

Exchange Report

The University of Manchester

Alliance Manchester Business School

United Kingdom



WONG, Chun San Sam
Year 4 BBA in Global Business and Finance Exchange
Term: Fall 2019/20

Table of contents

1. Monthly Activity Log.....	p.3-8
2. General Exchange Information.....	p.9-10
3. Items to Bring.....	p.11
4. Useful Links and Contacts.....	p.11

1. Monthly Activity Log

1.1 September

I departed on 13 Sept in order to catch up with the orientation day on 16 Sept I took Etihad Airways from HKG-AUH-AMS to MAN, which consumed me about 30 hours in total. This was certainly not a pleasant experience, and hence I would have taken a direct flight if I could have a second chance. The lucky part was that I could walk around the airport at AUH and AMS and explored their culture a bit. Upon arrival, the first thing I did was to visit the supermarket and purchase the necessities. On the orientation day, I got a chance to meet other exchange students from the rest of the world. I met few from Singapore, Netherland and Hong Kong, including students from HKU and CUHK. Besides, the professor provided a lot of information about course registration (for those who need to swap class), transportation, student ID collection, and much other useful information that would help cope with the confusion. Over the weekends, I also cycled to Lowry. I enjoyed a relaxing afternoon along the river, hanged out with other exchange students, and had occasional formal dinner in hall.



Fig. 1 Hotpot with other exchange students



Fig.2 Afternoon at Lowry



Fig.3 Formal dinner at Hulme Hall



Fig.4 DIY lunch in hall

1.2 October

I bought a bicycle for GBP110 in a charity sale for transportation for school. Since the transportation fare is quite expensive in Manchester (approx. GBP1.5 to GBP2.0 per ride), having a bicycle would be a good option for students to live in the hall like me. Road safety is certainly not a concern as the cycling path is well established. In the weekend, I geared up with my friend and cycled to the National Trust Lyme, which is 13 miles from the city. This was an adventurous experience since we had to cross several towns in order to get there. Although I was exhausted with the 7-hour ride, I was satisfied with the beautiful scenery and the lovely animals. When it turned to night, the temperature dropped drastically and nearly froze us, or I would have stayed longer.



Fig.5 Bicycle Charity Sale



Fig.6 Me at National Trust Lyme



Fig. 7 & 8 Lovely animals in National Trust Lyme



Fig.9 Peak District National Park



Fig.10 My gears

1.3 November

I spent another day on a ride to the Reddish Vale Country Park and the countryside. Having this long ride enabled me to explore the culture and meet people who live in different towns. During the journey, I met a resident who cheered me up regarding the political events in Hong Kong. I also experienced another large-scale, local, conventional and meaningful event which is called Manchester Bonfire Night. On that day, people gathered together, chilled out with each other and enjoyed food and beverages surrounding the enormous bonfire.



Fig.11 & 12 Geese in Reddish Vale Country Park

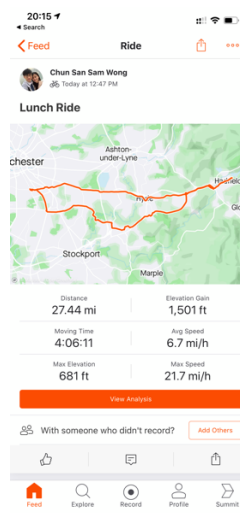


Fig.13 & 14 Selfie after the long journey



Fig.15 Crowded people surrounding the bonfire Fig.16 Adorable staff in the bonfire market

1.4 December

I had my first poster presentation for the course Marketing and Society at the beginning of December. Classmates shared their work about sustainable and social marketing technique for overcoming global climate change in a semi-formal setting. Since the teaching staff went on a strike against the new pension scheme, most of the classes were suspended. Hence, I took this chance to travel to Edinburg with my friends. Edinburg is really an old city where you can find the Edinburg Castle there. I learned a lot about the history of Edinburg through the historic architecture and museum. I also visited the largest Edinburg Christmas Market. You will definitely find it surprising. However, I would like to alert those who want to have a hair cut in Edinburg, think twice before you do so!



Fig.17 & 18 Edinburg, Scotland



Fig.19 & 20 Edinburg Christmas Market



Fig.21 Jail inside of Castle of Edinburg



Fig.22 Me shopping for the popular Edinburg cashmere scarf

1.5 January

In the following month, I travelled to Paris and London during the Christmas break and study break. I was so lucky to catch up with the Christmas Market in Paris in early Jan. In there, I could have a taste of the local Christmas food, which is entirely different from what I have experienced in Edinburg. I also went to the Avenue des Champs-Élysées for New Year countdown. The atmosphere there was so great since a lot of people gathered for a countdown. It was a hundred times crowded than what I saw in Victoria Harbour in the past! I also visited the Eiffel Tower, Alexander III Bridge, Tuileries Garden, Sainte-Chapelle and many other historic spots in Paris. However, I found it very difficult to communicate with the French in English.



Fig.23 & 24 Christmas Market in Paris

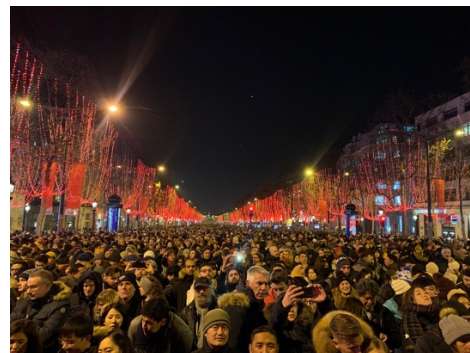


Fig.25 & 26 New Year countdown in front of the Arc de Triomphe

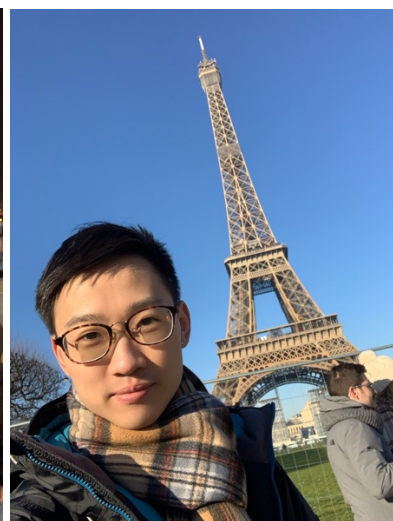


Fig.27, 28 & 29 Me and my family at different attractions

In prior to going back to Manchester for the exam, I travelled to London with my family. I visited Tower Bridge, China Town, Buckingham Palace and my favourite Harry Potter Warner Bros Studio. Here I could explore the tradition of the United Kingdom as well as the modern magic fantasy. After the memorable and enjoyable trip, I took the stagecoach back to Manchester and started preparing for the exam.



Fig.30 & 31 Me at Hogwarts



Fig.32 Tower Bridge



Fig.33 The popular Burger and Lobster in London

2. General Exchange Information

2.1 Visa Procedures

Since I am a holder of the HKSAR passport, I do not need to apply for a visa for short-term study in the UK. However, you should double-check the visa requirement if you are going to travel around during the semester or you are taking an indirect route. You should bring along with the acceptance letter offered by the University of Manchester EVERYTIME when you re-enter into the UK.

2.2 Orientation Activities

There are a couple of activities arranged by the International Society including but not limited to hiking, bowling and pub night. You can decide to join their WhatsApp group and Facebook group for regular update. You should be able to receive this information via email as well; this does not require registration.

2.3 International Services and Activities

For the hall that I lived in (i.e. Hulme Hall), the residential life society will arrange trips to the other cities in the UK, such as Bath and York. Students can join at a generous discount.

2.4 Accommodation

Accommodation is a big part of your exchange life. You should consider the level of privacy that you want to have. If you are more sociable, you can consider applying for shared-area accommodation where residents share a kitchen, bathroom and common room. Besides, you can choose the hall that provides catering service. This will save a lot your effort in cooking and provide you with a more comfortable ambience to make friends.

2.5 Course Registration

Usually, students are only allowed to take up to 50 credits according to the guideline. However, you are welcome to take up to 60 credit upon the permission from HKUST. After accepting the offer from the hosting university, they will send you a course selection form and what you need to do is to complete it, get the approval from HKUST, and email back to the hosting university. You should also check carefully with your study plan in HKUST and match with the courses available and apply for credit transfer assessment before the deadline. I would suggest students choose some courses with group projects in order to make friends but at the same time choose some courses that only require essay or individual assignment or exam. This can strike a balance between your social life and study workload.

2.6 Teaching and Assessment Methods

As mentioned in section 2.5, some courses only require the submission of an individual essay as the assessment, and some require a group project. Also, note that attendance is strictly enforced for some courses. The student will receive a warning and request of explanation if they skip the lesson/ tutorial class.

2.7 Sports and Recreation Facilities

There are two popular sports centres, namely the Sugden Sports Centre and The Armitage Sports Centre. You might find most of the accessible sports facilities there. Near the city centre, you might also find theatres and some workshops.

2.8 Finance and Banking

I would not suggest opening a bank account in Manchester since the exchange period is too short. Instead, I would suggest you apply for two to three credit cards before departure from Hong Kong. Since some credit card companies/ banks frequently offer a cash rebate for overseas spending, you may save some money for the higher exchange rate. After the setoff, you may find this method is cheaper than you exchange foreign currency in Hong Kong. Just make sure you have a precise budget plan for doing so.

2.9 Health and Safety

HKUST has already provided you with insurance coverage. If you think this is insufficient, you should contact the insurance company for a tailored insurance plan. Please note that travel insurance is not applicable for exchange study since the activities types are not under the insurance company's consent. For the common sickness such as flu and headache, you can always find medicine in the convenience store and supermarket.

Besides, you will have to be cautious about your personal safety even if you are going to the shopping mall, which is located in the city centre. During my four-month stay, there were reported four random stabbing cases in the Arndale Centre. I would also suggest you take Uber with your friends always.

2.10 Food

If you decide to live in a catered hall just like me, breakfast and dinner would not be a problem. For lunch, there are a lot of restaurants along Oxford Road, which is very near to the campus. If you want to look for a quick meal, there are café inside the business school so that you can save a lot of time rushing to the class.

2.11 Transportation

I think transportation is quite expensive in Manchester. If you will heavily rely on the bus, I would suggest you buy a half-year pass. If you live near to the campus and love to cycle, I would suggest you buy a second-hand bicycle and resell it when you leave.

2.12 Climate

Manchester is known as the rainiest city in the UK, so always bring with your umbrella or raincoat regardless of what the weather forecast says. I would suggest you buy a waterproof 800+ down jacket. This could help you get rid of any foreseeable bad weather in Manchester.

2.13 Communication

I would strongly suggest Three Pay-As-You-Go (HKD130 for 10gb data per month) and China Unicom Pay-As-You-Go (HKD110 for 40gb data per month). You can only find this cheapest offer in Shum Shui Po. So, do prepare it before departure.

2.14 Cautionary Measures

Always stay awake and do not be drunk at any time. Stay with your friends, even just for a short walk. If you are riding a bike, make sure that you are fully understood with the traffic rules, or you will face a severe penalty or personal safety threat.

3. Items to Bring

ID card, passport and visa, if applicable
Acceptance Letter
Mobile device with Apple Pay or Google Pay function
Little amount of cash and credit card
Waterproof down jacket
Umbrella
Laptops and adapters
Clothes and shoes, also bring with your suits for any interview and presentation

4. Useful Links and Contacts

4.1 University Accommodations

<http://www.accommodation.manchester.ac.uk/ouraccommodation/>

4.2 Course Catalog

<http://courseunits.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/Undergraduate/Manchester-Business-School>

4.3 University International Society

<http://internationalsociety.org.uk/>

4.4 Email address of AMBS Exchange Team

exchange.ambs@manchester.ac.uk