register an online form to select courses for your exchange semester. The maximum course you can register is 4 (excluding the LA2017/LA2018). You can additionally register LA2017/2018 if you want so that you can maximum take 5 courses in this case. As the first week of the semester is still add/drop period, you can change your courses before the add/drop period deadline. You can find the course timetable on Moodle, which is a similar system to CANVAS of HKUST.

Teaching & Assessment Methods

The teaching method is slightly different from HKUST, they have 2-hour lecture for each course in each week. Attendance was recorded for every lecture, but the attendance score would not be counted to the final grades for exchange students. I have taken the following courses:

Course	Assessment
FR2203 Company Valuation	Midterm and Alternative Assessment (Take-home-exam)
FR2210 Alternative Investment Management	Group Assignment and Alternative Assessment (Essay)
FR2211 Derivatives Trading and Hedging	Group Assignment and Alternative Assessment (Essay)
FR3201 Equity Investment Management	Group Assignment and Alternative Assessment (Take-home-exam)
LA2018 Historic London	Group Presentation and Final Exam

Sports & Recreation Facilities

Liberty Hall is not subject to gym facility, however you can go to Liberty Court to enjoy the gym facilities for free as long as you are residents of the Liberty. The walking distance between Liberty Hall and Liberty Court is around 20 minutes. Or otherwise you can pay a membership fee of GBP25 to use the gym facility inside the campus.

Finance & Banking (including currency / expenses)

Only very few banks will accept exchange students to apply for a debit card as the minimum tenor required by most of the banks is 1 year. Barclays is one of the banks that accept exchange students to apply debit card. However, the approval schedule takes for around 2 weeks and they do not accept walk-in but only booking appointment. You are required to ask the school to provide a bank letter as the guarantee so that exchange students can utilize the banking facility.

The spending in London is generally more expensive compared to Hong Kong, I almost spend HKD100k including travel expense for my exchange journey. You are suggested to exchange pounds and euros first in Hong Kong as it is more convenient to do foreign exchange in your Hong Kong bank account and the rate is cheaper as well.

Social Clubs & Networking Opportunities

Social clubs only intake members in fall semester, so spring semester exchange students are not able to join as members. But CASS will often organize social events and parties in City Bar so that students can relax and make some new friends.

Health & Safety

Students should pay attention to the beggars, as they will often aggressively ask for money everywhere. I was asked inside the restaurants for coins while I was eating. But London is generally safe compared to other European countries with a lot of refugees. Exchange students can sign up for a health care scheme, which provides a medical practitioner. You could visit the clinic if you are sick.

Food

There are wide ranges of food to choose in London. There are Chinatown in Leicester Square, thus you can go eating Chinese food there when you feel homesick. However, eating in London is much more expensive compared to Hong Kong, it spends average HKD150-250 to eat outside. Therefore, I suggest you to cook in hall to save money.

Transportation

As London is very big, the transportation is sophisticated. I suggest you to download

an app called “Citymapper”, which provides recommendation to your routes of transportation. You are recommended to buy Oyster card, which is equivalent to octopus card in Hong Kong. The costs of bus and underground are GBP1.5 and GBP2.4 respectively. You can also buy a 16-25 Railcard at GBP25, which provides 1/3 discount to railway transportation. You can also connect the Railcard to your Oyster card to enjoy tube discount at a price of GBP1.6.

Climate

The weather in London was extremely cold during January to April, and sometimes it will be very windy. Raining and snowing are seldom occurred.

Communication

I used 3UK’s pay-as-you-go SIM plan as it can cover most of the network in Europe. You do not have to worry about Internet and communication even when you go travelling. I choose the 5GB plan for 15 GBP per month. You only need to top up the card every month without signing a fixed contract with 3UK.

Cautionary measures

Students are not suggested to stay late outside in London as there are a lot of drunks. Streets are very dark in London, so be cautious of the theft pickpocketing.

Part III - Items to Bring

- Passport
- University Acceptance Letter
- Laptop
- Medicine
- Adapter
- Credit Card
- Coats

Part IV – Useful Links and Contacts

- Cass Undergraduate Module Catalog

<http://www.cass.city.ac.uk/student-intranet/undergraduate/modules>

- Moodle

<https://moodle.city.ac.uk/login/index.php>

- Skyscanner

<https://www.skyscanner.com.hk>

If more information is needed, get my contact from SBM Exchange Team by emailing at bmugexch@ust.hk.