

BI NORWEGIAN BUSINESS SCHOOL

Exchange report

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**BBA (ACCT&MGMT)
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Table of Contents

PART I

Monthly log

PART II

General Information

- Visa Procedures
- Accommodation
- Finance & Banking
- Transportation
- Food
- Climate
- Health & Safety
- Communication
- Cautionary measures

Campus

- Course Registration
- Orientation Activities
- Teaching and Assessment Method
- Sports & Recreation Facilities
- International Services & Activities
- Social Clubs & Networking Opportunities

PART III

Items to bring

PART IV

Useful links



Monthly log

JANUARY

I arrived Oslo on 2nd January through SAS airline. BI started their spring semester on 8th January so I decided to arrive a week earlier to settle into my new life in Oslo. During the first week, I also went to Norway in a nutshell with my friend. It was an amazing journey for you to explore and enjoy the snowy natural scenery in Norway through different transportation including train, ferry and bus.



During the month, I mainly spent my time exploring the city and the nearby islands with other exchange students. I have been to the mountaintop () to play sledging and that's super exciting and definitely a one-in-a-kind experience! Other than that, I also travelled to Stockholm by the overnight bus with my new friends in the last week of January! We had so much good food and a good time :D



FEBRUARY

In BI, I only had classes on Monday and Wednesday, it made me to have more time to travel around Europe ;p In the first week, I traveled to Copenhagen by overnight bus with my flatmate. During the trip, I tried my first bicycle ride travelling around the beautiful city yet it was actually quite dangerous so if you want to ride the bicycle then you really have to be careful and more alert!



Due to the good class schedule, I travelled to Edinburgh and Glasgow with my friend in the second week of Feb. Scotland is definitely one of my favourite places!!! I REALLY MISS the view of seeing the whole Edinburgh city on the top of Arthur's Seat. Despite walking around the old town and new town, I joined a one-day highland tour which brought me to the loch ness, Glencoe and highlands :p I had a wonderful time seeing all the beautiful highland scenery!!



MARCH

In March, I travelled to Iceland with my exchange friends. Iceland is really worth to visit! I will never forget the breathtaking landscapes, glaciers, blue ice cave, blue lagoon, waterfalls and the golden circle. We had so many delicious plates of seafood like lobsters, flounders and whales. It was also the first time for me to see the northern light!!!

BI doesn't have midterm exams so I only managed to hand in a few of assignment and a project progress report throughout this month :D



In the middle of March, I also travelled to Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Brussels with my friends. Although the weather throughout this trip was not good, we had a good time being foodies and I couldn't really recall how many meals we had on each day. For example, the Belgium Waffles, Frites and Herrings. Other than travelling, I just spent my time to hang out with friends in Oslo and improved my cooking skills by creating more recipes XD



APRIL

My Easter Holiday started from late March to early April for around 1 week. I spent the week in travelling to the Baltic States and Helsinki with my friend. I have been to Vilnius in Lithuania, Riga in Latvia and Tallinn in Estonia. They are three countries near the Baltic Sea and We had a good time exploring the local culture, food and architecture. In Mid-April, my friend came to visit me so I showed her around in Oslo and started to prepare my oral examination and writing the manuscript.



Since I knew that I would have my exams in late April and May, I had decided to travel to London before I stayed focused to study in Oslo. Being a Chelsea football fan, I went to Stamford Bridge to watch a live Premier League game. I was super excited because it was my first home game but the result was a draw :/ Other than watching the game, I did quite a lot shopping and eating with my friend. London is really a place that I could never get enough of :p What I did in the rest of April----- STUDYING.



MAY

After I had completed two oral examinations, I traveled to Dublin with my EXCOs! This was a short jong trip so we basically made good use of the time to join different day tours and walked around in the city center. We also went to the famous Temple bar and had the Guinness beer. Then I headed back to Oslo to have my last written exam and visited many more places in Oslo with my exchange friends.

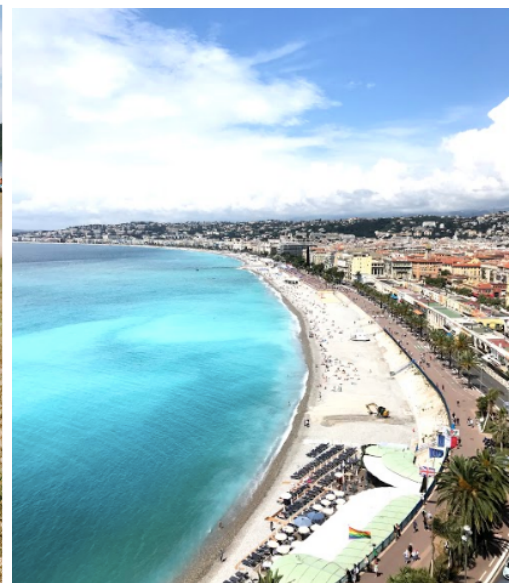


After wrapping up all my academic assessments, I started my post-exam trips!!! I travelled to Italy (Milan, Cinque Terre, Florence, Pisa), Madrid and Lisbon with my friends. The temperature was REAL and I got seriously tanned:)



JUNE

It took me a few days to clean up my room in Oslo and finished packing my luggages. Before coming back to Hong Kong, my last destination was the Southern part of France. I have been to cities like Nice, Cannes, Menton, Monaco, Eze and St. Pauls. The coastline has always melted my heart. These places were pretty much marked the end of my exchange journey. After all, I came back home on 12th June.



General Information

VISA

After confirming that you are going to BI, BI will send you your admission letter (most of the documents from BI are digital files). Once you get your admission letter, you have to call the Norwegian consulate to make an appointment in the Sheung Wan office applying for the study permit. You have to bring the admission letter, your passport, other required documents and money to pay for the application fee. I remembered that the fee was around HKD3,000.

It takes around 2 weeks to a month to process the application so please be careful to make the appointment as soon as possible.

ACCOMMODATION

There are three types of accommodation providers for students: SiO, BSN and Diakonhjemmet.

Among these options, BSN is the closest to the campus but it costs more expensive and you have to share with another student.

SiO is the cheapest ones with the monthly rent of around 4500 NOK (housing rent may vary across blocks and floors). Other UST students and I all chose to live in the Kringsja Student Village since it is a quite convenient location and one of the popular options. The distance between BI and Kringsja is within a 20-minute journey by metro. I love Kringsja very much since it is located near to Sognsvann (a park with a lake) where I can always go there to play cross-country skating in the winter and run in the summer.

My room includes basic furniture and a private bathroom. I shared a kitchen with six flatmates.

FINANCE & BANKING

Norway's currency is NOK and the exchange rate is similar to HKD. Although people in Norway are used to pay by cards, I still brought some NOK cash with me.

For banking matters, I opened a Citibank account in Hong Kong since the ATMs in Scandinavia ONLY supports cards with the logo 'PLUS'. Citibank's card won't have withdrawal fee so it is really a good option! 'UnionPay' may be accepted in some European countries but definitely not in Oslo. I also brought along some MasterCard credit cards.

When I was travelling to other European countries, I usually withdrew cash(Euro) from the Citibank ATM card or just paid by credit cards.

TRANSPORTATION

The public transport is mainly operated by Ruter. It is the most convenient and cost-saving option to get a student monthly pass so that you can feel free to take any buses, metro, trams and ferries in a month.

First, you just have to buy a Ruter card(non-refundable) then you can purchase single tickets, weekly tickets or monthly tickets by topping up the Ruter card. You can also have discounts on buying train tickets to the airport.

However, be careful that you have to activate your card for the first time after you purchase the ticket/top up the card. Since there will be spot checks on all type of public transports so if you are found that you didn't activate/buy your ticket, you will be considered as stealing the ride and the fine costs at 980NOK.

CLIMATE

In the January to April, the weather is quite cold and snow a lot in Oslo. The lowest temperature is -18°C . The daytime is short and the sunset is around 3-4pm. It is crucial to bring and wear some water-proof clothing and shoes with you.

In May to July, the temperature starts to get warmer in the summer. The highest temperature can hit 37°C and the daytime can last until 10 pm.

Be noticed that there is no air conditioner or fans in the room (Sio) so it is quite hot when you have to stay in the room.

FOOD

It costs around 150~200 per meal if you would like to dine in restaurants in Oslo. There are several restaurants that I would recommend since they are really tasty and high quality!!!

- 1) Sapporo (Ramen)
- 2) Alex Sushi (around 300-500 per person but their sushi and sashimi are fantastic)
- 3) Sea Sushi Bar
- 4) Rice Bowl Thai Cafe
- 5) Troy's burger
- 6) Mathallen (Food Hall)

Most food could be bought in grocery stores in Gronland and supermarkets such as KIWI and REMA 1000 which are the two cheapest supermarket in Norway. If you want to eat salmon sashimi, you can go to MENY(grocery stores) as they sell cheap but yummy salmon sashimi!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Be noticed that all supermarkets are closed on Sundays and public holidays.

COMMUNICATION

In terms of communication, Norwegians speak English really well. But you can still learn some basic Norwegian~

In terms of telecommunication, I brought a 3UK sim card (PAY-AS-YOU-GO) in Hong Kong and topped it up every month during my exchange. It costs 15gbp for 5GB data and 3000minutes and text messages for a month. Although it was a UK number, I could be able to call any Europe numbers with that number.

You can still purchase the local sim card in Oslo but they usually have separate plans for call and data plans.

For Wifi, I brought a WIFI Router with me and linked it with the accommodation wifi.

HEALTH & SAFETY

I would suggest you buy one travel insurance (FOR EUROPE) which could also cover the medical expenses since it is not cheap to visit the doctor in Europe. In Oslo, there are some medical centres and there is one (Sio Health Centre) which is located in the BI.

It would be wise to bring some medicine from Hong Kong~

Oslo is a safe place but you have to be aware of pickpockets when you are travelling in Europe.

CAUTIONARY MEASURES

Always be aware of your personal belongings when you are travelling! You can also use an anti-theft waist bag to keep your passport, cash and cards safe!

COURSE REGISTRATION

The course registration for the spring semester will be around December and the course registration procedures are quite simple. First, BI will send the login information and relevant information to your UST/given email. After looking at the schedules of different courses, you just have to hand in your application and wait for the result. Each of the students will be able to register for at most four courses. Normally, students will take up 4 courses in a semester.

TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT METHOD

I have taken up 4 management courses in the semester. The courses are all 3 hours each, once a week. There will be a break for each session of 45 minutes.

The following are my course list:

1. SPÅ2902 Business Communication in English - Effective Negotiations and Presentations (Oral) [7.5 ECTS]

The course will strengthen students' skills in two important areas of business communication that must often be carried out in English: (1) negotiations and (2) presentations. The Professor will give pair students up and discuss different negotiation cases on every class. It is quite interesting for you to negotiate with other students and learn the useful bargaining skills.

The final grade is 100% on the presentation of the oral examination. The oral examination consists of 2 parts, the first part is a 6-7 minute presentation in a business/professional/organizational context and the second part is a 12-13 minute 'negotiations' discussion.

3. ELE3769 Cross Cultural Management [7.5 ECTs]

This course develops students' skills in intercultural communication. Management tasks such as decoding cultural differences, cultural profiling and management framing within a business setting will be the focus of the course. Students were divided into different groups to complete the final project. Personally, I was grouped with an American and a Thai so that it's interesting for me to learn to work in a cross-cultural team.

The final grade is 100% on the written assignment which is the Project Report. Each group can set their own topic, company and related cross-cultural issues to look into and provide recommendations to solve those problems.

3. ELE3706 Persuasion and Dialogue for Leaders [7.5 ECTs]

The course will enable students to deliver effective persuasive presentations focusing on a controversial proposal for change or action that lies close to their hearts and in which they strongly believe. Students will focus on the development of a written manuscript and at the same time work on developing their delivery skills so that they, without the aid of this manuscript - using PowerPoint or other suitable visual aids - can make a credible, persuasive presentation of their proposal. The Professor usually held interactive workshops for us to learn more about public speaking and storytelling skills.

The final grade is 25% on the Final Manuscript, 25% on the Final Delivery, 25% on Presenter's Dialogue with Peers Following the Presentation, 15% on Each Student's Critique of a Peer's Presentation and 10% on the Written Reflection on the Manuscript. You only have to focus on writing the manuscript on your chosen topic throughout the semester so the workload is actually not heavy.

4. EXC3632 Corporate Governance [7.5 ECTs]

This course mainly covers basic corporate governance concepts and theories, International and national standards for corporate governance, Corporate governance mechanisms and processes in Norway and other countries like the US.

The final grade is 100% on the written exam which includes both short questions and the essay question. Remember NOT TO UNDERESTIMATE the number of materials that you have to study for the exam since you actually have to memorize quite a lot from the required readings, textbook and lecture materials. For anyone who would like to take this course, you better spend some time in doing the revision one or two weeks before the exam because the content is quite technical and will be hard to memorize in just two or three days.

ORIENTATION ACTIVITIES

The orientation activities will be held in the first month such as parties, picnics, quizzes and sightseeing tour in the city. It's really a good opportunity for you to make friends with different exchange students through participating in various events. For example, a welcoming gathering activity was held for international students with local students as Exchange Buddies to share things you may want to know in a group of about 12.

SPORTS & RECREATION FACILITIES

The gym centres are located among the SIO housings. The nearest gym would be Athletica Nydalen gym which is located on campus. However, you have to buy a membership in order to access the facilities in the gym.

For outdoor sports, you can actually go to ice skating, sledging and hiking around Oslo! You can also ride the city bicycle during the summer time!

INTERNATIONAL SERVICES & ACTIVITIES

There is a Facebook group [BI Exchange 2018] which was opened for exchange students at BI. Students sometimes will host events such as hiking, camping and picnics and invite the members of the group to join.

Also, there is a monthly dinner event named BINNER. Different themes were set for each month. It is a free first-come-first-serve event for you to enjoy a delicious meal and meet friends every month at BI. You shouldn't miss it since the food was really good!

SOCIAL CLUBS & NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES

At around one to two weeks after the semester begins, there will be an orientation week held by different student organizations. For example, SBio and If you are interested in it, you can go to their booths and see what events they are going to organize.

If you like to chill at the bar, there is a student bar located near BI which is named Kroa. Cheaper alcoholic beverages will be sold there and there were regular quizzes organized each week.

ITEMS TO BRING

- Passport
- important documents (study permit, admission letter, a copy of insurance policy etc.)
- debit/credit cards
- some cash (NOK and EURO)
- warm clothing (heat tech)
- gloves
- Hats
- Scarves
- Waterproof boots
- a waterproof backpack
- laptop + chargers
- international adapters
- WIFI Router (if you are living in Sio housing)
- medicine
- camera
- skincare products

USEFUL LINKS

1. Norwegian Consulate:
<http://www.norway.cn/embassy/hongkong/welcome/#.WloyPrZ968o>
2. Email for Consulate:
norwayhk@ncchk.org.hk
3. BI website for international students
<https://www.bi.edu/study-at-bi/student-life/>
4. BI student portal
<https://at.bi.no/EN/>
5. Sio (Housing website):
<https://www.sio.no/en/>

