

EXCHANGE REPORT

ERASMUS UNIVERSITY ROTTERDAM,
THE NETHERLANDS

OM & MARK | Fall 2018



Zoe So

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AUGUST

I arrived Amsterdam, the Netherlands on 27 August, 2018. On my first day of arrival, I have settled down a bit by checking in to Hatta Building, one of the few on campus halls. I have then walked around the campus and walked to the nearest attraction from campus, which is named *Arboretum Trompenburg*. Trip advisor said 'this arboretum is an oasis for travelers to stroll or sit among trees, perennials and bulbs. These lovely gardens feature a wide variety of plants including over 750 species of Hosta.' I can't deny that the species here are really a lot, the whole place is really large as well. It costed me 3.75 euro, it was kind of cool even though I don't have my student card with me yet, the guy there still granted me with discount. There were some repetitions round the garden, not too much, but still, it took me some time to go back to the entrance since the garden is really big.

On the following days, I have walked to Rotterdam Blaak for different attractions, including cube house, Markthal, etc. The building in the photo is PWC, which is located near Kralingse Zoom Metro Station. Buildings in Rotterdam are really weird in shape. The orientation session was held on 31st August 2018, and the details of it can be found on later pages.





SEPTEMBER

The semester commenced on 3rd September. Unlike HKUST, EUR does not have add-drop period, so you do not have a choice to enroll additional courses or drop the courses that you are not interested in. The lecture halls there were huge and nice, yet, the lecturers here always faces technical problems and within a week, three classes were cancelled in the middle due to technical errors.

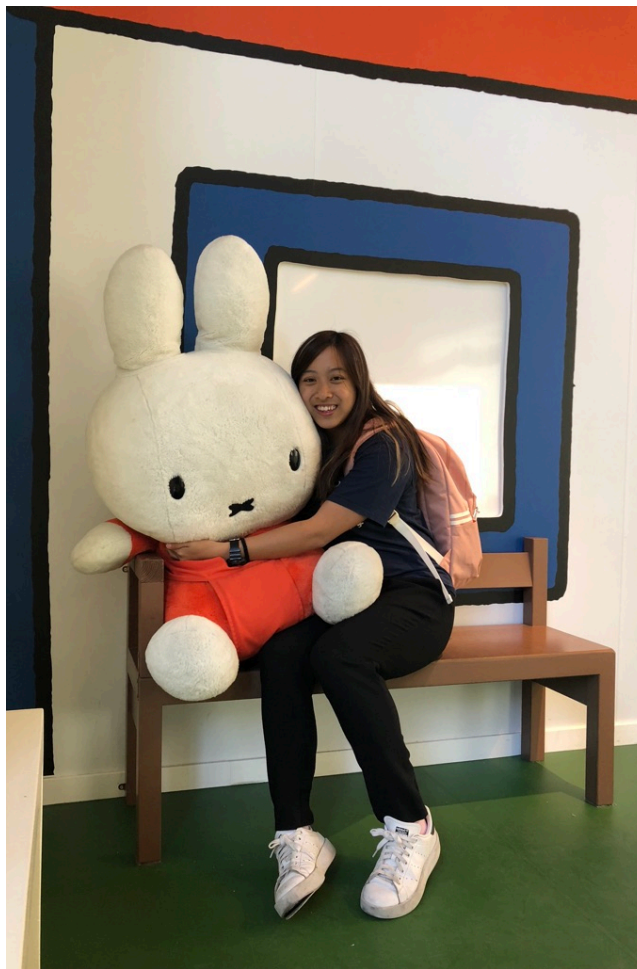
At first, I thought that people here would respond a lot in class, yet, in lectures, the class was more or less the same with HKUST. However, if it is in form of workshop or tutorials, people here do ask a lot of questions.

Students here all take notes in class, either in written form or using word instead of surfing the internet. They are all prepared for classes by reading all chapters of textbook and readings uploaded.

Apart from having classes, I have got some chances to travel in the weekends in September. I have been to

- *The Netherlands*: Maastricht, Amsterdam, Utrecht, Delft
- *Belgium*: Brussels, Kent
- *Germany*: Munich

I have also rented a bike from Swapfiets, paying €12 monthly. The bike I rented was without hand break, the way to stop it was to use pedal break. My cycling life commenced in September.



OCTOBER

Exams here are harsher than those in Hong Kong, it is hard to get a pass since you have to score 70% in MC questions to get a bare pass. Thus, it was actually quite demanding. In the meantime, the exam questions are unlike those in Hong Kong, they focus on every detail instead of the key points of the courses.

I have joined Euroturn, which is a gymnastic club offering regular practices on Tuesday and Thursday.

Apart from normal routine, I have signed up for the Cycling Dinner organized by Euroturn. The Cycling Dinner was like having dinner in two Euroturn members' homes, providing us with chances to try local cuisines.

More about Cycling was that my friends and I cycling from Erasmus University Rotterdam to Delft, then to the Hague. We were so grateful that we have cycled from city to city, which, originally, seemed to me that was mission impossible.

My first solo trip outside the Netherlands also happened in October, I had done comprehensive research about Berlin, Germany, and have met a friend who was from Singapore when I was travelling alone in Berlin.

I have travelled to the following places:

- The Netherlands: The Hague, Delft, Leiden, Eindhoven, Amsterdam, Giethoorn, Tilburg
- Belgium: Gent, Brussels
- Germany: Berlin
- Luxembourg: Luxembourg City
- Denmark: Copenhagen



Austria - Vienna; Croatia - Zagreb, Plitvička; Slovenia - Ljubljana;
Poland - Krakow; Hungary - Budapest; The Netherlands - Zaandam;
Portugal - Lisbon, Sintra; Czech Republic - Prague

NOVEMBER

I had great time in November and travelled more and to further places. Yet, I had quite a lot of group projects to deal with.



One of the projects was very frustrating as I was not used to the way they work here. Instead of reaching consensus on the way we work, people here are all unprepared before meeting, and read everything together, brainstorm together, the productivity was really low, like spending 10 hours together writing a paragraph. The most frustrating of all was that I had a group project with Bachelor students there and I faced a disastrous situation, even worse than freeriding, which was like people judging every part of your work thinking that you are Asian and Exchange student, so I really felt hard.

Yet, I still had some good groupmates in other courses. I had a group project with Dutch, Canadian, and Hong Kong people, we worked efficiently. The local student there will be coming to HKUST exchange in coming Fall too after completion of our project.

I had joined quite a lot of sports classes as well, ranging from Yoga, Pilates, Boxing, Indoor Cycling, Power Pump, Aerobics, and even to Cheerleading.





DECEMBER

Since different courses ended at different time, I had more free time after some courses had ended. I was quite stressed about the final exams as questions covered everything in the textbook. Luckily, I had all my exams completed on 12 December 2018. Ergo, I could chill out and travel around since then.

- Italy: Rome
- Greece: Athens, Santorini
- Switzerland: Geneva, Interlaken, Zermatt, Brig, Rigi, Zurich, Bern
- Lichtenstein: Vaduz
- France: Lyon

On 30th December 2018, my exchange journey has officially come to an end.





1. Visa Application

For Hong Kongers, it is required to apply for visa when exchange takes over 90 days. In the beginning, MVV should be applied. There are several points to note as listed below.

- Reserve the timeslot for visa application first as it only opens on Mon-Wed in the morning. It can be rescheduled, so just reserve any timeslots and change that later on.
- Remember to bring your passport, passport photos, letter of acceptance to IND.
- €192 has to be paid before it can be processed.
- Passport will be collected for several working days during visa application.
- Address:
Suite 3001, 30 floor
Central Plaza
18 Harbour Road
Wan Chai

Useful information that are retrieved from IND's website

- Visa application should be completed before you travel to the Netherlands. The entry visa will only valid be for 90 days after the visa sticker has been placed in your passport. It is essential to collect your Dutch residence permit as soon as possible after it has been issued by the IND upon your arrival in the Netherlands, but in any case before the expiry date of your entry visa.
- Collecting your Dutch residence permit
Your Dutch residence permit card is the document that is your official proof of legal residence in the Netherlands during your stay. After the IND receives your photo and fingerprint scans from the embassy or consulate, they need about 4-6 weeks for issuing your residence permit card. Once your permit is ready to be picked up in the Netherlands, you will receive a message from us with detailed information and further instructions about how to collect your permit.



2. Orientation Activities

It was arranged as a day event, all exchange students from all universities were attending the orientation session as it was mandatory.

Date: 31 August 2018

Time: 9:00-21:00

Cost: €65

Student card will be distributed that day by your exchange buddy.

Activities of the day includes:

- Welcome/information sessions
- Speech by Dean of RSM
- Lunch on campus (two sandwiches, a piece of fruit and a drink)
- Campus Hunt
- Team building activities in a Beach (as shown in the photo)
- Dinner (Buffet) at the beach (with 2 Cups of drinks)

3. International Services & Activities

- I have bought ESN card that provided me with different discounts and possibilities to join trips organized by external organizations
 - I have joined the Oktoberfest trip in late September
 - Free SIM cards are provided by ESN (Lebara)
 - Sports card can be purchased at a lower price for four months: €75
- Retrieved from <https://www.esn.org/>
 - ESN – Erasmus Student Network (ESN) is a non-profit international student organisation. Our mission is to represent international students, thus provide opportunities for cultural understanding and self-development under the principle of Students Helping Students.



4. Accommodation

I lived in Hatta Building (the photo is showing the outlook of Hatta Building), which is located in the campus. One of the best parts is that Bicycle Shed is provided inside the building, where only residents of the building have access to. In the basement, washing facilities are provided, but it costed €2.5 for washing and drying every time.

My room was on the first room of the first floor, 326A, which was nearest to the entrance of the building. It was like an apartment, with three rooms for three people, a shared kitchen, washroom, and shower. Inside my room, I got a bed (90 by 200 cm), hat rack, wardrobe, 7 clothing hangers, bookcase, desk, desk chair, wastepaper basket, desk lamp, armchair, side table, standing lamp, whiteboard, curtains and internet cable. The room is large (17.0 m²), and I was so grateful that I had some personal space.

Rent per month was €536.34, which was inclusive of all the charges for electricity, water, heating, service, furniture, decoration, household insurance and taxes have been included in your rent. Yet, heating would only be available from November.

The Period for the first Trimester's accommodation was 15 Aug 2018 – 31 Dec 2018, so I could arrive before the semester commenced. Make sure you have picked the right period instead of Aug – Jan, else you have to pay for the additional month's rent.

I would highly recommend Hatta Building for the sake of its convenient location, large and neat room. Yet, please note that noise cancellation of the room was not good, you can even hear you housemate's conversation over the phonecall. Yet, since I can easily fall asleep, it was not a problem to me at all.

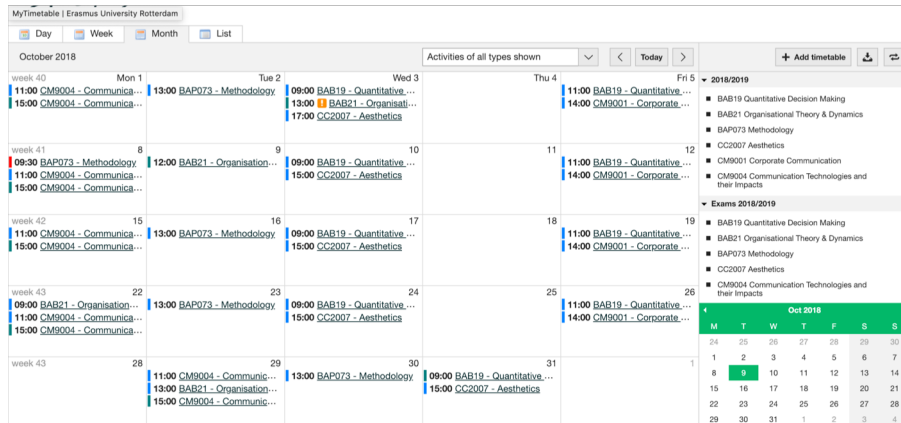


5. Course Registration

Courses from different schools have to be registered separately. Some may require you to fill in google form, some may require you to email them, so you have to search those information time-to-time.

Apart from different means, their application time differs. For RSM Minors, the deadline will be around May for Fall semester. For RSM courses, you can register them in July to August by sending the course registration form to bsc-exch-app@rsm.nl.

Unlike HKUST, Erasmus University would not help you to check whether your registered courses have time clash or not. So you have to check it on your own, it is possible for your courses to have time clash and you still got enrolled into it. Make sure that you can attend the final exams of the courses that have time conflicts.



For courses that are about History and Culture Studies and Communication and Media, the registration period was as follow. You can take it as reference.

Course period	Registration period
Term 1	30 July- 15 August (noon)
Term 2	1 October - 17 October (noon)
Term 3 & Term 4	24 December - 9 January (noon)

Workload

- 20 ECTS is the regular fulltime workload for one trimester
- Minimum workload for exchange students is 15 ECTS per trimester
- It is not advised to take more than 24 ECTS per trimester.
- The Maximum workload for exchange students is 30 ECTS

6. Teaching & Assessment Methods

- Some of the courses are more interactive than those in Hong Kong, they could even be in form of talk show
- Assessment includes Final Examination, Presentation, Projects, Essays, Talk Show, Blog Posts

7. Sports and Recreational Facilities

Erasmus SPORT BODYFIT 2018-2019

MONDAY

10:00 - 11:15	Shivavanda hotta Yoga	Anne	Sport studio
11:30 - 12:30	Plates	Sannia	Sport studio
12:30 - 13:30	Indoor cycling	Ton	Training hall 3
14:00 - 17:00	Boeing bag	Elfi	Training hall 1
16:00 - 17:00	Aerobic B&B	Corry	Training hall 2
17:00 - 18:00	Power pump*	Elfi	Training hall 1
17:00 - 18:00	Strength & conditioning	Elfi	Training hall 1
18:00 - 19:00	Power pump*	Sonia	Training hall 2
18:00 - 19:00	Zumba*	Sannia	Training hall 1
18:00 - 19:00	Indoor cycling	John	Training hall 3
19:00 - 20:00	Insanity	Sannia	Training hall 2
19:00 - 20:15	Yoga level 1	Johnny	Sport studio
20:15 - 21:30	Yoga level 2	Johnny	Sport studio

TUESDAY

12:30 - 13:30	Indoor cycling	Idko	Training hall 3
14:00 - 17:00	Body toning B&B	Corry	Sport hall 1
16:00 - 17:00	High intensity training (HIIT)	Carvey	Training hall 2
17:00 - 18:00	Body toning B&B	Corry	Sport hall 1
17:00 - 18:00	Steps	Biglie	Training hall 2
17:00 - 18:00	Cheerleading	Shay	Training hall 4
17:00 - 18:15	Yin Yoga	Ellen	Sport studio
18:15 - 19:00	Meditation	Ellen	Sport studio
18:00 - 19:00	Power pump*	Biglie	Training hall 2
19:00 - 20:00	Indoor cycling	Rosam	Training hall 3
19:00 - 20:00	STRONG by Zumba*	Piscika	Training hall 2
20:00 - 21:00	XCORE*	Rosam	Sport studio
20:00 - 21:00	Bootcamp	Piscika	Desk > outside

WEDNESDAY

11:00 - 12:00	Plates	Sannia	Sport studio
12:30 - 13:30	Indoor cycling	Sannia	Training hall 3
14:00 - 17:00	Power pump*	Corry	Training hall 2
16:00 - 17:00	High intensity training (HIIT)	Joelle	Training hall 1
17:00 - 18:00	Power pump*	Joelle	Training hall 2
17:00 - 18:00	Aerobic B&B	Corry	Training hall 1
18:00 - 19:00	XCORE*	Joelle	Training hall 2
18:00 - 19:00	Indoor cycling	John	Training hall 3
18:00 - 19:00	Boeing bag	Marc	Training hall 1
19:00 - 20:15	Yoga level 1	Johnny	Sport studio
20:15 - 21:30	Yoga level 2	Johnny	Sport studio

THURSDAY

14:00 - 17:00	Steps	Biglie	Training hall 2
17:00 - 18:00	Strength & conditioning	Elfi	Training hall 2
17:00 - 18:00	Indoor cycling	Ton	Training hall 3
16:30 - 17:45	Hotta Yoga	Anne	Sport studio
17:45 - 19:00	Yin Yoga	Anne	Sport studio
18:00 - 19:00	Zumba*	Sannia	Training hall 2
19:00 - 20:00	XCORE*	Rosam	Sport studio

FRIDAY

11:00 - 12:00	Plates	Sannia	Sport studio
12:30 - 13:30	Indoor cycling	Sannia	Training hall 3
14:00 - 17:00	Body toning B&B	Joelle	Training hall 2
17:00 - 18:00	Power pump*	Joelle	Training hall 2
17:00 - 18:15	Yoga all levels	Johnny	Sport studio
18:15 - 19:30	Yoga all levels	Johnny	Sport studio
19:30 - 21:00	Cheerleading	Shay	Sport studio

SATURDAY

11:00 - 12:00	STRONG by Zumba*	Piscika	Training hall 2
12:00 - 13:00	Zumba*	Piscika	Training hall 2
12:00 - 13:00	Indoor cycling	John/Rosam	Training hall 3
12:00 - 13:15	Flow Yoga	Bianca	Sport studio
13:00 - 14:00	XCORE*	Piscika/Rosam	Training hall 2

SUNDAY

11:00 - 12:00	Power pump*	Sonia	Training hall 2
12:00 - 13:00	Insanity	Sonia	Training hall 2
13:00 - 14:00	Indoor cycling	Sonia/Joelle	Training hall 3

Check our website for opening hours & schedules during holidays.
* You need a ticket to join power pump. You can collect your ticket at the service desk on the day you want to join power pump.

www.erasmusport.nl

- You can buy the sports pass to use the sports facilities there, it costs 75EUR for ESN card holders lasting for 4 months
- It is quite worthy since you can join any sports class you want in accordance to your schedule with high flexibility

8. Finance & Banking


Item	HKD
Visa	1,724
Airfare	7,137
Accommodation (Reservation fee + Monthly Rent)	23,139
Mandatory Orientation	584
Swapfiets (Renting a bike)	324
Other expenses (Travelling + daily expenses)	42,000
Total	74,618

- It is compulsory to open a Bank account there as the university will refund the deposit (Proof of financial means) to the bank account.
- I have opened a bank account from ING as it does not require a BSN number, meaning that you can open a bank account there without registering city hall.
- However, people there worked with low efficiency and accuracy, so it was quite frustrating.
- It is really convenient to use debit card since it is accepted in most European countries, much better than octopus card in Hong Kong

9. Social Clubs & Networking Opportunities

- I have joined Euroturn, the gymnastic club and met a lot of Europeans there



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10. Health & Safety

- It is mandatory to buy insurance there
- You can buy it in Hong Kong or at One Stop Shop

11. Food

- It usually cost around 4-10 EUR dinning in campus without drinks
- I usually cook my meal by buying food from PLUS, a supermarket that is near to the campus, which is much cheaper than SPAR (supermarket located in campus)

12. Transportation

- You can buy a OV-chipkaart after you have your ISIC card
- The student OV-chipkaart offers you 20% off discount for trains during non-peak hour
- It works like octopus card in Hong Kong, but only functional for transportation
- I have also rented a bike from Swapfiets which costs 12EUR per month



13. Climate

- Weather here is quite unpredictable, it can be rainy all of a sudden, and the next minute, it can be sunny
- It is quite cold here, not because of the temperature, but because of the strong wind, the wind is comparable to typhoon no. 3 at all time, sometimes it can blow me away

14. Communication

- Dutch are nice, you can communicate with them in English
- After visiting different European countries, I have realized that Dutch are really open to other cultures and I have never felt being discriminated against by Dutch

15. Cautionary measures

- Remember to return the residence permit when you leave the Netherlands as it is the property of Dutch government
- It should be posted to the following address
IND Bureau Documenten
P.O. Box 7025
8007 HA Zwolle

16. Must go event: Heartbeat Festival

- The event is really “heartbeat” as the sound effect there was really good and loud, you can feel your body shaking with the beat
- There are different events such as face drawing, music performances by different singers and bands, such as [@thedirtydaddies](#)
- Food booths, swings, beer, silent disco were also found
- We are required to buy the coins to purchase food there, and their revenue will be donated to the foundation of refugee students (UAF), so it is really meaningful
- The area was well decorated
- There was a Karaoke car too, so we sang song inside the car



Items to bring

- Travel Adapter
- Passport
- Credit Card
- Cash
- Birth Certificate (For City Hall Registration)
- Clothes
- Stationery
- Calculator
- Notebook



Useful Links and Contacts

Fact Sheet

<https://ug.bm.ust.hk/sbm/exchangeout/Upload/FactSheet/Erasmus%2018-1.pdf>

Course Guide

<https://courses.eur.nl>

Time Table

<https://timetables.eur.nl/>

Printing Facilities

<https://myprint.eur.nl/RicohmyPrint/Main.aspx>

Sports @Erasmus

<https://erasmussport.nl/bodyfit-en/>

Sin-online (Something similar to my portal)

<https://rsm.sin-online.nl/channel/index.html?SSOIMPORT=NONE>

Practical Matters

http://www.eur.nl/english/essc/internationaloffice/welcome/?utm_source=website&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=InternationalOffice

Instagram

1. erasmusuniversity
2. rsmerasmus
3. esnrotterdam