

HKUST

2022 Exchange Report

Jan 2022 – Jun 2022

Kelvin Tsang, Year 3 (BBA in IS & FINA)

Exchange School: Uppsala University (Sweden)

Before My Journey...

Everyone has their own imagination and journey during exchange. From studying, student lives, travelling, exploration to chilling out, they became one of the best part of my uni life. Before I went to Sweden, I gave myself a set of goals to hit:

- 1) build up a running habit
- 2) improve my health mentally and physically
- 3) make more friends
- 4) read more books
- 5) travel more
- 6) learn an online course

Gratefully, I hit all my goals. For those who is reading the report, don't forget to set some goals for yourself, or otherwise you may miss out some of the good time to force yourself to jump out of your comfort zone.

January



It was like a dream when I first arrived Sweden since I haven't travelled for years. I kept telling myself that it could be the best memory in my life so just try as much as possible. Explore and get my hands dirty.



We met 2 friends from HKU, travelling together in Sweden before the beginning of our semester. We went to Gothenburg, Malmo and Stockholm for a 10-day trip. The weather wasn't that nice but we so enjoyed our chaotic trip because of our excitement and first time travelling in Sweden.



I was the chef when we lived in Airbnb together. I was making steaks and portobello that night. They loved it. As an amateur chef, I felt so good about it. I didn't have the time to cook back in Hong Kong and it was time consuming to me. When it's all in Sweden, cooking suddenly comes as an interest which makes me feel good about making people smile by making good dishes.



After two weeks of Sweden trip, I finally settled down in the dorm. Getting necessities from IKEA under heavy snow, figuring out the rules of the corridor and the kitchen, finding out what to do in Uppsala. One day when I was looking out of the window, there was the northern light. Even people who live in Uppsala say it was rare. I was lucky to see that in the south of Sweden.

We were looking for some places around Uppsala, and we went to a place with a frozen lake. On the photo, I was lying on the lake. Some people ice-skated there. For a student who has never been out of Asia, sleeping on a lake is something I have never dreamt of. The view was just so nice and the nature is magnificent.



Throughout the whole exchange, I was getting along with both Ronnie and Annis. We travel together, we cook, and basically everything together.



We took this picture on the rooftop of the sky deck. We played the swing on the top of the building which was kind of scary to me. The weather was not that great, but the experience and memory are always beautiful.

It is so fun to travel under different combinations. Other than exchange, I cannot think of any chance to travel with different people you are not so familiar with. That's a good chance to learn how to get along with different people and learn how to enjoy different journey. I was not expecting I was that happy playing with two new friends. As the saying goes, you never try, you never know.



February

In the early February, I was travelling to Amsterdam and Belgium with two of my friends from HKU. We took this picture on



In late February, we went to the north of Sweden to do snow activities and see northern lights. Luckily, we got one night with super clear sky and caught the lights. This was the best journey I have ever had in my life. Experience, unexpected activities people, adventures...

A must go place during winter in Europe.

March



We were having dinner with a friend from the Netherland. He is enthusiastic about Chinese food so we just treated him a meal in return with beers!

One of my friends was also visiting from France. That's amazing to see a friend during exchange.

**Don't be shy and make friends!
They're so nice actually!!**



Meet my old friends in Copenhagen! It sounds crazy to travel to with friends without any plans in advance but it could happen during exchange in Europe!

We planned out all thing 2 weeks before and go. To me, the tourists spots are not important, but the people I travel with and the experience I got from the country.

After the first term of exam, I travelled to Barcelona and Madrid. Unforunitely, the weather wasn't as good as expected but we've got one sunny day. I love going to the see or the lake to watch the sunset whenever I go. I've got tons of sunset in my album! Remember to go to the seaside no matter where you go! NOT tourist place but the most authentic things the local can see and feel in their daily lives.





After Spain, I went to Nice, the south of France. It's all about sun and beaches which I like a lot. 6 days of trip I went to the beach every single day with a shiny sun, how lucky I was! Also, I made some friends from Taiwan who were also exchange students in France. We made an instant road trip to Saint Tropez to chill out.

April



The weather was warmer in April in Sweden so I decided to start my another goal, camping and picnic. I bought a cook set so I could cook steak outdoor. Sometimes I went to the seaside, making a fire and barbecue my ribs. That's was a nice experience to start a fire with nothing and under this nice weather.

In late April, suddenly out of a whim, I found that I have never tried solo travelling. I wanted to prove my abilities to myself that I could handle anything, that was how I started my 11 days the three countries of the Baltic Sea journey. I planned all the things within two days, which was so random and exciting.

I was not pursuing a perfect trip but a free and experiential trip. It was not easy to travel alone that long since I have no one to talk to. As a talkative person, it was tough to me.



From Tallin, Estonia, to Riga, Latvia, to Kaunas and Vilnius, Lithuania, they are all alike but the experience were totally different. I met some random guy in the hostel which left me great memories.



Hanging out with random people were nice, but don't forget to pay attention to my safety.

May



May is good for camping so I went camping with my friends. It's been my dream before I came to Sweden. The rest of the days were spent in Sweden to chill out and prepare for exam.

June



After exam, I made my last trip to Croatia with other friends from Hong Kong. It hot and nice, definitely my favorite type of trip.



It was so nice to meet people from different places in Uppsala. They made my last two weeks in Sweden. Thank you all.

Visa Procedures

Apply online as soon as possible since Sweden Embassy takes time to process the application.

Orientation Activities, International Services & Activities

I have not participated.

Accommodations

Apply for the dormitory according to the email the host school sent me,

Courses Registration, Teaching & Assessment Methods

Follow the guidelines of HKUST and the host school. Check for credit transfer and attendance policy.

Finance & Banking (including currency / expenses)

Swedish kronas were cheaper than before. Apply world debit card in advance. Sweden is cashless

Social Clubs & Networking Opportunities

Join the nation and having different activities like gasque, clubbing, and the like.

Health & Safety

Be careful with too many deep-fried food. They killed my throat. Sweden is safe to hang out at night but no one does it.

Food

I cook better than the restaurants, for real.

Transportation

In Sweden, I can get a bike, rent a scooter, or take the bus. But the weather would affect the method I chose.

Climate

Unstable, but that was what I expected from Sweden

Communication

I got the SIM card in the convenience store in Sweden, with roaming all over Europe.

Before your exchange, ask yourself:

- 1) what is it special about the country you wanna study there?
- 2) what are your goals during the journey?
- 3) what have I been afraid of for long but I should make a breakthrough?

Before your exchange, try to make sure that:

- 1) you got your summer intern offer so that you don't have to worry about your career.
- 2) you planned your future studies in HKUST so as not to worry about the credit transfer affair.

Reminder

- 1) don't think that you don't have to study. Get a pass.
- 2) jump out of your comfort zone. Won't regret it.