



# QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY SMITH SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

MOK PUI LAM | ACCOUNTING & MARKETING | YEAR 3



# MONTHLY ACTIVITY LOG

## DECEMBER 2019

I travelled with other exchange students from HKUST in Toronto for a few days before we went to settle down in Kingston. I was excited to see Toronto for the first time ever, but I was not used to the chilly weather and I felt unwell for a while. On 31 Dec 2019, we joined the New Year Countdown at Nathan Philips Square. This was the first time I celebrated new year with a crowd, and it was lit!



## JANUARY 2020

On the very first day of 2020, we took the VIA Rail to Kingston, and it was already very late by the time we arrived. The first few days were mostly about settling down and getting the daily necessities. After that, we went to an orientation activity held at Queen's. At the same night, I watched the first Hockey Game in my life, it was very exciting and I would love to watch more live games!





## FEBRUARY 2020

In February, I was still slowly getting used to the chilly winter in Kinston, it was snowing a lot! I joined the curling activity offered by Queen's, it was really fun! During the Reading Week, I took a trip to Los Angeles. There are 2 places I've been wanting to visit for so long - Disneyland California and The Last Book Store!



## MARCH 2020

Life was still normal until the middle of March. We had a lot of activities planned for March, Maple Madness, Trip to Ottawa and Montreal... But they all had to be cancelled due to coronavirus. It was very disappointing because I had not travelled to many Canadian cities at this point, and I wished to find out more about Canada. Luckily, we tried to make the best out of quarantine by learning to cook new cuisines and having movie nights at home!





## APRIL 2020

In April, there had been even more corona cases in Canada. The classes were switched to online mode, and we seldom went out. We would get groceries for a week each time and only went out for a walk once in a while.





# **GENERAL EXCHANGE INFORMATION**

## **1. VISA PROCEDURE**

For Hong Kong students going on exchange in Canada, a study visa is not needed, but you will have to apply for the eTA. The process is simple, you can apply it online by paying CAD 7. Print out the confirmation email and the Letter of Acceptance, so that you can show them with your passport to the customs when you enter Canada. If you plan to travel to the United States, you could also make an appointment online to apply for the US visa before departure.

## **2. ORIENTATION ACTIVITIES**

Queen's will hold a mandatory orientation before the commencement of a semester. In the orientation, you will get to know more about the academic environment at Queen's, as well as other incoming exchange students. They also give out free tickets for a hockey game event, but attendance is optional.

## **3. INTERNATIONAL SERVICES & ACTIVITIES**

Throughout the semester, Queen's University International Centre (QUIC) organize lots of activities for exchange students. I joined curling and English Conversation Group offered by them. I wished to join more activities like Maple Madness and Trip to Ottawa, but they were cancelled this year because of coronavirus.

## **4. ACCOMMODATIONS**

You could either choose to live in dorms or off-campus. For dorms, it is quite expensive, and friends who lived there told me that the walls were so thin that she could hear noise so often. I chose to live off-campus with another exchange student from UST in a 6-girls house. The rent was cheaper compare to other rooms we looked at, but we found out that it's an old house when we arrived: the heater and toilet were needed to be fixed.

## **5. COURSES REGISTRATION**

The course registration system used by Queen's is similar to what UST has. However, my advice is that you figure out what courses you wish to take in advance before departure. Some courses require prerequisite and approval from SBM.

## **6. TEACHING & ASSESSMENT METHODS**

The teaching style here is quite different from HKUST, they emphasise a lot on interactions and discussions. Professors do not prepare a lot on their PPT slides, they ask questions and let students discuss instead. Also, the courses require a lot of readings and case studies throughout the semesters. For assessments, it is similar to UST, with midterms and finals.

## **7. SPORTS & RECREATION FACILITIES**

There are multiple floors of gym areas in the Athletics and Recreation Centre, with badminton and volleyball courts. Volleyball competitions are sometimes held here, you could go watch a match.

## **8. FINANCE & BANKING**

IN the Orientation Day, staff from different banks will be there and you can apply for a bank card immediately. I did not do it that day, I went to a branch of CIBC later to apply for a debit card. It is convenient because you can use it in most supermarkets and restaurants. Remember to close the account before you leave Canada if you do not have any money in it.

## **9. SOCIAL CLUBS/NETWORKING ACTIVITIES**

The QUIC will organize an Exchange Buddy Program for exchange students to connect with local students.

# **GENERAL EXCHANGE INFORMATION**

Exchange students are required to pay for the University Health and Insurance Plan (UHIP) for CAD 212. Kingston is considered a safe town, I felt quite safe even when I walked home alone at late nights. People who live around are mostly Queen's students or staff members. The University also provides walk-home service at nighttime.

## **10. FOOD**

If you choose to cook for yourself, meal expenses can be pretty low. Students usually go for 3 supermarkets nearby, namely Metro and Food Basics. With the Queen's student card, you can get 10% off at Metro from Tuesdays to Thursdays, and every Thursday for Food Basics. There are a lot of restaurants in Kingston, you can also find Asian food and bubble tea there! However, it can be expensive to dine out, because you also have to pay tax and tips.

## **11. TRANSPORTATION**

Kingston is a small town, I usually only hung out nearby so I walked a lot instead of taking buses. You can check for the arrival times of any bus routes from Google Map. Also, it is free-of-charge to take any bus with a Queen's student card.

## **12. CLIMATE**

Kingston has a very chilly winter, it is even colder here than in Toronto. I bought some thick jackets in Hong Kong before going, but that's still not enough. I had to get new warmer cardigans and shoes when I was there. It still snows in May.

## **13. COMMUNICATION**

I got 5 monthly phone cards in Hong Kong for usage in both Canada and the United States. Each card provides unlimited data for 30 days.

## **ITEMS TO BRING**

Here is a list for your reference, but you can also buy some of the things when you arrive in Kingston!

- Passport
- HK ID Card
- Mobile Phone
- Cash, Debit/Credit cards
- Adaptors
- Medicine
- Winter Clothes
- Letter of Acceptance
- Chargers
- Laptop
- Powerbank
- Gloves
- Umbrella
- Rain shoes

## **USEFUL LINKS & CONTACTS**

- Queen's University - Off-Campus Housing  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1618611005028802>
- Queen's University International Centre (QUIC)  
<https://quic.queensu.ca>
- Queen's University International Centre (QUIC) Facebook  
<https://www.facebook.com/quic.queensu.ca>
- ETA Online Application Website  
<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/visit-canada/eta/apply.html>