

## Exchange Report

Lund (/LOOND/) University, Sweden

Lund University School of Economics and Management (LUSEM)

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## Monthly Activity Log

### January 2022

I arrived in Lund in mid-January, precisely the day before orientation week starts. While others were focusing on settling in and buying things to furnish their places, I had a bit of a unique situation. I was told that my assigned accommodation at 'Eddan' was not ready yet, so instead, I was allocated to a place called the 'University Guesthouse' for the first month. I was essentially living out of a suitcase at the time.



Aside from that, the first month was all about exploring and experiencing Swedish culture. My friends and I would meet up for 'Fika' - essentially coffee and pastries (cinnamon bun in a national treat!) with the intention of finding the best fika place in Lund. (Spoiler: Broder Jakobs has the best pastries for great value!)



By late January, we went skiing! As Lund is located in the southern part of Sweden, there are no good places to ski nearby. So we had to travel up north for 8 hours, up to a place called Romme Alpins. (If you want to ski frequently, consider avoiding Lund) Despite that, it was all worth it! I have been skiing in Korea and I can confidently say it's much better here!



## February 2022

A lot of things happened in February, so I will summarise in a few bullets

- We celebrated our first overseas Chinese New Year together
- We went to Copenhagen to visit the famous Nyhavn
- We went to Iceland to shoot the northern lights, but failed (kind of)
- I took two mid-term exams
- I finally moved to my assigned accommodation - Eddan





## March 2022

In March, I revised meticulously for my Swedish course. I spent two full weeks studying for the final exam and it was really tough. Learning a language overnight is not really possible and I learnt my lesson the hard way.

But shortly after my exam, I rewarded myself by embarking on a 2-week trip to Switzerland and Italy. March is a great time to go to Italy because it is the off-season for tourism!



## April 2022

By the start of April, another academic period (the second 'semester') began. I was enrolled on two new courses, and I attended some of the classes online.

One of the highlights of this month was Valborg Day, a national holiday on 30th April. I have asked the locals about the meaning of this day, but turns out it was just an excuse for nationwide drinking. :) Be sure to buy alcohol ahead, as the national alcohol stores (Systembolaget) close on holidays!



With no expectation of what was going to happen, I ended up going to a barbeque party at a random Swedes' garden with 40 other strangers! (Mind you, Swedes are known to be very conservative so that was a really rare sight)

### May 2022

To take advantage of my remaining time in Europe, I travelled to Spain, Portugal and Norway over the span of three weeks. During my travels, I also managed to submit my papers for my two courses, which marked the official end of my studies in Lund!





## Visa Procedures

### Applying for Residence Permit

If you plan to stay for more than 6 months, you will most likely need to apply for a Residence Permit (a physical card that is never used within Sweden, but is necessary for European travelling) on the Swedish Migration Agency website.

In your application, you will be asked to choose a consulate office to collect your residence card. Hong Kong is not an option on the system, but fear not, simply pick the Beijing or Shanghai consulate, then email the Consular General of Sweden in HK ([generalkonsulat.hongkong@gov.se](mailto:generalkonsulat.hongkong@gov.se)) to let them know and make an appointment.

You will need to upload the following in your application:

1. Passport
2. HKUST Transcript
3. Acceptance letter from Lund University
4. Bank statements showing that you have more than HK\$40,000

As I remember, Lund University did not issue the acceptance letter until mid-November, which was quite close to the suggested deadline for submitting the Residence Permit application. So if you still haven't received yours by mid-November, better email your exchange coordinator to get an update.

### Picking up Decision Letter in Hong Kong

Once successful, you will need to collect a Decision Letter at the Consular General of Sweden in HK in Wan Chai.

### Picking up Residence Permit Card in Sweden

When you arrive in Lund, you will need to make an appointment at Swedish Migration Agency in Malmö to pick up your Residence Permit Card. (Malmö is another city that is about 20-minutes away by train, crazy right?)

There's no need to rush for this process as you are allowed to stay in Sweden for up to six months without a permit, but do make it ASAP if you plan to travel around in Europe.

When you travel in Europe, they will always ask for your Residence Permit when they know you are studying in Sweden. (Europe travel tip: you will get through airports quicker if you always present your passport alongside your Residence Permit card)

## Orientation Activities

The university will organise a few orientation activities ahead of time, such as the overrated food event 'Taste of Sweden', group ice-skating, movie nights, etc. These are events that you will have to pay and book, as quotas are limited.

You will also be invited to join a mentor/buddy group, which I would highly encourage. These groups are led by local students at Lund University, and they will invite you into a WhatsApp

group chat alongside other buddies. Depending on your mentor group, you will be invited to regular hangouts, and you will also get to meet other international students.

## **International Services & Activities**

The university has a team called the International Desk, and they would organise regular activities for international students to join. I believe they are also the go-to people for any enquiries from exchange students.

## **Accommodations**

LU Accommodation is the official system from the University. It is highly competitive and you will need to apply for it as soon as it opens. I believe you will need to pick 10 choices in your portal, which is extremely overwhelming if you don't look into it ahead of time.

Below are my comments for some of the accommodations

### Eddan - new but far

TDLR: it's new and quiet but it's far and tough to cycle around.

Eddan is one of the newest built accommodations offered by the university. It is furnished with a table, bed mattress, bed frame, lamp, closets, private shower and toilet, and a furnished shared kitchen. It is a very quiet and comfortable place to live in.

BUT, it is very far away and tough to get around. Eddan is located downhill, on the outskirts of Lund. When cycling out of Eddan, especially if you intend to go to LUSEM (their SBM equivalent), there is a very steep and long upslope that you cannot avoid. I consider myself to be decently athletic but this was a slope that I could never ride without feeling sore. (That was an understatement - I hated it LOL)

You could consider taking the bus to get around Eddan, which is about 15-minutes away from the Lund Central Station. Do note that you cannot ride an electric scooter into Eddan, your scooter will limit its speed and only allow you to park it at the nearest bus stop (which is 6-minutes away by walking).

### KC Housing (Corridor Room) - comfortable and convenient

KC Housing is relatively more aged than Eddan, but it is a pretty convenient location to live in. In their corridor room, you have a furnished room with a private toilet, but you would have to share a kitchen and shower with other roommates.

It is a quiet area and it has only one bus line that goes there. Scooter coverage is good, as you will always find a scooter available downstairs.

### Sparta - convenient party house



Sparta is located just 2-minutes away from the LUSEM building, right above a gym called ACTIC. I liked its location a lot because it was very close to the school and decently close to the city centre.

Sparta is known to be a party hotspot. Expect LARGE-SCALE house parties on the entire building, especially on Thursday, Friday, and weekend nights. Their parties are very wild and loud - imagine a jam-packed, disco-light filled kitchen of dancing drunk students; huge speakers, loud parades, corridor beer-pongs; flocked by students not just from Sparta, but from all of Lund.

If this excites you, then you would have a very fulfilling nightlife. But if you are bothered by parties, and trashed kitchens on Saturday mornings, then I would suggest you avoid Sparta.

## **Courses Registration**

### Registering your courses on SoleMove

You can preview their courses in their online course catalogue. Once you have shortlisted a few based on your interest and credit transfer availabilities, then you would fill in your choices on the SoleMove system. You have to indicate your choice of preference in a very unintuitive way, so it is pretty much a random draw at the end.

There are two periods in one semester, and you are suggested to only study two courses per period.

### Checking your schedule on TimeEdit

You can also see a mock timetable using the TimeEdit system. Be sure to find the right schedule for LUSEM.

## **Teaching & Assessment Methods**

Most of the courses do not have mandatory attendance. Their teaching is laid back, discussion-oriented, and reading-heavy.

Assessment methods vary by course, by which you are most likely to encounter an oral exam. Oral exams involve a professor asking you questions, and you are judged by the quality of your oral response.

## **Sports & Recreation Facilities**

There are no gyms at the school. But there are membership-based gyms across Lund, and most of them have a one-week trial. I had the ambition of utilising the one-week trials of all of the gyms in Lund, but as you know... we'll just do that... tomorrow... :))

## **Finance & Banking**

The Swedish Kronor (SEK) is the currency of Sweden. They are a cash-less country and they basically take credit cards anywhere, i.e, on buses, taxis, and hair salons. There is no need to get cash ahead of time, as you would pay with a card most of the time.

During my exchange, I used the HSBC Mastercard Debit Card. It has minimal (or no) transaction fees, and no spending limit given its debit card nature. This is ideal if you plan to travel, as the spending limits on the typical student credit would usually not be enough if you pay for flights and accommodation all at once.

Simply apply for the card on the HSBC App and you will get the card delivered to your home.

### **Social Clubs & Networking Opportunities**

Nations are almost the 'HKUST Societies' equivalent in Lund. Nations are much bigger in size, they are student-run organisations that run bars, restaurants and events. You will need to apply for StudentLund at the beginning of the semester, and your choice of Nation will not matter much. You can basically join activities of other nations too, but you will get a discounted price if you are a member.

Stay tuned for events on their Facebook pages.

### **Health & Safety**

Lund is an extremely safe place, and may even be safer than Hong Kong. There are virtually no crimes or dangerous areas, and you would be surprised with how patient cars are. In intersections that have no traffic lights, you can pretty much cross the road with your eyes closed as cars will slow down from afar away and wait for you to cross.

However, healthcare in Lund is not super accessible, as you would have to go through surprisingly redundant procedures to get an appointment. To get a doctor, you would have to:

1. Register yourself by filling out a physical form at the clinic
2. Call the clinic's designated hotline to book an 'appointment' (you cannot make an appointment at the clinic physically)
3. Pick up the phone at the 'appointment', and the nurse on the phone will make you an appointment to speak to a nurse
4. Consult the nurse at the scheduled time (probably another day already), and if necessary, you would be transferred to a doctor

So, unless necessary, take a panadol and sleep it in. :p

### **Food**

If you are a local Hong Konger, you may be surprised by the cost of eating out in Sweden. Eating out in Europe is generally more expensive than in Hong Kong, so at some point, you would resort to cooking in groups or for yourself.

There are no prominent Swedish cuisines, but their Fika (coffee and pastries, i.e, cinnamon bun) culture is quite strong. You would be shocked to see the amount of Kebab and Falafel offerings in Scandanavia and Europe. (Try falafel at Lund Falafel near the centre, note that they only take cash)



## Transportation

Bike will be your main mode of travel. You can buy one from second-hand bike stores or from Facebook groups. You can aim to sell it by the end of your semester, as cycling is generally very popular in Lund. Beware that bike theft that is pretty serious, so be sure to always lock your bikes when you park.

For bus travels within Lund, or train rides outside of Lund, you would have to use the Skånetrafiken App. It may be confusing at first but it is actually one of the easiest transportation systems across Europe. Let me try to explain.

On the app, you can buy tickets that are valid for one-hour (single tickets), 24h, or 30 days.

- The 24h ticket is almost always the better deal if you don't have a bike with you, and you intend to take the bus for at least 2 times
- If you are travelling within Lund, then you would buy the tickets for the Lund City Zone.
- If you are travelling to Malmö, then you would buy the tickets for the Medium Zone
- If you are travelling to the Copenhagen Airport, then you would buy a ticket for the Öresund Zone
- You can also pick manually where you want to go and it would tell you which ticket to buy - so don't worry!

When taking the bus, you would have to point the ticket's QR code onto the bus' ticket reader. It would make a beep sound.

When taking the train, there are no gates like the MTR in Hong Kong to stop you from boarding the train. Instead, a train inspector would ask to scan your ticket's QR code for validation. If you don't have a valid ticket, you could be given a big fine!

## Climate

Weather in Lund is amazing.

During the winter, it will snow and it can get quite cold (low single-digits, though rarely below 0 degrees celsius). Be sure to wear a big coat with layers of underwear. Gloves will also be necessary especially if you ride a bike, as the wind will be extremely cold for your fingers.

During the spring, it will be very breezy but warm at the same time. It has a very prominent flower blooming period, where you see colourful flowers everywhere across Lund (unlike anywhere in Hong Kong at all). Lund does rain quite a bit, so don't forget your umbrella in spring.

## Communication

English literacy in Sweden is one of the highest in the world, so you would have no problems at all getting by with English. I find Swedes to be quite accepting with foreigners, as they would accommodate us by speaking English in front of their friends.

Facebook and Snapchat are Sweden's main social media channels, so be prepared to revive your accounts before you get there.

In terms of SIM cards, consider getting a prepaid one from Hong Kong that allows you to roam across Europe. After settling in Lund, you could get a local prepaid one in Telia, Telenor or Conviq. It is difficult to get a subscription-based plan, as they often require the applicant's Swedish Bank ID. Their auto-payment programs also don't work really well, as you would have to manually type in their Bank ID and Swift codes in order to pay for the phone plan.

### Cautionary measures

Lock your bike whenever possible, or else it could be stolen overnight.

Other notes (if applicable)

### Items to Bring

#### Essentials

- Passport & ID Card
- Residence Permit Decision Letter
- University Acceptance Letter
- Photocopies of all documents
- Credit Card

#### Clothing

- Waterproof big coat
- Scarf
- Gloves
- Thermal underwear
- Your other essential outfits

#### Electronics

- Laptop & charger
- Phone & charger
- Router (you need to bring your own!)
- Travel plug
- Outlet powerstrip
- Power bank

#### Miscellaneous

- Medicine
- Stationary
- Umbrella
- Water bottle
- Camera

### Useful Links and Contacts

- Swedish Migration Agency  
<https://www.migrationsverket.se/English/Private-individuals.html>
- Lund University Website <https://www.lunduniversity.lu.se/>
- Lund University TimeEdit <https://cloud.timeedit.net/lu/web/ehl1/>
- Canvas
- Skånetrafiken for public transportation app