



EXCHANGE REPORT

Cass Business School

CITY UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

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2019 SPRING

Exchange Report

Part1: Monthly Activity Log:

◆ January:

- Nando's: Nando's is a restaurant selling pri-pri roast chicken. I am so into it. You can have a try if you are in London (it's very cheap compared to other restaurants)
- Buckingham Palace: we went there to see the changing of guard. There were so many people, so you had better arrive there earlier to see clearly. The whole process is around 2 hours. You can go to the official website to check the time and length.
- British Museum: Highly recommended. It is so big that you need at least 5 hours to see all of the collections. But it is free, so you can go to there several times to ensure you don't miss anything.
- National Galley: it a free galley, which is one of the biggest galleys in London. It owns many priceless collections and the souvenir shop is excellent. If you want to buy some gifts, it could be a nice choice.

◆ February:

-02/23 Glasgow: I went to Glasgow in February 23th. It took 3 hours from London to Glasgow. And it is one of my favorite cities in whole Europe. Although the city is not big, it has many awesome scrawls and the whole city has the atmosphere of art and creation. It has a lighthouse, from where you can overlook the whole city (and it's free). I went there to see a concern, and the local people there were kind and nice. I had best memory in Glasgow.

◆ March:

- 03/02 Vienna: I went to Vienna mainly to see a concert of my favorite singer. And it's a nice city. I highly recommend the art museums there, which are all impressive. However, I don't think Vienna is a good place to see concert, because the organizers there are kind of ineffective. You can spend a week-end in Vienna and come back to London.
- 03/14 Brussel: If you know the movie <Brugge>, you must go to Brugge and see the little town. It takes 1-2 hours from Brussel to Brugge. And you can directly buy tickets in the train station (the government has special offer on Sunday).
- 03/16 Amsterdam: Netherland is one of my favorite counties. And Amsterdam is a very open city (as something is legal there). And my most impressive thing there is Van Gogh's museum. That museum is extremely popular, so if you want to go there, you must book the ticket online in advance.
- 03/18 Germany: I really enjoyed myself in Germany, especially in Munich. In Munich, you can take the train to New Swan Stone Castle and the King Lake. They are all very beautiful, although the transportation fees are really high. I don't recommend you go to Frankfurt in Germany, because based on our experience, that city is relatively dangerous and unsafe. But Kolner is a nice city, the church there is one of the most

famous church in Europe,

- ◆ April:
 - 04/08&04/09 On these two days, I took my two final exams.
 - 04/10-04/16 Paris. The most unforgeable memory is Paris is that I witness the fire of Notre dame of Paris. To be honest, when it started burning, I was just there. It was so sad to see that gorgeous building burning into dust and you could see the sadness in everybody' s eyes. Except the tragedy of Notre dame of Paris, I had good time there. Paris is a beautiful city, really beautiful. The life there seems so romantic, so quiet and so peaceful. The charm of Paris not only exists in its museums and galleries, but also exist in every street and every normal building. Walking along the Senna river was one of the best experiences I have in Europe.
 - 04/23-05/03 Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland. These four countries are not as popular as France or Italy, but they all have their own charm and culture. We went to Tarling and Tartu in Estonia, and Liga in Latvia. Actually, they share some things in common. And if you have limited time, I recommend Tarling as it has very concrete places of interest and they offer free English tour every day for tourists. And the most impressive place in Poland is its national exhibition. You can know more about Poland history and the heartbroken truths during WWII. And I remember one sentence on the wall of a particular exhibition area about Jewish in Warsaw "Don' t die without a fight" , which is really touching and inspiring. If you plan to travel in these four countries, I highly recommend you live in an Airbnb instead of a hotel. Because their houses are all very stylish and many of them have good view and cheap price. Poland' s most famous food is dumpling (although it called dumpling, it is quite different from Chinese dumplings). Trying all kinds of food in different countries is always an interesting thing to do.
- ◆ May:
 - 05/13 Go back to Hong Kong.

Part2:

1) *Visa Procedures:*

If you are Hong Kong permanent resident, you don' t need to apply for the short-term student VISA. But if you come from Mainland China, you have to do so. The basic VISA application information is available online. You need insurance proof, which you need to write an e-mail to ask for the soft copy from HKUST office (that information will be included in the pre-exchange briefing material); and you need bank statement to prove that you have enough money to support your study in the UK. If your own bank account doesn' t have enough money, you can use the bank statement from your parents, but you need a relationship proof at the same time. If you ask for official bank statement from Bank of China (HK), they need two weeks to send that to you. Therefore, please prepare this in advance in case of emergency. And you need acceptance letter of host university, you need to wait and fetch it from HKUST study abroad office. If you haven' t received your accept letter on time, please send an e-mail to check as soon as possible.

2) Orientation Activities:

They will have several tutorials for exchange students, and they will have a local student to introduce the life in London and share some tips. After these tutorials, generally they will organize a social session with free wine and fruits. You can make some friends there. And City University has two special courses only exchange students: LA 2017 performing arts and LA 2018 Historical London. So, if you want to make as many as exchange friends as possible, it is really nice to take one of these courses (or both!). The student hall won't organize many activities as HKUST halls do. You need to pay attention to the e-mails to know any new activities.

3) International Services & Activities:

As I mentioned, they have two special courses only for international students to help them understand the culture and history of London better. The LA 2017 performing arts will give students several drama tickets for only 50 pounds, which is a nice deal as most of the performances in London are expensive. Therefore, through the semester, you will have chances to see several famous or popular dramas or operas or ballet with your classmates. It will be very interesting and impressive. As for the LA 2018 historical London, they will bring you to many places of interest and provide free tour almost every week. Generally, LA 2018 doesn't have regular classes in classroom, all you need to do is to follow the guide and enjoy the historical tours of London.

4) Accommodations:

I was living in the liberty hall. The school will provide liberty hall and liberty court for students as accommodation. The living condition is similar in these two halls, but the liberty hall is relatively more expensive. The rooms in Liberty hall are all single room with shared kitchen and common room. In your own room, you have toilet and shower equipment. And the kitchen is very big with two microwaves and two ovens and three big refrigerators. You don't need to bring any cook equipment, they provide new and free plates, pot, forks, knives for every new resident. And they have two pillows. If you need to do any cleaning, you can find a dust collector in your kitchen. And they have free garbage bags on the ground floor (green ones for recycle, and red for general waste). One convenient thing of student hall is that they have reception to help you get all your parcel or mails. Therefore, you can do lots of online shopping and just go to the hall reception to pick up your parcels.

5) Courses Registration:

They have specific tutorial for exchange students to understand courses registration system. Actually, before you arrive London, the host university will send you e-mail to let you pre-choose some courses. But you are free to change your plan after you arrive. Just don't miss the e-mail, as you can find all course introduction and timetable links in that e-mail. The exchange can take five courses maximum and if one of the five courses must be LA 2017 or LA 2018. But if you just choose three or four courses, you don't need to choose any LA courses. Be careful, that many courses of Cass Business School won't accept exchange students. If you have any questions, just send an e-mail directly to the exchange students office.

6) Teaching & Assessment Methods:

The teaching style here is quite similar to HKUST. And at the beginning of semester, there

will be several tutorials for exchange students to help them use online study platform. It is like Canvas in HKUST, you can see all your courses, your assignment, class material. And you can also submit your assignments through this platform. Some courses may require you to submit hard copy as well as soft copy, so please read the assignment instruction carefully. One huge benefit of City university of London is that exchange students can choose alternative assessment instead of regular final exam. The alternative assessments may be a case report or an essay. If you choose to take the alternative assessment, you can leave campus after April. 10th. But if you choose regular final exam, you may need to stay until the end of May. However, the end of semester is March 30th. That means you have a month break before final exam. Different courses have different requirements for exchange students, so you need to read courses information thoroughly before you choose certain classes.

7) *Sports & Recreation Facilities:*

The university has free gym access for exchange students and other recreation facilities. And we just have a park across the road to our hall. Therefore, if you are a gym person, it is very convenient.

8) *Finance & Banking (including currency / expenses):*

As a short-term student, we can apply for a UK debit card, which is extremely convenient because you can use the debit card payment everywhere. To apply for a bank card, you need to go to the City University Exchange student office and ask for an address proof for bank card application. You can send an e-mail in advance. Please check the address information is correct. And you just need to go to the bank you prefer to ask help from counter. The whole process won't take longer than one hour. And you can receive your card within 1-2 weeks. I applied for a HSBC card, because there is a HSBC bank near our student hall, and the application procedure is not complex in HSBC. You can also open a Euro currency account for free. And if your parents need to transfer money to you from Hong Kong or Mainland China, it is also simple and quick. When you are travelling around Europe, the UK bank card is also helpful, which can save your time and avoid too many coins.

9) *Social Clubs & Networking Opportunities:*

You can receive many e-mails from their student union every day, you can choose any activities you are interested freely. And making friends through classes is always the easiest way.

10) *Health & Safety:*

The area we live is quite safe, therefore, you don't need to worry too much. But when you go to China Town, please be very careful as there will be many thieves. If you feel sick, you can try to buy some medicine first, and they will assign a doctor to every student. If you have severe condition, please contact your personal doctor and ask your friend for help.

11) *Food:*

The food in London is expensive. But you can always find what you love. We have many cheap Chinese restaurants near our campus. And the canteen inside the campus is very cheap. You can give a try. They have fried chicken, salad, pizza, and curry. And in London, you can use a delivery App called "Deliveroo" to order food. It is convenient and the

price is acceptable.

12) Transportation

You need an Oyster card for the bus and subway. When you leave London, you can refund it at any tickets machine in the underground stations. And as student, we can apply for the 16-25 rail card, which will give us discount on the train tickets. And you need to go to an underground station to ask a staff there to help you to connect your Oyster card with your rail card, therefore, you can have a student discount on subway tickets. For example, the full ticket is 2.4, but you only need to pay 1.6.

13) Climate:

The weather in London is a mess. It rains a lot but most of the time, you don't need an umbrella. Please prepare some warm clothes if you come on January. And even if in May, it still has chance to be very cold.

14) Communication:

Sometimes, British accent is really difficult to understand, but no worries, they are all very nice and gentle. If you don't understand or can't hear it clearly, just ask them to repeat or speak slower. As for the communication with other students, there will be culture barrier, but it won't impede you to become friends.

15) Cautionary measures:

Lock your door every time. And when you go to some places with many tourists, always be careful of your belongings. Don't go out alone in the night. If you want to go to some clubs or bars, please go with your friends.

16) Other notes:

If you are not permanent resident of Hong Kong, do remember to apply for a Schengen VISA to travel around Europe.

Part3: Items to bring

1. Clothes: the weather in London is really a mess. The temperature in January and February is super low, and it is really cold outside. One or two down coats are necessary. But if you don't want to bring it from your hometown, it is always okay to buy a new one in London. And you don't need to bring many T-shirts, hoodies and some jackets will be very useful.
2. Foods: the food in London is quite expensive. It is at least 3 times as expensive as that in Hong Kong. Therefore, you can bring some food from your hometown. When you are tired of western food and chips, some home dishes will help a lot.
3. Medicine: it is convenient to buy some common and OTC medicine in the supermarkets or pharmacies. But the categories are limited. If you are more suitable with the medicine brands that you are familiar with, you had better bring some common medicine to the UK.
4. Wash supply: you can buy nearly all kinds of brands of washing supply in London. As these shampoo or condition are super heavy, you don't need to bring them from home. Just buy them on the day you arrive here.
5. Computer: study here is quite similar in UST; computer is necessary for you to do the search or submit your homework.

6. Change-over plug: please make sure you bring the change-over plugs you need. If you come from Mainland China, the plugs in the UK is similar to Hong Kong. However, in most of the European countries, the plugs are different. Just prepare in advance. But you can also buy them in the supermarkets.
7. Documents: don' t forget to bring all the documents you need, and please keep them in a safe place. If you will go to travel in Europe, don' t forget to bring your Schengen VISA. The confirmation letter from host universities may also be required.

Part4: Useful Links and Contacts:

1. Link of guide for Schengen VISA application: <https://bbs.qyer.com/thread-2740994-1.html>;
2. Website for buy tickets for whole Europe:
https://www.omio.com/?utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=DR_||GoEuro_01_Brand||EN_UX:Omio&utm_term=goeuro%20train&campaignid={campaign_id}&keywordid={targeting_id}¤cy=USD&gclid=Cj0KCQjwzunmBRDsARIsAGrt4mv_DtWadmXAmqtX4J2bcOoDfiRFyyDdnJxH9ecF4RLs9eRoZ9xE3nkaAlq8EALw_wcB
3. Very useful guide in the UK, including food, entertainment and any other suggestions you need: <https://www.honglingjin.co.uk/>
4. This website can help you to plan your travel: <https://www.qyer.com/>
5. The online learning platform of City University:
<https://moodle.city.ac.uk/login/index.php>