

# **Exchange Report**

**NEOMA Business School, Rouen, France**



**Kelvin Wan**

**Spring 2020**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b>PAGE</b>
<b>Part 1:</b> Monthly Activity Log	3
<b>Part 2:</b> General Exchange Information	5
<b>Part 3:</b> Items to Bring	9
<b>Part 4:</b> Useful Links and Contacts	10
<b>Part 5:</b> Conclusion	10

# Part 1: Monthly Activity Log

## Jan 2020:

It is my first time to be in Europe, I arrived at CDG airport on 2<sup>nd</sup> Jan with friends that I met in pre-exchange meetings organized by HKUST. We have called a car from the airport to NEOMA business school. I was excited when I arrived at school. It was really attractive, the surrounding was full of trees, buildings are quite separated and small. I really enjoyed have an exchange time in Rouen.



Paris, France

Since I only had lessons on Monday and Tuesday (sometimes even Wednesday), I got free time to go travelling. On January, I have been to Paris, Bulgaria and Poland as well.

## Feb 2020:

I had already adapted the daily life in France, the lessons in NEOMA were quite relaxed and I met many friends from all around the world. I was surprised when they shared about their home countries and their lifestyles. It was a great chance to meet and share our stories.

Of course, I had also been to some European countries in February, such as Versailles, London, Belgium, Spain and Porto. Every place has its uniqueness, in general, Europeans are really friendly and nice that they are always talkative and treat me as a tourist, suggesting me to visit some special spot apart from those tourist guides. I felt like earned a lot from travelling around Europe.



Versailles, France



Bacelona, Spain

## Mar 2020:

I had finished a few of midterms in NEOMA and was working in group projects with the locals. It was a great way for me to get to know more about the French culture because I was working on a local restaurant in order to seek new innovative changes. I had an opportunity to speak with the owner with the help of a local student. Unfortunately, due to the spread of coronavirus, lessons were cancelled in the mid of March and the border was shutdown. I can't even go for travelling and eventually I backed to Hong Kong in late March.

## **Part 2: General Exchange Information**

### **Visa Procedures**

The documents needed for applying student visa are listed on the website of Consulate General of France in Hong Kong & Macau. The whole process takes around 3 weeks and the documents are easy to prepare. If you have any enquiries, both HKUST and the Consulate General of France are willing to assist.

### **Orientation Activities**

The orientation day was held before the start of the semester. Student helpers in NEOMA will take us to walk around downtown near the school. Besides, they will also have a WhatsApp group to share updated news and also the method of linking to the school's network etc.

### **International Services & Activities**

Local tours for international students are organized by "Culture Connection" in NEOMA. Their committees held a tour once a month to different beautiful and special spots, for instance, I joined the Versailles tour in February. Around 60 international students had joined.

### **Accommodations**

Four types of accommodations (Ango, BOIS, Pleiade A&B) could be chosen before arriving to France. I chose Pleiade A which is a single room near the school. The room was really clean and big for self-living. The environment was great as well. If you are not interested in those choices, you might consider rent a room in Mont-Saint-Aignan (it is the downtown near NEOMA).

## Courses Registration

Courses are registered a month before the begin of the semester and the detail of courses, i.e. timetables and course list, will be provided by email. The registration procedure will be included in the email. To be aware of, the add-drop period of NEOMA is different from HKUST, it ends before the semester starts.

## Teaching & Assessment Methods

In general, either midterm or group project will be included in the assessment method, plus a final exam. In daily lessons, professors will use PowerPoints, video clips and also case studies to explain the content of lectures. It is quite easy to understand by having diverse teaching materials.

## Sports & Recreation Facilities

NEOMA did not have sports facilities inside the campus; however, there is a Sports Centre nearby. Students could enjoy discounts on using those facilities.

## Finance & Banking (including currency / expenses)

Banking accounts could be operated on the orientation day. All you need is the housing certificate and passport. The banking account is needed if you are applying subsidies from NEOMA or getting accommodation refund. However, I prefer using Visa cards and MasterCard.

## Social Clubs & Networking Opportunities

Social clubs and student organizations will invite students to join on first week of school. You can find their counters all around the campus.

## Health & Safety

Health Insurance could be purchased on the orientation day as well, it will reduce the cost of seeing doctor. The nearest clinic is located 5 minutes away from the campus.

## Food

I think the fast food shop near campus is quite cheap and yummy. For lunch, I usually bought at campus' restaurant which mostly serves western food. Since few restaurants open at night, I prefer cooking at dorm for dinner.

## Transportation

I usually travel within downtown by bus. For example, Bus number 8 could take you from campus to downtown, it takes 20 minutes. An app called "My Astuce" could help you to find arrival time, location of bus stops and the way to arrive your destination.

For travelling across cities, I suggest to travel by Flixbus, it is really cheap but you need to look at the time schedules on its app or on the internet.

## Climate

The climate is quite cold on January, around -10°C at night and 3-4°C in the morning. You might see snowing as well. However, most of the days are rainy day, so I suggest taking a big jacket with hat or wearing hoodies.

## Communication

It is better to learn basic French before visiting France as most of them do not speak English, especially in small town. However, body languages could help you to communicate with others. If you got troubles, you could also use google translate by your phone that can directly translate messages by taking photos, such as menu.

## Cautionary measures

It is better to buy a travel insurance in case you are planning to travel around Europe. Besides, you could download useful apps before going to exchange, i.e. google translate, My Astuce etc. Once you arrived Europe, you should always aware of your belongings, especially passport and wallet. Before I went to exchange, I bought a small fanny pack to put my passport and some cash and card, and then I use my hoodies or jacket to cover it. It is to avoid I drop my belongings or face robbery.



## Part 3: Items to Bring

CHECKLIST	
✓	Hoodies
✓	Big Jacket
✓	Bed Sheets, Blankets and Pillow (You could buy at Carrefour supermarket)
✓	Notebook and its charger
✓	USB
✓	Camera
✓	T-shirts and shorts
✓	Medicine
✓	Food or snacks (for homesick or share with new friends)

## Part 4: Useful Links & Contacts

1. Course Catalog  
<https://www.neoma-bs.com/docs/NEOMA-BS-CATALOGUE-2020-2021-V1.pdf>
2. NEOMA Business School Website  
<https://www.neoma-bs.fr>
3. Consulate General of France in Hong Kong & Macau  
<https://hongkong.consulfrance.org/-English->
4. Flixbus Website  
<https://www.flixbus.com>
5. Culture Connection Facebook Page  
<https://www.facebook.com/cultureconnection.neomabs>
6. Emergency number list  
<https://en.rouentourisme.com/emergency-numbers/>

## Part 5: Conclusion

I do recommend the exchange program to my fellow schoolmates. Staying away from comforts and studying in an unfamiliar setting outside of Hong Kong could gain independence and grow in facing any obstacles. Going for an exchange experience can force myself to plan my daily life and be aware of my own safety. Due to the coronavirus, most plans were disturbed, however, it is also one of the obstacles faced in exchange. I could manage my schedules even in a hard time. After joining the exchange program, I became brave and independent which definitely benefit to my future studies and career. I hope you could have a great experience in your exchange time.