

Exchange Report | Fall 2019

City, University of London (Cass Business School)

United Kingdom



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FINA & MGMT (Year 3)

Part I – Monthly Activity Log

September

I arrived in London on 17th September and my orientation started on 18th September. I lived with four other exchange students who come from Hong Kong, Austria, Switzerland, and the United States at Liberty Court. There were many orientation activities during the first two weeks, such as freshers' fair, city walk and the International Students Welcome Reception, etc. Through these activities, I got chances to meet different local and exchange students. Also, we walked around to explore London and visited different places such as Covent Garden, Oxford Street, British Museum and China Town. We have also visited the Arsenal Stadium and watched a match. For food, we sometimes went out to visit some famous restaurants and markets, for example, Flat Iron, Borough Market, and Camden Market. However, because of the high price level in London, we often cooked at Liberty Court to save money. I kickstarted my semester on 23rd September.



October

I have registered four finance courses at Cass Business School. Although I am under Cass, the venues of all lessons are all located on the main campus of City, University of London, which is in the Northampton Square. I observed that the diversity of

students was really large, which there were students coming from different backgrounds. Therefore, I got some chances to do group projects with people from diverse cultural backgrounds. Since I only got lessons from every Mondays to Wednesdays, and the workload at the beginning of the semester was not heavy, I went travelling during weekends in Amsterdam, Paris, and Switzerland with other exchange students. The architectures and natural scenery were really impressive, and I understood more about different European cultures. Moreover, I joined the Halloween party held by the City Students' Union with my friends. It was really fun since everyone wore their own costumes and a winner was chosen for the most creative costume and makeup.



November

The mid-term exams, coursework, and presentations were mostly due in this month. The assessment methods here are slightly different from UST, since most of the courses consist of presentations and a final exam, while few of them consist of mid-terms. In one of the courses that I studied, there were presentations in alternate weeks. Although it seemed quite intense, the learning environment was relaxing, and I improved my presentation skills. The coursework of Financial Econometrics and Fixed Income Securities was very challenging, fortunately, my teammates and I

finally figured it out and I am satisfied with the grades. I watched a Chelsea football match in Stamford Bridge Stadium, and it was unforgettable since I could see the faces of every football player closely. Almost all Christmas markets in London were opened in early November, so the atmosphere has been already excellent starting from that time. Also, I went to an amusement park called Winter Wonderland in Hyde Park with other exchange students. Before Thanks-Giving Day, we made cookies and cakes to celebrate, and it was my first time celebrating for Thanks-Giving Day.



December

The final exams were all conducted in early December. Katie, the Student Exchange Coordinator, was really nice on helping us when we met some difficulties in academic administration. The question type in the exams were mostly essays, rather than calculations. Therefore, it is better to really understand the theories and concepts during the revision. I had some farewell meals with other exchange students, and we promised each other to keep in touch in the future. After I finished all the exams, I went travelling in Brighton, Spain, Germany, Prague, Vienna, and Budapest to conclude my exchange journey. The experience was unforgettable since the cultures in these places were quite different.



Part II – General Exchange Information

Visa procedures

City will provide the acceptance letter and short-term study visa support letter for all exchange students who are staying in the UK for less than 6 months, so we do not need to apply for visas ourselves. Remember to bring along your acceptance letter and short-term study visa support letter whenever you go travelling for immigration purposes.

Orientation Activities

During the first two weeks, there were a lot of orientation activities held by the school, as well as the student union. Academically, there were course introduction and moodle induction. There were also some interesting activities, such as freshers' fair, drink parties, city walk, etc. Remember to register for the International Student Welcome Reception in advance since a reservation is needed. The invitation will be sent 1-2 weeks before the semester starts.

Accommodations

Luckily, the school reserved rooms for me and another exchange student from UST in Liberty Court, which is around a 10-minute walk to campus. The rooms are in single study bedrooms in an apartment shared with four other students, sharing two shower rooms and access to kitchen facilities. The email regarding the accommodation would be sent in late March, and you would need to confirm the room before May. My accommodation fee was £2,650 from 14th September – 20th December 2019, but it could be extended until 2nd January 2020 upon request. There should be an email from Katie, the Student Exchange Officer if there is no accommodation provided for you.

Course Registration

You would receive an email about the course registration in late March. To apply for the courses, you only need to submit your top 4 preferences with 2 backup choices before May. If you would like to study 5 courses or more, one of them should be Historic London or Performing Arts. You could visit the course equivalent database of UST to make sure the credits could be transferred. If there are courses that you would like to study but it is not in the database, you can try sending the syllabus to ARO and request for course mapping. You will make your final course selection during the first week of term in City (full information will be given during orientation). Although the availability of the courses could not be guaranteed, City will try its best to accommodate the preferences of all exchange students, so most of my friends were able to study the courses they preferred.

Teaching & Assessment Method

Courses Taken	Equivalent HKUST course	Assessment
IF 3108 Corporate Finance	FINA 3303 Intermediate Corporate Finance (3 Cr)	Mid-term + Final exam
BS 3200 International Financial Management	FINA4403 International Finance (3 Cr)	Projects + Presentations + Essays
FR 2202 Financial Econometrics	FINA 4000-level Course in Finance (3 Cr)	Project + Final exam

FR 3100 Fixed Income Portfolio Management	FINA 4303 Fixed Income Securities (3 Cr)	Project + Final exam
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Sports & Recreational Activities

If you are interested in doing sports, you can register a membership in CitySport. There are three types of membership, which are monthly pre-paid membership, annual pre-paid membership and pay as you go membership.

Health & Safety

After reading all the information in the welfare pack provided by Liberty Court, you can register for the student clinical services online through the link on one of the information sheets. The university also provides a nurse-led Health Centre for all students. Try not to go out at late night since there are many drunk people at night in London. Be aware of pickpocketing in London, as well as other European countries and research on the safety of different countries before travelling is strongly recommended.

Food

It is quite expensive dining out in London, so I usually cooked with others at the dormitory. I often visit Sainsbury's and Tesco nearby to Liberty Court to buy groceries. However, for cheaper and more variety of groceries, you can visit Iceland and a larger Sainsbury's near Angel station, which are a 10-minute walk from campus and a 20-minute walk from Liberty Court. This Sainsbury's sometimes sells Asian food, which is cheaper than those being sold in China Town.

Transportation

You can get an Oyster Card at the machines at any metro stations, this card allows you to take the metro and buses in London. Be aware of the refund procedures of it when your semester ends. Since the transportation fee in London is quite expensive, you can consider applying for a Railcard for an additional 30 pounds if you will travel within the U.K by train. If you link your Oyster Card with your Railcard, you can get a 1/3 discount on taking the metro in London and trains to other cities in the UK. If you do not want to get an oyster card, you can use your contactless debit or credit card to take the public transport for the same prices too.

Climate

The weather was really nice in September to October, but it became cold in late October. The lowest temperature can be around 2 degrees in December. I suggest wearing a few layers of clothes, rather than a very thick one since it would be very warm indoor with heaters.

Finance & Banking

I opened a UK bank account since it was more convenient to withdraw cash from my account and use my debit card for purchasing stuff. You can still use your HK credit card since contactless payment is very common in London. I suggest checking different transaction fees required by different banks in advance.

Part III – Items To Bring

- Clothing
- Medicine (strongly recommend 清熱酷)
- Laptop
- Charger and adaptors
- Extension sockets
- Calculator
- A travel bag or small suitcase (for short trips)
- A fanny pack (for your valuables when travelling)
- Passport, acceptance letter, short term visa support letter (hard copy)
- Cash, credit cards and ATM cards

Part IV – Useful Links

Modules Available

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

Photos of Liberty Court

<https://www.city.ac.uk/accommodation/undergraduate/liberty-court/gallery>

Campus Map

<https://www.city.ac.uk/about/campus-map>

<https://www.city.ac.uk/about/campus-map/campuses/northampton-square>

Contact of Katie Hughes, the Student Exchange Coordinator

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