

EXCHANGE REPORT

UPPSALA UNIVERSITY,
SWEDEN



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Marketing & Management, Year 3

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PART I - MONTHLY ACTIVITY LOG

August 2018

My initial feelings when I got to Sweden were mixed with excitement and anxiousness because I was unsure of what to expect. Yet, this was a great opportunity and experience. During my first day in Sweden, I took a campus shuttle bus to the Blåsenhus (Campus 1477). This was where registration took place and where you normally meet your exchange buddy. In Blåsenhus, you can set up your student accounts, collect your temporary student card (or Nation card) and collect your room key. After registration, there will be a bus to take you to your housing. During the month of August, the weather was particularly warm (18-24 degrees during the day and 6-10 degrees night). I travelled around Uppsala to see some popular destination spots e.g the Botanical Gardens, Uppsala Castle and Cathedral and I shopped for furniture and daily necessities in IKEA. The nations (student clubs) also led many orientation activities (mostly lunch, dinner and leisure activities) for new students to meet new friends. It was a very warm and welcoming 2 weeks in Uppsala.



September 2018

During September, I met many new friends from Spain, France, Italy, China and Sweden in my corridor. We went to many nation led activities (Parties, Lunches, and FIKA (Swedish Coffee Break)). This was also the month school began. It was very different in comparison to HKUST. There were a lot of seminars (1 or 2 per week depending on course). It was filled with 1 or more hours of discussion on readings and case studies. Towards the end of September, I found time to travel to Norway. It is a beautiful country, with delicious foods but it was quite expensive.



October 2018

October was a busy month. I was close towards finishing my 15 credits course (equivalent to 8 credits in HKUST). However, I still found time to travel to Stockholm and Copenhagen. In Stockholm, there are many attractions to visit and see. It is a big city with a lot more things to do in comparison with Uppsala. If you love shopping and eating, Gamla Stan is a perfect place to visit. As for Copenhagen, I bought a Copenhagen pass, which provides free transport and

entrance to 80+ attractions. Most notable attractions were the Castles and Tivoli Gardens, which was a beautiful and antique amusement park.



November 2018

Sweden's temperature suddenly dropped as my first Swedish snow showered in November. The daylight also was reduced to 3 - 4 hours. As Swedish natives say, the Swedish Winter is the most depressing and worst season to live in. However, it was a wonderful month in Sweden as I was lucky enough to see the Northern Lights in my room. Moreover, final exams and presentations rolled in.

Most exams for business students are home exams, which means you can do them at home. Towards the end of November, I went on a cruise and travelled to Riga and witnessed its 100th Anniversary



for its Independence. It was a national holiday and the country boasted its military. Thousands of soldiers marched in the streets and singing their anthems, and a parade of military automobiles raided the streets and sky.

December 2018

The weather in Sweden gotten even colder (an average of -10 degrees per night). It was a hectic month as 2 of my courses were ending and I had many presentations and exams to complete. In the middle of December all my courses ended. So towards the end of December I travelled to Finland and Iceland. In Finland, I travelled to Helsinki, Rovaniemi and Levi. It was the coldest place I have experienced as it was -28 degrees at one time. In Finland, visiting the Santa Claus village is a must and skiing is quite popular there as well. As for Iceland, it was not as cold but it was the most beautiful country I had been to. The glaciers, lagoon and ice caves were breathtaking. Again, I was lucky enough to see the Northern Lights one night.



January 2019

This was my last month in Sweden. So I had to spend my time to the fullest with my friends. In the beginning of this month I had several home exams to complete. After completing my exams, I moved out as my leasing contract ended and moved in to my friends room which was in the same corridor. I also travelled to Italy and Amsterdam. Towards my last few days in Sweden. I had to say farewell. Farewells are never nice and always hard. Reflecting back, I noticed how much I have grown and matured. Moreover, learnt so much more about people's cultures, new things and experiences. I also shared many valuable experiences I had in Hong Kong and HKUST in hopes for my exchange friends to visit me one day in Hong Kong as well as for me to visit them in their home countries. Before parting my friends, we threw a huge party and we exchange gifts to remember each other. This exchange trip was definitely one of my most memorable experiences.



PART II - GENERAL EXCHANGE INFORMATION

A. VISA PROCEDURES

To stay in Sweden for more than 3 months a residence permit is needed. You will need to create an account and submit an online application via

<https://www.migrationsverket.se/English/Private-individuals/Studying-in-Sweden.html>

The application cost around 1000 SEK. In order to access the account you will have to use the Safari browser. Any other browser does not work. The online application requires the following:

1. Proof of Identification e.g Passport
2. Acceptance Letter in Sweden
3. Health Insurance
4. Bank Statement (proof you can support yourself)
5. Documents and information on scholarships and fundings of sorts etc

The time for process is around 1-2 months, which is why you should always apply earlier. After your application is processed you have to book an appointment to get your fingerprint and photo taken. You can do this within 90 days in Sweden. However, the appointments are in limited amounts. You have to log in daily to find an appointment at a location near you in Sweden.

Don't worry if you cannot book one immediately as it took me 3 weeks in Sweden to book an appointment.

B. ORIENTATION ACTIVITIES

Most Orientation activities are student led by nations (13 student clubs). They organize an array of activities to welcome new students. These normally take place 2-3 weeks before school starts.

In other words in August for Fall students. It is best for you to join more of these activities to meet new people and friends. Moreover, get to know which nation you like as you have to

choose one nation to get a nation/student card as well as its perks. Each nation offer unique activities. Thus, it's recommended you research what each nation has to offer.

C. INTERNATIONAL SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES

Different nations and student unions offer a range of activities for international students per month. It is recommended to join the Facebook groups “International Students of Uppsala University” and “Flogsta 2018-2019”. Most of those student activities are organised there.

D. ACCOMODATION

University Housing Office and Heimstaden works together in providing housing for exchange students. Housing is not guaranteed as it is not on a first come first serve basis but it is important to apply before the deadline. If you choose to find your own housing, it will be quite difficult and if you cannot find housing sometimes people rent out their rooms. People normally rent out their rooms in the Facebook page ‘Uppsala buy and Sell’. The housing I chose is Flogsta, where most of the exchange students live. It is a 5 minute walk to ICA supermarket and a 7 minute bus ride to Ekonomikum (Faculty of Business), where all business classes take place.

E. COURSE REGISTRATION

Course registration requires you to submit an online application. This application tends to open around 1 month to 1.5 months before start of school. It requires you to do minimum 15 credits (equivalent to 8 HKUST credits) in business studies and maximum 30 credits per semester. The semester in Uppsala is split into two halves. Basic Swedish courses are offered after arrival in Sweden. They tend to get quite full so you have to apply quickly. The links for registration will be sent to your emails as well as many other stuff like housing. Thus, check your emails frequently. Course information can be found via

<http://fek.uu.se/student-en/incoming-exchange-students/courses/>

F. TEACHING ASSESSMENTS AND METHODS

I chose one 15 credit course and two 7.5 credit courses. These are all offered for bachelor students. It is highly recommended for bachelor student to not choose master courses. They are very challenging and very time consuming. If you do choose master courses then I wish you best of luck because they are not easy and should not be underestimated. Depending on what courses and in which department assessment methods are different. For business students, weekly seminars (1-2 per week), reflections on readings, presentations and home exams (mandatory and non mandatory) are the basis for your grades. Attendance are mandatory for seminars but not lectures. There are weekly reading and case studies and they are very time consuming. Seminars are based on them and reflections and discussion are based on them so you must understand them thoroughly. So you must have good organizational skills to handle the workload. Home exams are sometimes non-mandatory. This only applies if you have enough points to pass the course. However, you can take them if you don't have enough points to pass or if you need to get distinction for the course. Normally to pass you will need 50 points out of 100 and to get distinction you will need 80 out of 100 points.

G. SPORTS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

There are no free sports and recreation facilities offered by Uppsala. Campus 1477 is the most reasonable priced gym. Other sport or exercise facilities hosted by student unions or external providers are expensive. Campus 1477, at the beginning of the semester provides you free trials for their lessons. They also provide an extensive range of activities like yoga, dancing etc. You can go skydiving from April 2019 to October 2019. Skiing is not possible in Uppsala but possible in other cities near Uppsala. In the city center during Winter, there is an ice rink for people to ice skate.

H. FINANCE AND BANKING

Individuals who live less than a year in Sweden will not have a personal identity number, which is required to create a bank account in Sweden. As far as I know, most Hong Kong students do not have a bank account in Sweden (if they stay less than a year). Almost every shop accepts credit card so transactions and payments are easy. However, payments in machines etc. for train ticket for example is not possible. They require a PIN number. Hong Kong credit card holders do not have one so you will be unable to pay for them. Instead most transport companies or other companies have mobile apps. This is the only payment option to pay if no service counters are available. Remember to bring enough Swedish Krona, American USD and Euros. Just in case if you want to travel to have cash to exchange to other currencies if need be. My monthly expenses not including rent and oversea travelling was around 2000-2500 SEK.

I. SOCIAL CLUBS AND NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES

International Committees, Nations, and Facebook groups I mention above all provide networking and social club opportunities. It is very easy to participate and join events or activities. So you do not have to worry. There are many events to learn about local culture like Gasque (traditional dinners, singing etc) and other events. Normally on the Nations guide they will list out the activities you can join via

<https://uppsalastudentbostad.com/nationsguiden>

Nation card is required to join these activities.

J. HEALTH AND SAFETY

Uppsala is a safe city. People are very friendly and they can help you if you ask them nicely. Most people knows english so it is not hard to communicate. However, thieves are common and they mostly steal bikes. So remember to not leave anything valuable there as they will steal them.

Moreover, drinking and biking is illegal. Helmets for biking is not required but lights are mandatory when riding bikes at night or when it is dark.

K. FOOD

Eating out in Sweden is costly. Maybe around 150-200 SEK. Nation provided lunch or dinner is generally cheaper but I will still think it is expensive. Most people cook in dorms, so practice your cooking skills! Normally, corridor mates will have gatherings to cook with each other so if you have bad cooking skills you can probably count on you friends to cook but it is not a guarantee. School cafeterias are also very expensive so everyone brings their own lunch and microwave at campus. One tip when shopping in supermarkets (Willy's, ICA, MAXI) are to buy when they have big sales and discounts. This tends to happen when they are clearing stock or when food are expiring. These products can go from 50% to 70% off.

L. TRANSPORTATION

Biking is the most convenient and popular transportation in Uppsala. However, the roads are not as flat as you believe. Especially during winter when the roads are frozen (it is easy to slip and injure yourself). If your fitness levels are not sufficient or you have never ridden a bike before. Then I will not suggest you to buy a bike as it is quite tough. Second hand bikes can go from 500- 1300 SEK. You can buy them through "Uppsala buy and Sell" or in flea markets downtown. An important note if you buy a second hand bike then you have to test the wheels and brakes. They tend to get worn down very easily and the maintenance fee for them are expensive. Other than biking other transportations in Sweden is expensive. A monthly bus pass is 560 SEK. Buses in uppsala goes to all zones and most cities. Trains are available in Uppsala Centralstation and they can also provide you access to other cities. Prices can vary. Taxis are also an option but they are the most expensive form of transport.

M. CLIMATE

August till October is quite nice. The weather is around 12-24 degrees. November till January is when it worsens. The daylight will be reduced to 3 hours and the temperature can dropped to -17 degrees at night. Make sure you bring enough clothes, a thick and long jacket, beanie, scarf and gloves (actually makes a difference). If you think your jacket is not warm enough. Stadium Outlet, which is next to IKEA sells good priced and quality jackets.

N. COMMUNICATION

Official language is Swedish and most individuals can speak English. Most courses are offered in English in Uppsala University. Swedish second language is English so communication is rather easy.

O. CAUTIONARY MEASURES

Student card is necessary for many things for example, proof of identification if you buy a bus pass, student discounts at shops etc. The fines for paying at student discount are quite high so you must apply for them quickly. Bring extra backup cash and enough clothing's for the winter. Moreover, if you own a bike buy a good lock and lights to ride safely at night. As daylight falls around 15:00 in November.

PART III - THINGS TO BRING

CHECKLIST	
	Passport, HKID, Acceptance Letter, Student Insurance, residence permit (must be carried at all times)
	Cash (SEK, Euros, USD), Credit Cards, Debit Cards
	Backup Locks and Keys (for suitcases or bags)
	Router or LAN cable (housing do not have WiFi)
	Phone, Phone cable, Earphones and Extra battery
	Camera, Memory card and charger
	Laptop and charger
	Adaptors (2 round legs) (Type C or F)
	Medicine, skincare products, cosmetics (girls)
	Warm Clothes (Thick Jacket, gloves, ear muff, beanies, scarf, warm stickers or bags etc.
	Medium/Large Bag for travelling
	*Optional (Contact Lens or Glasses)
	*Optional (Winter/Snow shoes or you can buy in Sweden) (Frozen roads are very slippery)
	*Optional (small kettle, rice cooker)
	*Optional (toiletries or you can buy in Sweden)

PART IV - USEFUL LINKS AND CONTACTS

A. Migration Agency/Residence Permit

<https://www.migrationsverket.se/English/Private-individuals/Studying-in-Sweden.html>

B. Uppsala University Housing Office

<http://housingoffice.se>

C. Course Catalog

<http://fek.uu.se/student-en/incoming-exchange-students/courses/>

D. Transportation (Bus): UL

<https://www.ul.se/en>

E. Transportation (Train): SJ

<https://www.sj.se/#/>

F. Emergency Contact Tel:

+46 77 114 14 00 (Police station in Uppsala)

G. International Mobility Office Incoming exchange:

Email: incoming@fek.uu.se

Phone: +46(0)18-471 1407 (EU, EES) or +46(0)18-4716801 (Non-EU)

H. Student Nations

http://www.uu.se/en/admissions/student-life/the_student_nations/

I. Campus 1477

<http://campus1477.se/en/>

J. Facebook groups

Uppsala Buy and Sell:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/uppsalabuyandsell/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/313584162175767/>

International Social Activities and networking:

<https://www.facebook.com/UppsalaIK/> or <https://www.facebook.com/groups/flogsta1415/>