



Exchange Report

University of Warwick, United Kingdom

Warwick Business School (WBS)

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Economics and Finance (ECOF)

Spring 2022

Monthly Activity Log

January | Sheffield | Coventry | London



Landed at London Heathrow International Airport on 5th January 2022, I immediately took the train to Sheffield and stay at my friend's place for 2-3 days, as the Warwick University accommodation allows check-in only after 7th January 2022. Sheffield was a quite and comfy town, a perfect place for me to take a rest from the 13-hour flight and fix my jet-lag problem.



I checked in at the on-campus accommodation on 8th January 2022, and got my student ID card in the Senate House. Since the semester starts on 10th January, I have got a few days to wander around the city nearby, Coventry. It was city with lots of historical architecture like chapels and towers. To be honest, there is not much activities we could do in the city but only chilling at pubs with locals.

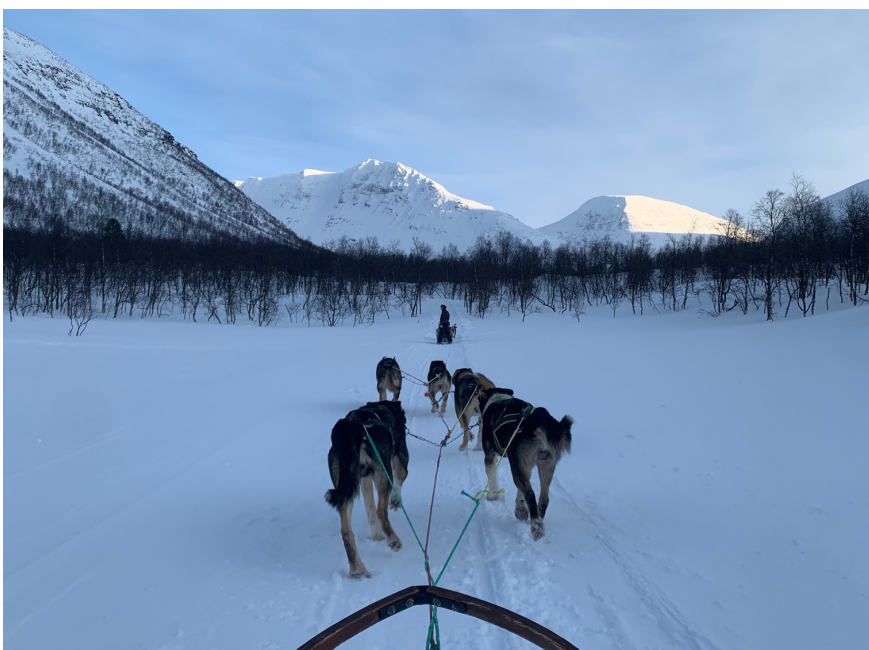


On 22nd January, during the second week of the spring semester, I went down to London to visit my friends. It is very convenient to commute from Coventry to London, only taking 1.5 hours to get there by direct train. During the stay, we went to many famous landmarks, such as Oxford Street, British Museum, Buckingham Palace, Bricklane, Spitalfields Market, etc.

February | Berlin | Tromsø | Oslo



Since there is no school work in the few beginning weeks of the semester, I decided to go to Berlin with my friends on February. I took the plane from London City Airport to Berlin International airport. The food there was astonishingly delicious, especially appealing to me as a meat-lover. We also visited the national gallery and different museums that talk about the history of Germany and WWII.



At the end of February, I went on another trip to Norway. The first stop of the trip was Tromsø. I got on Ryanair from London Stansted Airport to Oslo Airport for transit, then hopped on another domestic flight to Tromsø. It was the northern city of Norway. The freezing climate (around -10 degree Celsius on average) almost got us cold to death, but it was so worthwhile that we had seen the northern light and experienced husky sledding activities in this trip. It was such a once-in-a-lifetime experience.



The second stop was the capital of Norway, Oslo. It was a very livable city. We went to the national gallery and national theatre on the first day. The second day we woke up at 7am at -4 degree Celsius and went to experience the morning outdoor sauna session. After that, we went skiing in the Oslo's largest skiing park. It was my first time skiing, and I was very lucky to have been guided and looked after by my friends. Overall, it was a very wholesome trip.

March | Birmingham | London | Budapest | Vienna



I was busy doing assignments and taking tests in early and mid March. After the semester ended, I went to visit Birmingham. I was very fortunate to have the opportunity to watch The All England Open Badminton Championships 2022. I was a huge badminton fan, and I was thrilled that I was able to watch Viktor Axelsen's match on that day. Few days later, I went to London again and reunite with my highschool friends.



Right after the reunion, I flew to Budapest from London Stansted Airport, to have a trip with my exchange friends from other places. We went on a ferry trip to enjoy the famous riverside view with the Parliament. We also went to the famous outdoor hot bath, People's Park, the Buda castle and other famous tourist spots.



We continued the journey by taking 2-hour train from Budapest to Vienna. The main purpose for this journey is to watch any opera in Vienna. We have unlocked this bucket list item, and we visited other Viennese famous landmarks as well.

April | Faro | Lisbon | Sintra



Deadlines of the final assignments were all at around early to mid April. After fighting the deadlines, I went on a trip to Portugal with my friends. We first went to Faro, playing different kinds of water sports enjoying sunshine and beaches.



We went on a boat trip to visit different famous caves and rocks on the last day we spent in Faro. The trip included driving by the most well-known cave, the Benagil cave.



We then took a 3-hour Flixbus to the capital of Portugal (it was very cheap when you booked early online), Lisbon. We spent a day in discovering good food and visiting museums in the city centre of Lisbon. Then, we spent another day going to Sintra, which is 1-hour distance from Lisbon, to visit the westernmost point of Europe, Cabo da Roca.

May | Naples | Pompeii | Sorrento | Prague



Before the finals, I decided to go on another trip to Naples, Italy. We have visited many tourist spots, such as Ovo Castle, Royal Palace of Naples, Castel Nuovo, etc. We also spent another day visiting one of the ruins in Pompeii when we were on the way to Sorrento.



We planned to travel to all famous coasts in Naples, so got on a train from Naples to Sorrento, and settled down there. On the next day, we spent a full day walking around Sorrento, going to Amalfi Coast and Positano via speedboat (don't take bus if you planned to go here, it's very hot inside with no air-con). On the last day, we went to Capri and experience the kayak tour. The water is very clean and it was pretty fun.



Two weeks after coming back to UK from Naples, I went on the last trip with my friends to Prague. It was a beautiful city with stunning streets and city views. The food here was also amazing. It mainly served German food such as pork knuckle, wiener, and beer. We went to different tourist spots as well, such as Prague Castle, Petřín Tower, Charles Bridge, etc. After this trip, I went back to UK finishing all of the remaining final exams, packing my stuff, and went back to Hong Kong on 8th June.

General Exchange Information

Visa Procedures

For Hong Kong citizens, if you are going to stay in UK for 6 months or less, you do not need to apply any visa, as the Hong Kong Passport already grant you a 6 months Standard Visitor Visa. If you are going to stay for 6 to 11 months, you can apply for a short-term studying visa, which requires you to prepare the following documents for registration:

- Passport
- A letter of acceptance from the institution (host university)
- Short term study visa letter from the institution (you have to ask for yourself)
- Bank statement to prove your financial ability
- Prove of your return ticket (optional)

For me, I stayed in UK for around 5 months, so I did not apply any visas.

More information about Visa application can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/applying-for-a-uk-visa-in-hong-kong>

Also, the university will send you an email which requires you to upload the proof of arrival (stamp on passport) to its student portal. Details can be found at:

<https://warwick.ac.uk/study/international/immigration/i-am-a-visitor/>

Orientation activities

Unfortunately, there is not much welcoming events held by Warwick in Spring semester. Welcoming events are mostly held only during Fall Semester in September and October. Warwick Business School will only organize an introduction session and social events like regular coffee chats, but do not expect too much as the attendance rate is very low.

Accommodations

Students can choose their residence and apply via Warwick's online portal if they want to live on campus. There are lots of options of on campus accommodations. Prices vary much as it depends on the type of accommodations. Students can also live in the city centres nearby (Coventry or Leamington Spa), which is 30 minutes driving distance from the campus.

More details about accommodations can be found below:

<https://warwick.ac.uk/services/accommodation/>

I lived in Claycroft 3 Residence. I like this residence because it is the hall nearest to the big supermarket (Tesco) nearby (in only 5-10 minutes walk distance), and it was quiet. Its price is in the middle of the price range based on the on-campus accommodation options.

Sports & Recreational Facilities

There are gyms and sports courts in the campus, but using it requires you to register for the membership of using on-campus sports facilities. Considering that I will not stay long and the membership fee is extremely high, I did not go to any of the facilities. Instead, there is a gym nearby Tesco, which is very cheap, students can consider going there rather than the sports facilities on campus.

General Exchange Information

Finance & Banking

UK accept pounds only. Almost every stores in UK are quite technology-oriented, they all receive credit/debit card payment, and every transportations in UK offers contactless payment. It is quite convenient. So, students are recommended to open a UK bank account and get a visa debit/credit card. Alternatively, students can take a look at registering a virtual bank visa debit card, Monzo. It is quite popular among local university students, because it is easy to register and use.

At the same time, I would prefer bringing some pound and more euro cash, especially when you are planning to travel across Europe. From my experience, some countries does not have a wide use in card payment (e.g. Portugal).

Health & Safety

There is a clinic in the university campus, but the locals usually directly buy their own medications instead. Considering the COVID situation, students are recommended to wear mask at indoor (i.e. lecture room and malls), but the COVID situation has been improving before I left, and there is not much infection cases in the campus, therefore no one wearing masks.

Food

There are food trucks parked nearby the bus stop every Wednesday. Apart from that, there are cafes and bars, but they closed early during winter time. I would prefer cooking instead of eating out because it is expensive to eat outside. There is a small grocery store nearby the Warwick Student Union, at the centre of the campus, but the stuff there is more expensive. Alternatively, there is a huge supermarket (Tesco) in Cannon park nearby the campus, which were where I usually go, with a large variety of grocery and food options.

Transportation

There is a central bus station in the main campus, and small bus stops around the outer perimeter of the campus. Buses are going to Coventry, Leamington Spa and other places. Bus route 12X and 11 are mostly the bus students are taking, it can reach the Coventry city centre and Coventry Railway Station. Many trains are available in Coventry Railway Station. Students can take intercity train at the station, such as going to Birmingham, London or other cities. I would recommend downloading an app called Trainline. The app shows all available train route and schedule upon your search, and you can priorly book e-tickets in the app. Also, I strongly recommend buying the 16-25 railcard for travelling in UK as it saves 1/3 of your ticket fees and it will break-even easily as you travel more. Also, buy the train tickets as soon as possible for discount, as the prices changes with time.

Climate

It is quite chilling at the time. In January, it usually stays at 1-2 degree Celsius, and get colder at night. Weather in March and April starts to get better, at around 10-15 degree Celsius. Temperature rarely goes above 15 degree Celsius from January to June. But I would recommend also bring some t-shirts, as temperature in other European countries are much hotter.

General Exchange Information

Course Registration

Course Registration usually starts 1-2 months before the semester starts. In my case, the course registration starts in late November to early December. So do pay attention to the school email particularly during that time.

Before choosing which course to study, I would strongly recommend you to search those courses in [HKUST course mapping website](#) to see if its credit is transferrable. Please remember to choose the correct duration of study (i.e. Spring Semester) in the website, since the transferrable courses differs across semesters.

When you received Warwick Business School email, follow the instructions to register course in [my WBS](#). Course enrolment are first-come-first-served basis, so please enrol the courses as soon as possible.

In addition, there is also something called “unusual option”, which refers to the courses not taught by Warwick Business School (WBS) but by other departments. If you want to enrol on those courses, you need seek WBS supervisor and the course teacher’s approval and fill in an unusual option form. In my case, I enrolled in a course taught by Department of Economics. More instruction in this enrolment process will be covered in orientation day, so please attend it to know more about the procedures.

Teaching & Assessment Methods

Teaching and assessment methods differs across courses. From my experience, all teaching lectures and tutorial were already resumed to F2F method before I left. But the good thing is, there are not many lessons at each course, with an average of 1 hour lecture & 1 hour of seminar per week. Yet, depending on the course, there might be extra after-class works to make sure you keep up with the teaching progress. Lectures would be mostly the lecturer talks all the time on the course, while seminar focused on providing you practices on the topics (i.e. exercises in Finance courses, and discussions in Marketing courses).

For Assessment method, most of Warwick Business School modules usually takes it simple using 20% assignment and 80% final exam as the scoring system. Depending on different requirements form the modules, some count attendance in your final result, or some even does not take attendance as marking criterion but requires mandatory attendance rate.

For final exam, I took all 4 exams in online exam format, providing me much flexibility to take the exam. Exam usually starts from late May to early June (depending on the courses we registered). Basically, Year 1 courses took place in early May to late May, where Year 2 & Year 3 are in late May to June.

Communication

Everyone speaks in English in the university, there is not much communication barrier. The only hardship is to overcome and adapt to the strong accents.

For phone and data service, I chose to use giffgaff. People usually choose between giffgaff or O2, depend on the offers of the phone plans. One of the reason why I use giffgaff is because its service also covers most of the country in Europe.

General Exchange Information

Cautionary Measures

Bring some masks if you are alerted to the pandemic, but I would not recommend bring many. From my experience, I bought a reusable mask and never used the disposable mask anymore. I had many unused masks in my luggage, wasting my luggage space. Also, people start to not wearing masks as the pandemic situation improved a lot with time.

Beware of your personal belongings when you are travelling across European countries. It is quite safe in UK but not in other countries. Recommend you to weak your bag sideways or in front of you when taking subway transports, as there are many pickpockets in the underground station.

Items to bring

- Passport
- Identification Documents
- Vaccination Record
- Cash
- Letter of support from warwick
- Flight booking references
- Medications
- Masks
- Laptop
- Chargers
- Clothes
- Swimsuits
- heat-tech

Useful contacts and links

Visa Procedures

<https://www.gov.uk/apply-to-come-to-the-uk>

University of Warwick Exchange Program Website

<https://warwick.ac.uk/study/studyabroad/>

Campus postal address and deliveries

http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/estates/post/s_tudents

Warwick Accommodation

http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/estates/post/s_tudents