

EXCHANGE REPORT

City, University of
London
Cass Business School

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Operations Management & Economics
Year 3
2019-2020 Fall



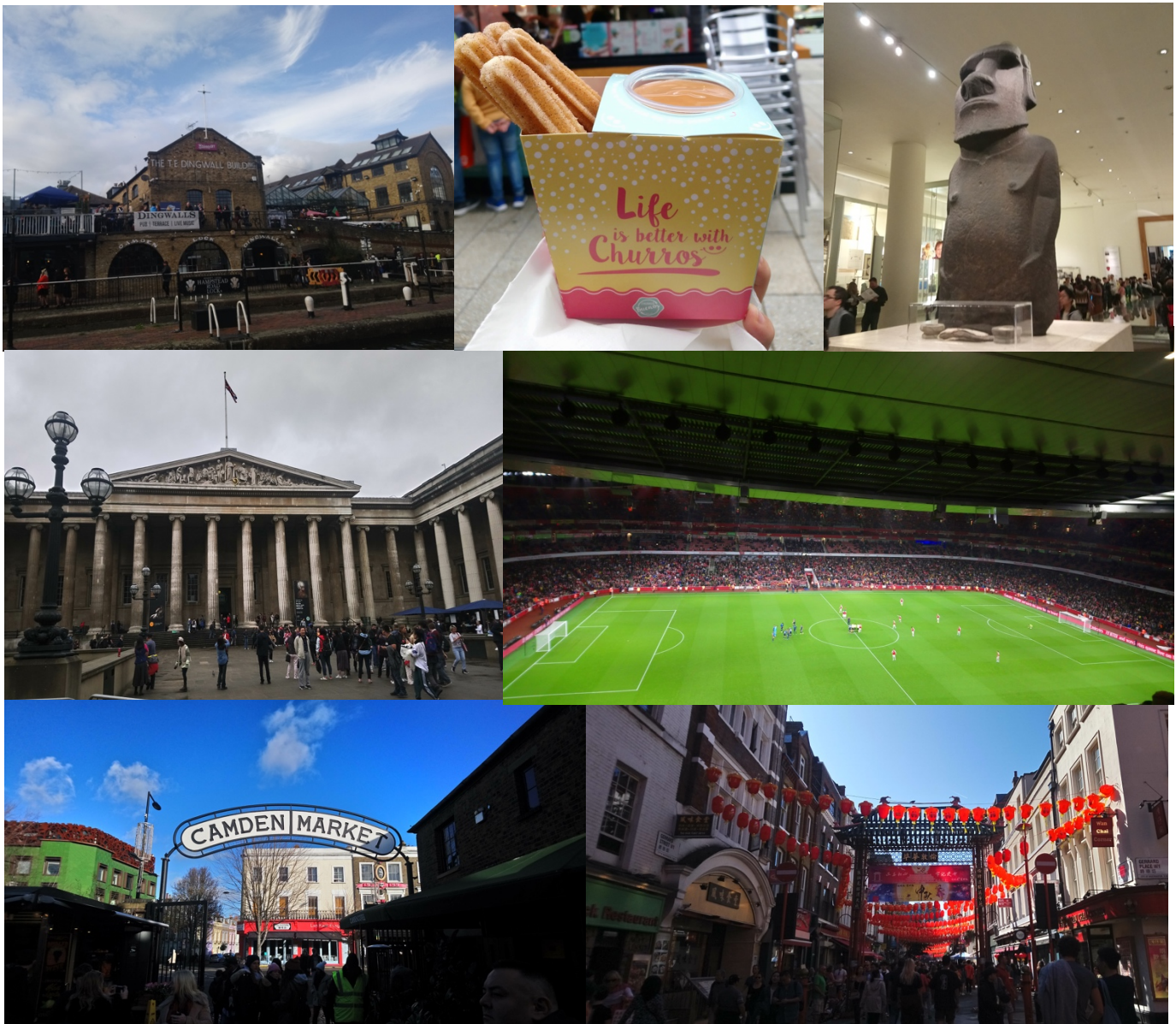
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Part I: Monthly Activity Log

September 2019

I arrived London on 17th September, a day before the orientation day. After settling down and buying daily necessities from the supermarket near Liberty Court, I went out to explore around the neighborhood with Athena, my exchange and flat mate from UST and had lunch. The orientation days was held on 18th and 19th September. I was luckily enough to meet a student from CUHK when checking into Liberty Court and was then able to meet all students from other Hong Kong universities and became friends with them. We went to different places during the weekends such as China Town, Oxford Street, Camden Market and the British Museum. We even went to see a football match at the Arsenal Stadium. It was my first time watching a football match and I enjoyed it a lot.



October 2019

October was quite a fruitful month for me in terms of travelling and coursework workload. I went to Milan and Saints Petersburg with them during October and it was really an interesting experience. The food and weather in Milan was really good and I enjoyed my first trip a lot. As for Saints Petersburg, the weather was super cold during that time and we were all freezing. Nevertheless we enjoyed visiting the museum and the tourist spots. The food in Russia was quite good as well. After going back to London, we went to Cambridge for a day trip and went on a boat tour with a guide introducing the history of different colleges. Throughout the month, I watched several plays as I took the Performing Arts cultural module. It was my first time watching plays and I was totally immersed into the actors' performance and the sets, joining this module was definitely worth it. On the other hand, I had to hand in one 1000 words essay and two presentations at the end of the month, which was pretty mind blowing to me. Luckily I was able to finish all the presentations successfully and became friends with my groupmates. Sadly I couldn't attend the Halloween Night organized by our university since I had to attend a ballet performance. However, the performance was spectacular, combining modern ballet with storyline and jazz music, which was a new experience for me. Athena and I also celebrated our flatmate's birthday by giving her a surprise birthday cake and we chatted in the kitchen until late night.



November 2019

The workload during November was also quite mind blowing as well, with three group projects and one 3000 words essay due throughout the month. For one project I had to stay until 8pm in the university to finalize the whole report which was super tiring. Nevertheless I managed to visit St. James Park, Buckingham Palace, Notting Hill and Hyde Park during my free time. Parks in London are really a great place for a walk. I met some squirrels and birds walking around which was so cute! I couldn't help but taking photos of them constantly. I also went to watch another football match at Wembley Stadium with my friends and the atmosphere was superb. During the end of the month I went to watch Hamilton with two of my friends. Although the ticket was quite expensive, it was totally worth it. The music and the rap was super catchy and the actors' performance was splendid. I even got a bit emotional at the end of the musical. Moreover, I also managed to go to Geneva for a short trip with one of my friend I made during this exchange trip. The cheese fondue and chocolate cake was super good and we went to visit different museums and tourist attractions. At the end of November it was Black Friday and Cyber Monday, the highlight of the month. Sadly I caught a heavy cold after visiting my friend in Brighton and therefore didn't go out to shop much.



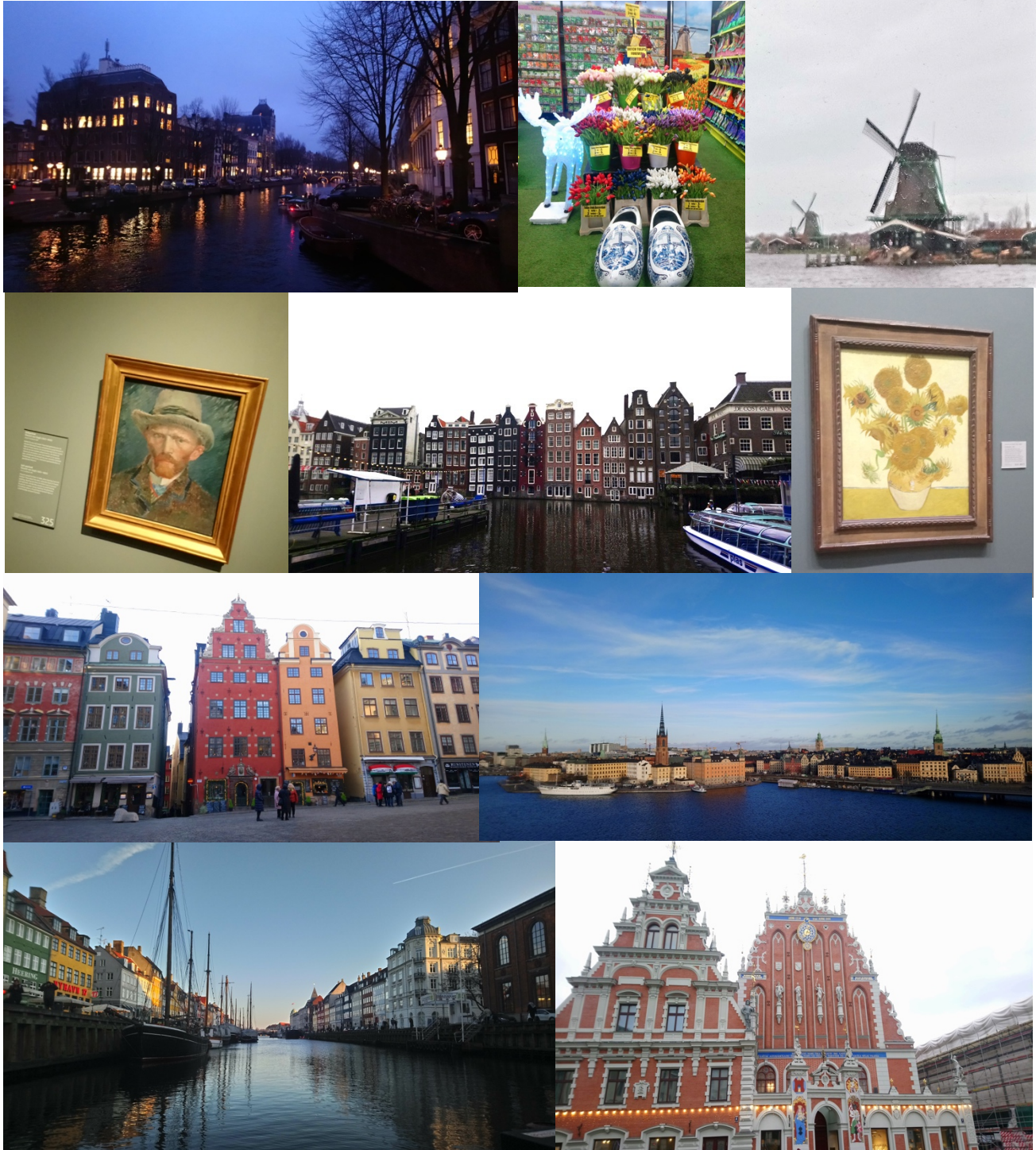
December 2019

It was the last two weeks of school in CASS. We had a farewell hotpot dinner since one of us will leave at the first week of December. On the other hand, my friends from Hong Kong came to London for a competition and I went touring around London with them despite having exams on the same week. Apart from those attraction spots in London, we went to Bath and the Stonehenge for a day trip. I had a great time with them and it made me remember the days studying in Hong Kong. The first two weeks was a sad week for me since most of my flatmates were leaving and I had to say goodbye to them. We baked Christmas cookies together and chatted in the kitchen until midnight. I hope we are able to meet each other in the future despite living in different parts of the world. I also had a farewell lunch with my friends I met from CASS since I won't be meeting them in school. While having numerous farewells, I still had to study for three exams which was a headache for me. Luckily I managed to squeeze some time to go to the Winter Wonderland with my friends and went to watch Harry Potter and the Cursed Child play. The play was better than I thought since the settings and the music made me feel that magic does really exist. After having the last exam on 13th December, I went on a solo trip to Barcelona and enjoyed it a lot. After coming back to London I went to watch the Phantom of the Opera and met a friend there. My parents then came to find me during mid-December and we went to Basel, Colmar and Nuremburg for our trip. During the last day of December, we were able to see people shooting fireworks next door which was a new experience for me.



January 2020

We continued our trip to Amsterdam and Brussels before coming back to London. After staying a couple of days in London, I went to Stockholm to find my friends from Hong Kong and went to Copenhagen and Riga with them which I enjoyed a lot. After arriving back to Stockholm, I went sightseeing and toured around Stockholm with them. At last I went back to London to take the flight back to Hong Kong, marking the end of my four months exchange journey.



Part II: General Exchange Information

Visa Procedures

You do not have to apply visa if you are holding HKSAR passport unless you are studying for more than 6 months. However, please remember to bring your offer letter with you whenever you go on a trip outside the United Kingdom since the immigration officer may ask a lot of questions if you do not have it with you which is quite trouble-some.

Orientation Activities

The orientation week would be held in mid-September. There are some compulsory sessions for exchange students to attend such as the Moodle induction for exchange students to learn how to use their online system, two general introduction sessions about CASS and Study Abroad in City University of London and a session for Exchange students to collect their student ID card. Apart from compulsory session, there are also a lot of optional activities such as talks, boat parties, campus tours, city walks and Freshers' Fair, where you can join some clubs, societies and sports teams.

International Services & Activities

Katie, the Student Exchange Coordinator in the Student Exchange and Work Placements Office is very friendly and helpful. If you encounter any problems just simply go to her office or email her and she will try her best to help you sort it out.

Accommodation

As there was only 2 of us going to exchange in CASS, we both got offered a place at Liberty Court. You will be allocated a flat with your own room, two bathrooms and a kitchen which are shared among 4 people. The accommodation is located in Zone 1 and is near to Farrington station, while there is a Sainsbury just around the corner. It is just 10 minutes' walk to City University, which is quite convenient. The hall fee was 2650 pounds for around 3 months (Mid-September to Mid-December). If you are not offered a place at Liberty Court or choose not to live in Liberty Court, you would have to rent a place on your own.

Course Registration

You will be given a list of courses to choose from during end of March when handing in the exchange application. CASS Exchange students are allowed to take up to 4 CASS Modules or 5 if you plan to take a Cultural Module (LA2017, LA2018) which are for exchange students only. As the first week of school is the add- drop period, you will be asked to fill in another form and submit it by the end of the week indicating your final module choices. Therefore you can still change your mind on what course to study after submitting the exchange application on April.

Teaching & Assessment Methods

For each module, CASS only has one 2-hour or 3-hour lecture per week, while some modules may have labs or tutorial. For the course workload, for most CASS modules and Cultural modules, there will be one project and one final exam. While some modules may have an additional midterm. For exchange students, we will mostly take alternative assessments for the modules. For cultural modules, the final exam will be held in early-December, while the alternative assessments will mostly be a take-home exam, take-home essay questions or an earlier exam, depending on the course you take. For my case, most of my alternative assessment was sitting an actual exam earlier instead of a take-home exam.

Courses I have taken:

Modules	HKUST Equivalent	Credits	Assessment format
AS3021 Operational Research	ISOM3000OM 3000-level Course in Information Systems, Business Statistics and Operations Management	3	One individual essay, one group project and alternative assessment (exam)
IF2201 Monetary Economics	ECON4334 Money and Banking	4	One group project with presentation and alternative assessment (3000 words essay)
AS3208 Statistical Reasoning, Communication & Ethics	ISOM1500 Insightful Decisions	3	One group presentation, one group essay and alternative assessment (exam)
LA2017 Performing Arts in London	HUMA1000HMCC 1000-level Course in Humanities	3	One group presentation and final exam (2 essay questions)
FR2202 Financial Econometrics	ECON4304 Time Series Econometrics and Business Forecasting	4	One group project and alternative assessment (exam)

Sports and Recreational Facilities

As there are no gym facilities in Liberty Court, you can go to CitySports which is operated by City University or the free gym located in Liberty Hall, which is around 10 minutes from Liberty Court. I have not been there before but I heard from my friends that the gym in Liberty Hall is rather small with a few facilities only.

Finance & Banking

Since I was in London for 3 months, I did not open a student account. Instead I brought pounds and euros in cash, with a credit card and a bank card. As HSBC has quite a lot of branches in London, you can activate your overseas withdrawal function and withdraw money in ATMs with Union Pay or HSBC banks. However, a transaction fee would be incurred for each transaction so it would be better to withdraw a larger amount each time.

Social Clubs & Networking Opportunities

During the Orientation Week, there would be a Freshers' Fair where you can sign up for different clubs and sports team, either via email subscription or joining their membership. As I had to find the Exchange Coordinator for some urgent matters during that time, I did not attend the Freshers' Fair so I did not join any clubs.

Health & Safety

You could see the nurse advisor at the student health service available on campus, they would give you further instructions if you are very unwell. For safety, I found the area near the campus and the accommodation safe but be aware of pickpockets when going to crowded places.

Food

There are different kinds of cuisine in London and quite a lot of Chinese food too so there is no need to worry about being homesick. As we usually cook in the hall to save money, I rarely dine out. I remember the average cost of dining out should be around 15-20 pounds per meal, depending on what cuisine you eat. If you want to save money, it is recommended to cook in the hall.

Transportation

Transport in London is quite convenient and relatively expensive compared to that of Hong Kong, with 1.5 pounds per journey for bus and 2.4 pounds per journey for tube. I bought an Oyster card, which is equivalent to the Octopus card in Hong Kong and can be used on transportations only.

I recommend downloading 'Citymapper', an app for finding the fastest route to your destination. It shows the time needed as well as the price for each route, which is really handy especially when there is so many underground lines in London.

I also suggest buying a 16-25 Railcard for 30 pounds per year if you want to go to other places in UK or to airports by train as it would give you a 1/3 prices off for train. If you combine your 16-25 Railcard with your Oyster Card, you can also get a 1/3 prices off for the Tube during non-peak hours.

Climate

The sky was mostly cloudy during my stay and the temperature was around 3-10 degrees during winter time. However, it wasn't that cold as I expected. There is quite a lot of rain and wind in London, so it would be better to wear a water-proof jacket with a cap since using an umbrella would be hard under the strong wind.

Communication

All of us received a free Giffgaff sim card in the welcoming gift from Liberty Court but I didn't use it. Instead, I joined VOXI, a plan for youngsters under Vodafone UK for 10 pounds per month, with 8 GB (excluding all social media applications such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat) which was a great deal. Some of my friends who were using 3 UK changed to VOXI after a while since they say Vodafone has better connection when travelling around Europe.

Cautionary Measures

As London is rather a safe place, there is not much to worry about. However, be careful of pickpockets and don't stay out too late alone.

Part III: Items to Bring

- Cash (HKD, GBP and EUR)
- Credit Card
- ATM Card with overseas withdrawal function
- Passport and HKID
- University Acceptance Letter
- Hall Acceptance Letter
- Laptop
- Medicine
- Clothes (Coats, scarfs, sweaters)
- Adaptor
- Portable Charger

Part IV: Useful Links & Contacts

Cass Study Abroad:

study-abroad@city.ac.uk

Cass UG Incoming:

cass-ug-incoming@city.ac.uk

Course list for exchange students:

<https://www.city.ac.uk/study/international/exchange-and-study-abroad/study-abroad-programme/actuarial-science>

<https://www.city.ac.uk/study/international/exchange-and-study-abroad/study-abroad-programme/business-management>

<https://www.city.ac.uk/study/international/exchange-and-study-abroad/study-abroad-programme/finance-and-investment>

Timetable planner:

<https://sws.city.ac.uk/tt1920/default.aspx>