



Copenhagen Business School Exchange Report | 2022 Spring

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Monthly Log

Part I

January

CBS offered Crash Course and the Introduction Week to better help exchange students adapt to Copenhagen and make new friends in January. Since these courses are optional, I did not participate in any of them. However, if you would like to make friends, then I suggest that you do so!

I spent my entire January out of Copenhagen. In the meantime, I travelled to Bulgaria and Germany.



February

I arrived on the 1st of February, a day before the start of lessons. Everything was easy and smooth from the airport to the school dorm (elaborated later). Most of the courses in CBS during this period were mixed-mode, and attendance is optional. Since I had the option of participating in a class either online or face-to-face, I decided to participate in my classes completely online to allow for more flexibility. The classes are extremely engaging and require lots of interaction with the instructor.

Since I am in my final semester, I chose my courses very strategically to make the best use of my exchange (explained in later section).

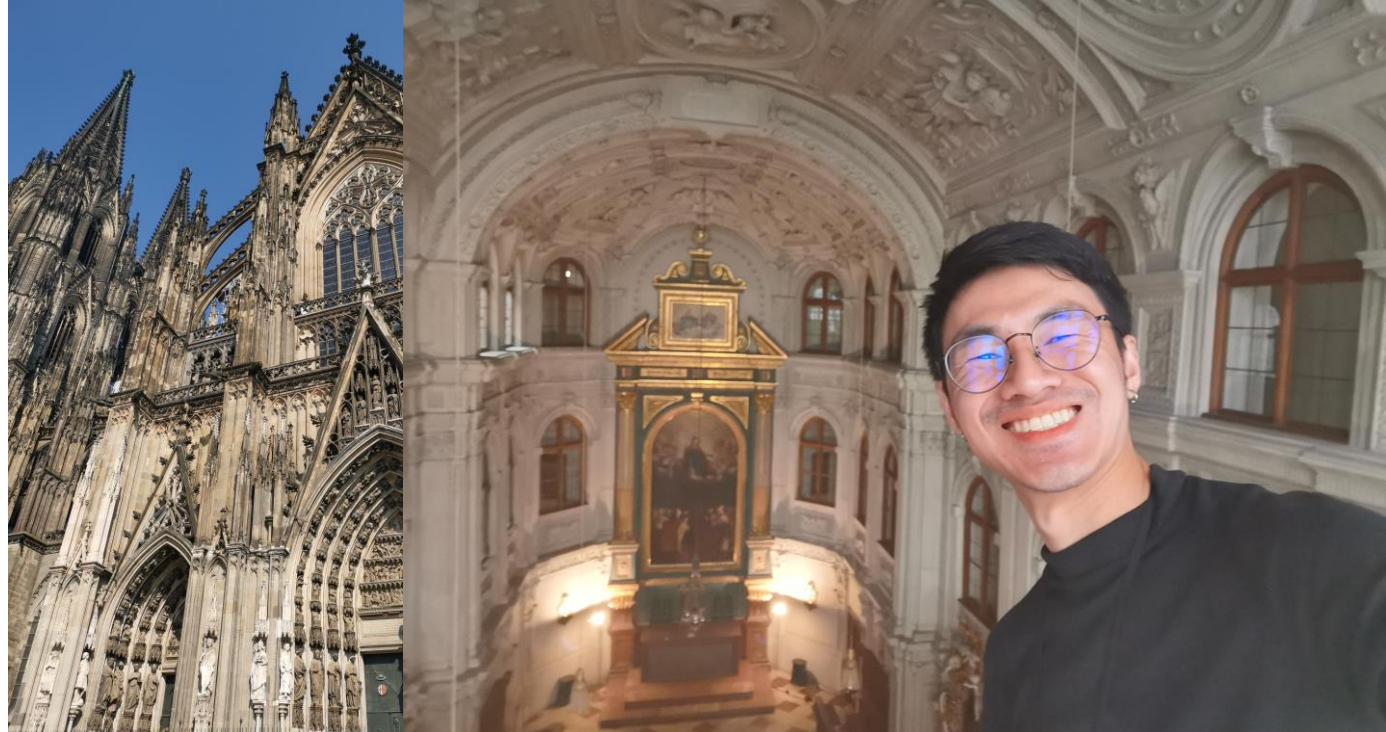
During my short time in Copenhagen, I settled my visa and walked around the city. In the month of February, I visited quite a few countries, including – Hungary (Budapest), Poland (Warsaw, Krakow, Zakopane), Belgium (Brussels, Antwerp), Lithuania (Kaunas, Vilnius), and Latvia (Riga).



March

Since all my courses are done online, I also took the opportunity to travel during this month. I visited Norway (Oslo) and Germany (Cologne, Nuremberg, Munich).

Since I had a face-to-face presentation for one of my courses this month, I took the opportunity to explore Copenhagen and CBS a little bit more. Copenhagen is an extremely green city, so renting a bike is crucial to getting around. There are bike companies that offer CBS students special monthly discounts, but what I did was just borrow my roommate's bike since I am hardly in Copenhagen to begin with. It is also useful for you to travel between campuses, since CBS is scattered all over Copenhagen, so you will need a bike to get between classes.



April

This month is where all the exams take place. I spent the first few days revising for my papers, but since most courses are open-book and notes or written assignments, they are not too difficult. The Danish exams are very lenient, whereby you are able to retake the exams up to three times when you fail (but I'd suggest you not to!). All of my courses are final-exam driven, whereby your final grade is determined solely from the final exam. You also will encounter oral-exam, whereby you have an interview with the course instructor on the course material.

Even though this is exam month, I still managed to travel to a few places, including – Croatia (Zagreb), Slovakia (Ljubljana), Vienna (Austria), and Czech Republic (Prague, Rybarska).



May & June

All my courses are over at this point, since I only took courses in the first quarter. Hence, I travelled all around Europe, Middle East, South East Asia and Africa at this point before returning to Hong Kong.

Countries that I travelled to include Italy, Iceland, Morocco, Turkey, Thailand and Malaysia.





General Exchange Information

Part II

I will keep this part extremely short, sharp and sweet. I suggest that you take a thorough read as these are things that I wish I knew beforehand, and some of the pro-tips I found out through experience.



Visa Procedures

There are no Visa application services in the Danish Consulate in Hong Kong. You can choose to travel to Shenzhen/ Guangzhou or just apply in Copenhagen. I chose to apply in Copenhagen.

The visa is extremely expensive (around HKD 4,000), but there is no dodging it.



Be Prepared & Plan Ahead

The visa process is super easy in Copenhagen. Make sure you make your reservation (you will receive an email) earlier, and you can just cancel if you cannot make it. This is because the slots for fingerprint scanning and picture taking gets taken up super quick.

Also, bring everything with you – HKUST transcript/ acceptance letter, passport, all forms etc., even if it's not mentioned on the checklist. You do not want to give them any reason to reject you.

Visa Procedures



Start Early

This is because once your visa is completed (1 to 2-months process), you will need to use the visa form to apply for residency (another 1 month). The latter can only be done in Copenhagen. Once your residence permit is done, you will receive a residence permit card, which is a godsent when it comes to travelling around Europe. You do not have to explain yourself and get suspicious looks from immigration officers once you show them the card.



Coordinate with Friends & Family

There is actually an indirect way you can reduce your fees. If you have an overseas address or already know your Copenhagen address, you can apply for the Wise Card (formerly TransferWise). Since you are transferring a huge amount, you can earn up to HKD 500 for every 3 friends who transfer more than HKD 2,000. This is useful as you will also be transferring huge amount for your housing.

Arriving Copenhagen

Copenhagen is as amazing as it gets. This process is relatively stress free for me. You should be paired up with an exchange buddy that picks you up from the airport. But even if your buddy cannot make it (like mine) and you are on your own, stress not, everything is well connected and easy.



Pro Tips

- **Get a Rejsekort:** It's the Danish version of our Octopus card. Transportations included are buses, metros and trains. Yes, prices are cheaper if you use a Rejsekort. You will need to buy one at a machine, which can be found in the airport itself right in front of the train. It is non-refundable, but transferable. So, if you have any seniors that exchanged at CBS, you can ask them to donate their card to you, so you do not have to pay for the deposit (non-refundable).
- **Mobile SIM:** You do not have to buy one. CBS International office provides SIM, and you can just go collect it. Download the "LEBARA" app to choose your plan.
- **Get a bike:** Everyone cycles in Copenhagen. Find a store near to your dorm, and ask if they have student packages / CBS exclusives. It is significantly cheaper, and cycling in Copenhagen is actually a very pleasurable activity.
- **Sign up for Erasmus Student Network:** You get tons of discounts, including discounts on Ryanair and Flixbus, which will be your main mode of domestic travel in Europe. I wish I knew this earlier!

Orientation Activities

I did not join any of the orientation activities, as they are all optional. However, if you want to make friends (be it international or local) or get to know CBS better, you should! Most of my friends enjoyed it. Activities include:

- CBS Danish Crash Course
- CBS Introduction Week
- Exchange Social Program
- Buddy Programme

Accommodation

CBS uses a first-come-first serve system for accommodation. I stayed in Kathrine Kollegiet (“KK”), and I believe it is a great dorm, and I suggest that you stay there too. It is extremely close (walkable even) to most CBS facilities, rooms are spacious, and it is an internationals-only hall – so great student life. It is also directly accessible from the airport metro.



Pro Tips

- **First-come-first-serve:** Make sure you take this seriously, like how we register courses in HKUST. The most popular ones are Tietgen (one of the top dorms in the world) and KK, both are popular for different reasons. In hindsight, I will still prefer KK because it is so near to campus, and it is easier to make friends there through self-initiated basement events.

Extremely Pro-Tips for those staying in KK:

- **Try to request for a double room with a friend.** The rooms are significantly bigger and prices are cheaper. It is about 2.5-3x bigger than a single room.
- **Request for specific rooms** – try to send emails requesting for rooms as far away from “the basement” as possible, saying you are sound sensitive. Parties are very loud and can go until 4am every Thursday to Saturday, and can be heard even 4 floors above. I stayed in room 011, and it was perfect because it is furthest from “the basement”, and since it is the ground floor, we had high ceilings.

Course Registration

Courses are published early. You should plan ahead and coordinate with ARO for credit transfer. You are required to take 4 courses (max 5).

CBS follows a “quarterly” system, which means that some courses are taken in the first quarter, and some are taken in the second quarter, whereas some are throughout the entire semester. To illustrate:

	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Semester
Class	Jan – Mar	Apr – May	Jan – May
Finals	Mar – Apr	Jun	Jun



Pro Tips

- **Start early:** The most painful process was coordinating with ARO for credit transfers that are not in the HKUST system. Be sure to learn thoroughly the credit transfer system. ARO will normally want these attached – (i) detailed course syllabus – which you need to email the exchange officer in CBS to get it for you; (ii) Justification – a quick summary on why you believe it is worth exchanging back to HKUST. Remember to constantly follow up
- **Plan your semester:** As you can see from the picture, it is entirely possible for you to take courses in only one quarter. See which quarter the course is being offered when deciding to take it up. This is why I did not have any classes in Quarter 4, and could travel entirely then.

TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT METHOD

Classes are more interactive and require huge participation. Your final grade is largely determined by a single final exam, which can be a written exam, an oral exam or a report.

Classes and Exams:

Attendance is completely optional. Some courses also are fully online, self-paced – so take a look at them. You are allowed to retake the exams up to three times at no penalty.

SPORT & RECREATION

There are no gyms and sport facilities in CBS. However, if you stay in KK, there is a pole dancing/ fitness studio nearby offering at a cheap price, which I would strongly recommend!

Finance & Banking

Denmark uses the Danish Krone (DKK). Cash is not required at all in Denmark. You are not required to open a bank account in Denmark. I used three cards throughout my exchange, and believe you can survive with them as well

Some ATMs in Europe charge you a very high fee for withdrawals, eg: EuroBank, EuroNet etc.

They can be found at very convenient location with huge flat icon signs. I normally only go to branches that I hear before in Hong Kong, eg: BNP, HSBC etc. or search the net and read the terms before any withdrawal. The withdrawal damages can be up to 10%.

Cards that I use:

1. HSBC World Debit Card

- (a) Apply online if you have a HSBC account. Remember to activate it in an ATM before arriving to Europe, or else you cannot use it at all.
- (b) Rates are decent. You can deposit loads of currencies in it. If exchange is needed, they will debit your HKD.
- (c) You can withdraw cash at any HSBC branch in Europe for free, but a small fee will apply for a non-HSBC ATM. Note that there are very little HSBC ATMs in Europe.
- (d) **Downside: Two step SMS- authentication is needed for online transactions. You may not be using your Hong Kong number then, so that is why I use Wise.**

2. Wise Debit Card

- (a) Cannot be applied in Hong Kong. I used my Malaysian address and got it delivered there. You can also apply when you are in Denmark. An alternative will be Revolut, but Wise has better rates. You can also consider using ZA Bank, but the exchange rates are not good.
- (b) Uses the app for two-step authentication. Online transaction is easy because of this.
- (c) You can withdraw money at any ATM for free, with a small cap.
- (d) **Downside: Require you to transfer your money into a European bank, which results in high transaction fees.**

3. American Express Explorer Credit Card

- (a) Very good exchange rate, very convenient and loads of benefits. If you are a HKUST student, you can get a student offer and your annual fees can be waived.
- (b) **Downside: Not accepted everywhere.**



SOCIAL CLUBS & NETWORKING

I did not join any. Most networking is done over weekend drinks, which you will have plenty



HEALTH & SAFETY

After getting your CPR Number, you will get a CPR card and a medical card. I did not use it.

I would suggest you get an insurance plan, especially if you decide to travel quite a bit. I used AIA, which also covers skiing. You can find it [here](#).



FOOD

Food in Copenhagen is expensive. I suggest you to either buy from the grocery store (Lidl is the cheapest), or you can eat from the school canteen, which is relatively cheaper.

PRO TIP:

TooGoodToGo: This is an app that sells leftover food and groceries at dirt cheap prices. It basically saved my life and wallet in Copenhagen. If you do not have a fixed eating schedule, and not fuzzy about food – download it! They serve super delicious food at huge portions!



TRANSPORTATION

Get a “Rejsekort”, which is similar to the Octopus card in Hong Kong. You can get it immediately at the airport, or if you have nice friends, get it from them as it is transferable.

Rent a bike. Copenhagen is super bike friendly, and I genuinely enjoyed biking there. There are some biking stores that give CBS students a discount if they rent by the month.

CLIMATE

Copenhagen can get really cold, and really hot at the same time. Weather is extreme. The clothes that you wear in Hong Kong is not enough to survive the wind there.

PRO TIP:

- Do yourself a favor and just get the jackets there. It is more suitable for the Nordic weather.
- There are many cheap clothes at the outlet stores. I went to “Intersport Outlet” and got myself a super warm jacket for only HKD200. Saved my life honestly.

COMMUNICATION

You get a free Libara SIM Card for free when you join the Introduction Week, or you head to the international office to get one. Choose the best mobile plan for you – I chose the cheapest as I travel a lot and there is WIFI in the hall and classroom, so you do not really need a lot of data.

PRO TIP:

Lebara’s SIM offers international roaming. Do not base your subscription decision on that – it is cheaper to just buy a SIM Card overseas than to use the Libara roaming, especially for long travels.

Eg: Buying a SIM Card in Italy for their 20GB plan for 20 Euro is cheaper than buying the Libara 5GB Roaming + 100GB Local plan in Copenhagen.



Things to Bring

Part III

1. Clothing

- Warm Clothes (down jacket, gloves, scarf, heattech – top and bottom, hat)
- Light Clothes (T-shirt, shorts)
- Sneakers
- Waterproof Hiking Shoes (if you are going to Iceland)
- Long Pajamas

2. Hygiene Products

- Shampoo & Bath soap
- Toothbrush & Toothpaste
- Lotion (it is very dry there)
- Surgical Mask
- Cosmetic Products

3. Electronics

- Phone & Laptop
- Chargers
- Adapters

4. Travels

- Passport & Official Documents
- CBS Acceptance Letter
- SIM Card
- Small Backpack

5. Money Matters

- Credit Card
- Cash (Euro)

VISA Application

<https://www.nyidanmark.dk/en-GB/You-want-to-apply/Study/Higher-education>

CPR Registration (for timeslot reservation at Frederiksberg Townhall)

<https://www.frederiksberg.dk/en/english>

CBS Course List

<https://www.cbs.dk/en/international-opportunities/international-students/guestexchangestudent/undergraduate-courses>

CBS Grading System

https://www.cbs.dk/files/cbs.dk/danish_grading_scale_2017.pdf

Lebara SIM

<https://mobile.lebara.com/dk/en>



THANK YOU

Remember to have the time of your lives!

This will probably be the highlight of your entire university life – so enjoy every single moment of it!