

# Exchange Report

University of Glasgow

Adam Smith Business  
School



University  
of Glasgow



Leah Chan

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# Part 1- Monthly Activity Log

## September

When I first entered Glasgow University, I was amazed by its architecture and history. Glasgow University is established in 1451, which is really archaic. Its main building is a gothic style architecture, which makes me feel like Hogwarts! If any of you is a fan of Harry Potter, you should definitely be studying here!

My student apartment is called Murano Student Village, which is located 30 mins away (by walk) from the campus. At first, I thought I would be skipping lots of lessons because it seems a challenge to me to walk to campus every day for half an hour (infrequent and not much public transport available there). Nonetheless, on my way to the campus, unlike Hong Kong, there are no skyscrapers, only with natural scenery, it makes me feel so serene and calm to take a stroll to the campus and listening with music, therefore, I started to enjoy the time walking to campus (I did not skip my lessons eventually!)



This is the business school welcoming dinner. This is a traditional Scottish dish called Haggis (made from animal's organs) although it sounds gross, it's so tasty!



I have joined a student tour to the Isle of Skye (the second most beautiful island in the world) The view is absolutely stunning!

## October

As the days goes by, I started to adapt to the life in Glasgow. Hence, I felt like a freshman again as I joined a myriads of societies and clubs, like Drama society, Baking society and Japanese society, and I had a great time there. I have met a lot of friends across the globe and it was interesting to get to know people with different cultural background. For instance, one of my flat mates, who also is my very best friend, is from Gaza, a place where flames of battle ranging everywhere. She shared her life in Gaza, which somehow is hard to imagine by a person who lives in a civilized society and never experienced war. I was amazed and shocked by her background and what she had experienced in her home country. The most memorable event that I have experienced in October was celebrating Halloween. I dressed up as Alice in Gothic style (Alice in the wonderland) during Halloween. Everyone dressed up on that night and we went to a Halloween party held by my University. I was really enjoyed that night. I also went to Paisley, a small town near Glasgow to join its Halloween festival. There was a parade where every citizen in the town wore Halloween costume and performed. This is the first time (and probably the last time) I am able to experience such a festive Halloween!



I dressed up as Gothic Alice during Halloween (we dressed up with the theme of Fairytale in Gothic style) We had a blast and it was so fun!



We went to Paisley to join its Halloween festival. There were parade, and lots of Halloween performances. We had a great night experiencing a festive Halloween in Paisley!

## November

The life in Glasgow is simple yet fruitful. My daily routine is going to school, buying groceries from the supermarket, meeting up with friends, and starting off my work-out schedule: doing gym (it is actually hard to imagine myself start to do exercise because I am a lazy person) In the weekends, I joined the local tours provided by my university to explore the highlands and other cities in Scotland, such as Edinburgh, Oban and Fort William. We had a wonderful time traveling in Scotland. I immersed myself into the nature, had a nice walk into the forest, and saw all the cute little sheeps and horses. I wish I could stay there forever.



Autumn in Glasgow: on the way to lecture

The leaves have turned to yellow and red colours, so pretty!

## December

Never realized the time passed so quickly. It is almost the end of the semester. I hoped to complete everything I would like to do on my bucket list, however, time is running out and I need to finish five essays in two weeks before I left Glasgow, so it was hard to get everything done. Nonetheless, I managed to visit a few more museums and art galleries in Glasgow with my friends from Hong Kong, and went to Edinburgh to visit the Christmas market with my flat mate. I treasured every moment I spend with my friends and surely it is hard to say goodbyes to the things and people I have met there. Moreover, I believed that time will pass, but memories will last forever, I hope in the near future I can visit Glasgow once again and reunion with the friends I met there!



I went to the Christmas market in Edinburgh with my flat mate from Gaza. There are a lot of booths selling Christmas related products and food (waffle, hot chocolate). We had a great time in Edinburgh.

# Part ii General Exchange Information

## Clubs and Societies

There are over 200 societies and interest clubs. For instance, bakery club, Caleigh (Scottish dancing) society (I have joined this one and it offered taster session to teach us how to dance! It was so fun), cheese club (for cheese lovers!) and a lot more... You can join as many as you can to fill up your schedule. It is also a great opportunity for you to meet new friends, so remember to sign up for the clubs during the orientation week.

## Health

Every full-time exchange student who studies for six months or less is entitled for free healthcare services in Scotland (no additional fee is required). Hence, there is a uni-clinic located at Fraser Building. All in all, you do not need to worry about any medical-related issues studying abroad.

## Food

The food in Glasgow is generally a bit more expensive than in Hong Kong (around hkd 80-100 per person), so be prepared to cook the food on your own, especially dinner, because school canteen only opens till 5pm. Learn how to cook before you come! There are a lot of supermarkets such as Lidl, Tesco and Sainsbury. Most supermarkets are open till 10pm. If you are bored with the European food, you are still able to purchase Chinese food at SeeWoo (29 Saracen Street, Glasgow G22)

## Transportation

There isn't a problem for you to travel around and exploring Glasgow as the transportation network is quite comprehensive.

For public transport, there are subway and bus for you to go to city center and uni. For subway, it has 15 stations to link up the Glasgow City. The nearest subway station to the University campus is Hillhead in Byres Road. For bus, buses 4, 4A and 15 stop on the University Avenue. The traveling time depends on the location of your student accommodation, which usually within 10-20 minutes (for bus) and 5-10 minutes (subway). If you are living in Student Apartments, congratulations! You only need to walk to the campus for 5 minutes.

## **Visa Procedure**

If you are holding a HK passport (HK / BNO passport), you don't need to apply for a visa to study in the UK for less than six months, which means if you only go on a term exchange, visa is not required. However, if you are not holding a HK passport or you apply for a year exchange, you are required to apply for a Tier 4 Visa, from the British Government website: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-to-come-to-the-uk>. If you are uncertain whether you need to apply a visa or not, you can also check the requirements on this website : <https://www.gov.uk/check-uk-visa> . Do remember to apply the visa at least 2 months before the departure in case of any delay!

## **Orientation Activities**

You don't need to worry you are not able to meet any new friends in Glasgow! There are lots of orientation activities allows you to meet exchange students from other countries, and also the local students studying in the University of Glasgow. For instance, there are welcoming dinner held by your faculty, "meet and greet" ice breaking session held by the student union. You can also join the "movie night" for free every Thursday night to know your peers and make new friends!

## **International Services and Activities**

The University of Glasgow provides welfare services to support the needs of the exchange student. There will be International Student Advisers to provide help and advice through holding workshops, orientation program and webchat meeting to provide guidance and help with your daily matters such as issues regarding on the living and studying in Glasgow. You can make the appointments with the student advisors on MyGlasgow page. On top, there are a myriads of activities for you to join in order to relieve stress from study, such as student local tours to visit and explore other places in Scotland, and you can are free to join any sports class like Yoga Class, Badminton class, etc without any requirements and are for free! I am sure you will never get bored in your exchange.

## **Accommodations**

If you wish to live in student accommodation, you are required to apply the accommodation online through: [glasgow.ac.uk/services/accommodation](http://glasgow.ac.uk/services/accommodation). There are 11 residential campus in total, such as Murano Student Village, Kelvinhaugh Street and Student Apartment, and all of them are out of campus. In terms of walking distance to the main campus, Student Apartment is the nearest to the campus, only 5 mins away, and for other residential apartment,

the walking time varies from 15 to 35 minutes. If you being allocated to Student Apartment, Congratulations! However, if you are being assigned to other accommodations (like me), although it seems quite far from the school, but I think it is a good exercise for you to walk to school every day, and you are able to enjoy and immerse yourself into the natural scenery in Glasgow.

## **Courses Registration**

You don't need to worry about the course registration at all, because all you need to do is to email to the department head (which the contact list of the departments will be distributed during the orientation talk), and stating what you would like to enroll in this semester (include the course code and the course name). If the instructor/ the head of the department approved your request on the course enrollment, you will sign up for the course automatically. Therefore, you don't need to stress on the course enrollment.

## **Teaching and Assessment Methods**

All the courses are conducted in English, so you need not to worry about facing any language difficulties. The assessment methods are mainly essays, presentations, and tests, where essays take up a high proportion towards the course grade, which is unlike UST, and sometimes the instructor will require you to write your English in the UK style, so please do aware of this issue.

## **Sports and Recreation Facilities**

The University of Glasgow values sports and recreational activities. Therefore, it has up to 50 sports club, from American football to sailing, and I am sure there is something for you. There are drop-in sports session that allows you to experience how's the sports is like. This experience also allows you to relax from stress, improve your health and most importantly, able meet new friends who have the same interests with you!

## **Finance and Banking**

Scotland is using pound as the currency (1 pound= around 10.2 HKD). To manage your money, it is better for you to have a HSBC account in Hong Kong, because there is HSBC in the UK and you can apply for HK-UK money exchange functions in the Hong Kong HSBC which facilitates you to transfer

the money from HK to UK. For the daily expenses, it is around 80-150 HKD for a meal, which costs quite a lot if you eat outside every day. The good news is: there is well-equipped cooking utilities at the dorm therefore I would suggest you to cook by yourself because the groceries in the supermarket are on average cheaper than in HK (a good opportunity for you to learn how to cook!) For other daily expenses, I think it is similar/ slightly more expensive compare to Hong Kong, but usually do not cost much if you cook every day and do not always goes shopping.

## **Climate**

The climate in Glasgow is overall quite windy and dry. It is quite cold in the winter, around -3c to 10c throughout November till January, and breezy in summer, around 15-22c. But somehow it is quite weird, because it usually has a sunny, clear blue sky in the morning but raining in the afternoon. But due to strong wind, you will find it hard to open the umbrella, so people in Glasgow usually wear hoodie or jacket to avoid the rain.

## **Communication**

English is Glasgow official language, but with its unique Scottish accent. Apart from the accent, the tone and the use of words are also quite different from other cities in the UK. It is somehow hard to understand their thick accent at first, but soon you will get used to it and eventually understand what they are saying.

## **Cautionary Measures**

Safety wise, I think overall Scotland is a safe place to live as the Scottish people are really friendly and willing to help out. Just to be reminded that if you are a girl, do not stay up too late and make sure you have someone to go back to the accommodation with because there is not much streets light so it is quite scary to walk alone. In addition, be alert to people that are drunk because Scottish people like to drink (esp. Scottish Whiskey) and the tramps because there is quite a lot in Glasgow (actually in the whole UK too). Otherwise, overall I think it is totally safe to study in Glasgow.

## Part III Items to Bring

1. Money
2. Passport
3. Laptop
4. Mobile Phone
5. Warm clothes
6. Medicine
7. Charger
8. Hair dryer
9. Towel
10. Personal skincare/ cleansing products
11. HK food if you think you will miss it

## Part IV Useful Links and contacts

1. University of Glasgow official website  
<https://www.gla.ac.uk>
2. Glasgow student (check out clubs/ societies/ latest updates)  
<https://www.glasgowstudent.net/clubs/find-a-club/>
3. Accommodation Services  
Level 1, Fraser Building tel: +44 (0)141 330 4743
4. Counselling & Psychological Services  
67 Southpark Avenue tel: +44 (0)141 330 4528
5. International Student Support  
Level 2, Fraser Building tel: +44 (0)141 330 2912 • Registry, Level 2, Fraser Building tel: +44 (0)141 330 7000
6. Students' Representative Council  
  
McIntyre Building tel: +44 (0)141 330 5360
7. Student Services Enquiry Team  
Level 2, Fraser Building tel: +44 (0)141 330 7000
8. Breathing Space

tel: +44 (0)800 838 587 [breathingspace.scot](http://breathingspace.scot) Experienced advisers who you can talk to when you find it difficult to cope with everyday life.

9. British Medical Association

Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9JP tel: +44 (0)207 387 4499 [bma.org.uk](http://bma.org.uk)