



Exchange Report  
(2019-20 Spring)

**Stockholm School of Economics, Sweden**

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BBA (GBUS & IS) Year 3

## Monthly Activity Log

### January

The orientation was on the 13-14 Jan and the semester starts from 15 Jan. I arrived Stockholm on 13 Jan as the check in for student accommodation was not available before that day. Other exchange students from Hong Kong who arrived earlier than the check-in period had to arrange their own accommodation.

In the last week of Jan, the professor of one of my courses took leave for a vacation. So I went on a trip to Interlaken (Switzerland) to ski in the Jungfrau region. I also detoured to Milan (Italy) as the flights were cheap (~HKD 500 round trip) and went to Interlaken by train.



Taken on the train from Milan to Interlaken



First ski region of Jungfrau

### February

On the first day of February, I went on a solo trip to Copenhagen (Denmark) and Malmö (Sweden). I spent 2 days in Copenhagen, then took a 40-minute ride on train to Malmö. Copenhagen had a more energetic vibe while the Swedish cities has more tranquillity.



Den Blå Planet at Copenhagen



I travelled with my high school friend who is studying in the UK



Taken at Malmö, Sweden



Generally speaking, both cities are very safe to travel alone, yet I would not suggest staying on the streets at night as they do not have as much street lights and could easily get lost.

### **March**

The first period of the semester ends in the first week of March, followed by a 2-week exam period. As I only have 1 exam on the last day, I had the entire 2 weeks for travelling.



I first went to Paris for a 3-day trip. At that time, the COVID-19 has not yet been spread out in the city. I would recommend visiting as much museums as possible during exchange period as most of them are free for EU students/citizens.

Louvre Museum, Paris

After that, I travelled to Marseille and Bordeaux in Southern France. The weather was very nice. Unlike most European cities (and Stockholm), it was warm and sunny most of the time.



Taken at Les Trois Forts, Marseille

This trip also marks the end of my journey in Europe. With the Red OTA issued to the Schengen region, I left Stockholm on 18 March and continued my program at SSE through Zoom.

### **Apr – Jun**

I completed the second half of the semester with live Zoom classes. Due to time difference, I had to stay up till 2am for the lectures. Luckily, I only registered for 1 course in the second period.

## **General Exchange Information**

### **Visa Procedure**

The Consular General of Sweden in HK *does not* issue visas to non-Swedish. I applied online through the Swedish Migration Agency. It required me to complete the procedure (for fingerprints and photo) in Shanghai. But I requested to do so in Sweden instead as I do not need a visa to enter with the HKSAR passport. It costs 1000 SEK.

There is only one office in Stockholm and is often fully booked. I took a 2-hr train to Örebro on the second day upon arrival. Some exchange students I met were able to book an appointment early-Feb at Uppsala, which takes less than an hour from Stockholm.

### **Orientation Activities**

I missed out the first day of orientation. The second day started with a talk about equality and inclusiveness in SSE. We then had a brief tour around the campus, meeting some student societies.

### **International Services & Activities**

The ratio of local buddy to exchange students is about 1:10. In fact, I never got in touch with my buddy after meeting him during orientation.

### **Accommodations**

SSE has two sites offered for exchange students, Saltis and Lappis. Saltis is very close to the campus, takes around 3 minutes on foot. Lappis is a bit further from city centre. It takes about 15-20 minutes to arrive school by bus.

I lived in a single room at Lappis. The room is quite spacious with a private toilet. The kitchen is shared among around 10-12 students on living on the same floor. Lappis is essentially a residential area for overseas students. Although it is on the outer part of Stockholm, there is supermarket and a few restaurants within the area. There is also a small forest and lake behind, a good place for taking a walk. Rental fee was around 4893 SEK per month (insurance and administrative fee included).

University libraries are open to public in Stockholm. As it only takes 5-10 minutes to walk from Lappis to Stockholm University, I often go to their library for studying.

### **Course Registration**

The registration procedure is much simpler than UST. The school has all courses offered listed out, and can be registered with just one click. SSE also has an add/drop period of about 2 weeks.

## Teaching & Assessment Methods

I took 3 courses in total, with 8 credits transferred.

### *764 Digitalization in Finance*

- 2 Group reports
- Final exam

### *8063 Execution – Running Your Own Company*

- Group report and presentation
- Reflection paper

### *8065 Business Model Innovation*

(conducted through Zoom)

- 2 Individual assignments
- Group report

## Sports & Recreation Facilities

There is no gym nor sport centres on campus.

## Finance & Banking

It is difficult to open a local bank account for a few-month stay. Instead, I registered for a debit card with Neat before leaving for Sweden. My friend also recommended using Revolut. Sweden and other European countries are mostly cashless societies. I made most transactions with the Neat card and my own HSBC visa card.

Below is a brief summary of my expenditures (Jan- Mar, excluding the return trip):

Transportation	SEK 2,062
Accommodation	SEK 15,872
Grocery	SEK 2,979
F&B	SEK 4,984
<b>Total</b>	<b>SEK 25,897</b>

## Social Clubs & Networking Opportunities

Exchange students are automatically members of SASSE (Student Association SSE). It is free for us to join any clubs and societies. For some workshops and talks, all students are welcome to sign up even if you are not a club member. SASSE has their own website with a schedule of all activities.

I joined the volleyball club as I am on the school team in UST and wanted to keep up with my physical fitness. We had trainings every Wednesday night at a sports centre near SSE. I had to pay an extra fee of 149 SEK to sign up for sports clubs.

## Health & Safety

It is generally safe and peaceful in Stockholm as well as other cities I travelled to.

For some larger cities, like Milan and Paris, you will have to be more cautious in tourist areas and on public transports as there are many pick-pockets. Research is definitely needed before travelling as there may be some areas that tourists should stay away from.

## Food

Local restaurants are rare to be found in Stockholm. Instead, there is a wide variety of cuisines such as Japanese and Turkish food. If you crave for Hong Kong food, there is a nice restaurant operated by Hong Kong immigrants near Hötorgshallen.



Price level for food is generally high, with an average around 100 SEK for lunch. I usually cook my own dinner at Lappis, which is a relatively cheaper choice. The cheapest lunch I had is at the Kebab restaurant near SSE (next to McDonald's). The set included a kebab, French fries and a drink for 50-60 SEK.

## Transportation

Transportation is mainly operated by SL in Stockholm, including the metro (Tunnelbana) and buses. The tickets are relatively expensive. A 75-minute student ticket costs 25 SEK. I purchased a SL travel card (20 SEK) and top up with 30-day tickets (640 SEK) during my stay as I had to travel from Lappis to city centre. Although I often travelled out of Sweden and I did not have classes every day, it is still cheaper for me to purchase the monthly ticket.

Bolt is the most popular ride-hailing app in most European cities, including Stockholm. It is essential another version of Uber. Sharing scooters are also popular in Stockholm. There are several platforms you may try, such as Lime and Voi.

Below are some apps/websites I used for budgeted travelling:

<i>Flights</i>	KAYAK Kiwi.com Ryanair
<i>Others (train, bus)</i>	Trainline SJ train (for Scandinavian countries) FlixBus

## **Climate**

Due to global warming (sadly), there was not any snow in Stockholm this year. Some locals told me it was a particularly bad year as the days are much dimmer without the snow. Temperature seldom went below 0°C unlike previous years. Yet, the strong wind still made it difficult for me to explore the city in Jan and Feb.

Daylight period is approximately 6 hours in winter, sun sets at 3pm. It stated getting better in late-Feb with an increase of 7-minutes of daylight per day. (PS: This period of time is best for Northern Lights Trips)

## **Communication**

I purchased a prepaid sim card from Telenor as it can be used across the EU. There are several monthly top-up plans, and I would recommend buying for at least 20 GB if you enjoy unlimited data in Hong Kong. Top-up vouchers can be purchased at Pressbyrå (a convenience store).

Lappis *do not* provide Wifi routers, but a LAN cable only. I was lucky to have received one from another Hong Kong exchange student who just completed the semester.

## **Cautionary Measures**

Stockholm is quite a safe place from my observation. The streets are almost empty after 10-11pm. However, if you happen to have early morning flights like I did, be aware at the Centralstation as there may be some drunk or homeless people around.

## **Items to Bring**

1. Passport
2. Plug adaptor
3. Winter clothing
4. Boots/ Hiking shoes (for slippery floor)
5. Skincare (for dry climate)
6. Bed linens
7. Laptop
8. Some cash for emergency (Euro/ Swedish Krona)

## Useful Links and Contacts

Swedish Migration Agency – Studying and researching in Sweden

<https://www.migrationsverket.se/English/Private-individuals/Studying-and-researching-in-Sweden.html>

SSE Housing

<https://www.hhs.se/housing>

SASSE Sports Committee Facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/thesportscommittee/>

SL (Stockholm public transport)

<https://sl.se/en/>

Telenor

<https://www.telenor.se/handla/kontantkort/ladda-kontantkort/#products>

If more information is needed, you may get my contact from SBM Exchange Team by emailing at [bmugexch@ust.hk](mailto:bmugexch@ust.hk)

Wish you have a great exchange experience!