

The background of the cover is a photograph of a university campus in autumn. The sky is blue with some white clouds. Trees with yellow and orange leaves are scattered throughout the scene. In the foreground, a paved walkway is covered with fallen yellow leaves. A person's legs and feet are visible in the lower left corner, walking across the path. A white car is partially visible in the middle ground. A semi-transparent white box is overlaid on the lower half of the image, containing the school's logo and title.

**wbs** WARWICK  
BUSINESS  
SCHOOL

# EXCHANGE REPORT

Warwick Business School

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BBA Management, Year 4

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# Table of Contents

<b>Monthly Activity Log</b> .....	<b>2</b>
September .....	2
October .....	3
November .....	4
December.....	5
<b>General Exchange Information</b> .....	<b>6</b>
Visa Procedures .....	6
Orientation Activities.....	6
International Services.....	7
Accommodation.....	7
Course Registration.....	8
Teaching & Assessment Methods.....	8
Sports & Recreation Facilities .....	9
Finance & Banking.....	9
Social Clubs & Networking Opportunities .....	10
Health and Safety.....	10
Food.....	11
Transportation.....	11
Climate .....	12
Communication .....	12
Cautionary Measures.....	13
Other Notes.....	13
<b>Items to Bring</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>Useful Links and Contacts</b> .....	<b>14</b>

## i. Monthly Activity Log

September – London | Coventry

I arrived in the UK on the 13<sup>th</sup> September, a bit more than a week before the start of the Fall semester. I took the opportunity to explore London, go around and meet up with my friends. I went on a tour of the Wembley Stadium, watched a game between QPR and Stoke City, visited HMS Belfast, walked up the St Paul Cathedral's tower and visited the famous Sky Garden among other activities.

Me and my friends also went to Hyde Park and paid respects to the Queen at her funeral.



I travelled to Coventry on the 24<sup>th</sup> on a rainy day carrying 2 pieces of luggage with me. It wasn't the best of experiences but I made it there just fine.

Having moved into Westwood, I met my flatmates. There were surprisingly many Asian faces in my block – thought the majority were still Europeans. I then met up with fellow exchange students at a Welcoming party and joined the Welcome Week activities, including Society Fairs, giveaways and challenges. On a whole, I had a great start to my student life at Warwick thanks to the warm welcome.

## October – Coventry | Oxford | Barcelona | Amsterdam

In October, I went to Oxford with a few Hong Kong exchange students – it was such a beautiful place. The architecture was classy and of course, the influence of Oxford University can be felt everywhere in town.

On the next weekend, I visited Barcelona with my friend. It is probably my favourite European city I have visited to date. The people were amazing, the food was amazing, the beach was perfect and the weather was absolutely fantastic. As a huge football fan of course I could not miss out on Camp Nou as well.



With my day offs being Monday and Friday, there were plenty of room to plan trips around. So on the next weekend, a few of us went to Amsterdam for its annual electronic music festival. It was held at a major stadium with an attendance of over 40 thousand! The lighting and music was mesmerizing, definitely one of the most memorable nights of my life.

## November – Rome | Milan | Manchester | Switzerland



With some time to spare, a few of us decided to go to Italy for a weekend. We visited Rome, walked around the Colosseum, visited Milan, walked around Piazza del Duomo (where the Milan Cathedral is) and had some authentic and amazing Italian



food. We also went into the Vatican City and paid a visit to the gorgeous St. Peter's Basilica. Decorated in beautiful mosaics and famous artworks, the church was a stunning sight to behold.

We also went to Manchester to watch an EFL match between Manchester United and Aston Villa. As a long time United fan, it was a dream come true, and what a match it was as well, 4-2 with all 6 goals coming in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half!



Switzerland is honestly a surreal country. Having visited them in the last week of November, I still remember how it felt like we were living in a fairy-tale. It was nothing but green hills, blue skies and cows with bells strolling around. It did not help that we got to ski on the Matterhorn! You know, the famous mountain on that chocolate, yes *that* mountain!

## December – Coventry | Edinburgh

After all the travelling, I needed to spend December in the UK to properly prepare for my assignments and deadlines. However, I still had the time to visit my friends at Durham and Edinburgh, two very beautiful cities. Regardless, it was the last month I spent in the UK, and the flatmates that I stayed with prepared an end-of-semester for the whole floor! It was probably the best meal I had in the UK and I couldn't feel any more thankful.



## ii. General Exchange information

### Visa Procedures

For HKSAR passport holders, you do not need any sort of VISA for a short term study (<6 months). You can check here: <https://www.gov.uk/check-uk-visa>. I have seen recommendations to bring a copy of the letter of acceptance, along with student ID, proof of accommodation and a 'short-term study Visa letter' . I was only asked to present the first during my first entry to the UK. Your passport would then be stamped with a 'short term study Visa' .

If you are on for exchange less than 6 months, remember not to enter the (extremely long) queue for those with student visas at immigration! You should go through the normal immigration procedures.

### Orientation Activities

Warwick and the Business School (WBS) will each hold different orientation activities, which will give you an oversight of how the semester will proceed and where you can find the relevant resources needed to make you feel at home. The first goes through course enrollment and campus information, as well as the usage of my.wbs portal and gives us an introduction to the Warwick Business School life. The second, which is held just for exchange students, gives us guidance on how to settle down and get used to our new home, as well as an introduction to the school's attendance and assignment policies. We were given the opportunity to meet and mingle with other exchange students after the orientation, which was greatly appreciated.

You will also meet your course coordinator and be able to talk to your personal tutor (there will be a mandatory catch-up meeting but you can meet before then), both of which are very helpful, so feel free to reach out to them either in person or over email if you are unsure about anything, not just related to academics.

The school also held a school-wide Welcome Week, where we could roam around campus and join various activities held by different societies, as well as getting to know other students. Remember to take this opportunity to go out with your newly made friends! There is free pizza too, given away by Domino's.

### International Services & Activities

Warwick students have an opportunity to join the Global Connection Club but I was not part of it. There were also multiple international student meetups and sharing sessions

### Accommodation

You will be given an opportunity to apply for on campus accommodation at Warwick. There are many different accommodation at Warwick to choose from, varying at different price point and features. You will have to pick 5 and rank them before submitting your choices. I was assigned to stay at Westwood. It was not en-suite, i.e. we had to share the bathroom with the 11 students on our floor, and the kitchen with 5 other students. However it wasn't really a problem as I find it better as an opportunity to get to know other local students. Ultimately the closest friends I made at Warwick were those that lived in the same block as I do. There are often activities held at Arden residential centre, which is just 3 minutes' walk from our block.

The biggest issue I had with Westwood was its location – it was very far from the business school and main campus. To get to the business school you had to walk almost 20 minutes, which is fine if not for the constant drizzle and temps going below 5c. To get to the Sports and Wellness complex (the gym) it took almost 30 minutes. Fair to say I did not need leg days at the gym. It was quiet and very chill though, and it is just next to the bus stop, which makes getting into town very convenient.

## Course Registration

Course Registration is a lot easier in Warwick – you only have to submit your choices on my.wbs before the deadline and they will assign you to different modules afterwards. None of that fierce competition you get at HKUST every semester.

I selected four modules during my semester at Warwick, namely:

1. IB2580 Foundations of Human Sociality and Cooperation
2. IB2D70 Management in Practice
3. IB3610 Equality and Diversity
4. IB3L40 Building a Venture

All 4 have their credit transfer mappings approved. Do note that they may not be available for other semesters, and its best to check on the list of modules available to exchange students.

Some popular courses will get full very quickly but as time goes by, students will drop courses and allow others to register. Any courses that are too full will be determined by random allocation instead of a first-come-first-serve basis. Note that there is no queue like in HKUST, you'll have to manually go into the my.wbs portal to check for any vacancies. Add-drop period lasts till Week 3 so there is plenty of time to let others drop.

## Teaching & Assessment Methods

Teaching is a lot more interactive and less stressful compared to HKUST. I feel students are genuinely more interested in the content being taught and participate a lot more in class. Professors sometimes encourage students to reply to others' questions too which is a good way of promoting interactive discussions in class.

There are much fewer quizzes/scored assignments than our university. Most of the tasks given out will be preparations for discussions in class, such as questions preparations and

readings. However, even though it is not scored, I highly recommend everyone to actually complete the tasks as they are intriguing, and provides a context not just to the class content, but also the world we live in.

We were assessed by written essays at the end of term (4x3000 words essays). At Warwick, they place a lot of emphasis on proper thought process and arguments in the essays, so it is not something you can churn out overnight. It was very different to the midterms/finals in HKUST as it encourages much more critical thinking and digestion of teaching materials, which is something I appreciate.

### Sports & Recreation Facilities

Sports and Wellness hub is one of the main facilities on Warwick campus. It consists of a very big and well equipped gym, along with squash, badminton and tennis facilities and a swimming pool. Comes with a sauna as bonus too. In addition to that, there are pitches available for contact sports and tracks for running. All in all, basically all of your sports needs can be fulfilled on campus. You can take a look at the facilities via the link below:

<https://warwick.ac.uk/services/sport/active>

Though a big catch here – they are not free. You'll have to subscribe to their facilities plan, which is not cheap, in order to use them.

### Finance & Banking

Most of the UK accepts cashless transaction nowadays, even more so than Hong Kong. Therefore, it is highly recommended to get yourself a HSBC One World account and request a debit card. Extremely useful as it holds most major currencies so wherever you travel to, be it the UK, Europe, the US, Japan or Korea, the debit card will still work. However, if you are staying for more than one semester, I'd recommend you get a local bank account, e.g. HSBC UK account, since some local transactions can only be completed

via a local bank account. More so if you'd be going out with locals and need to pay them back later – One World Debit cannot transfer GBP to UK accounts.

If you need to exchange HKD for GBP/Euro, I suggest using Wise (formerly TransferWise). They have got very good rates, much better than banks. <https://wise.com/>

With the recent inflation, food and groceries have become quite expensive in the UK, though not to the point where it is unaffordable. Transport is also quite expensive compared to Hong Kong, a bus ride costs a few pounds compared to \$10 or less here.

### Social Clubs & Networking Opportunities

There are plenty social clubs that you can join, from Art Society to Matchday Society, Warwick has got you covered. It has got too many societies in fact, I was a bit shocked at first! Here is a list of societies you can check out for yourself:

<https://www.warwicksu.com/societies-sports/societies/>

Warwick is famous for the amount of network opportunities you can get - there are plenty of events going on every day, held by the school or societies. Big firms also regularly hold sessions at Warwick where you can socialize with graduates who work at such companies. You'll never find yourself out of networking opportunities.

### Health and Safety

I was there during the winter and truth to be told, quite a few were sick with either flu, RSV or Covid. It took me just a week to get sick, so pay close attention to your own health and get some medicine just in case.

Medication is readily available at Boots, which has a store on campus. However, the brands are all different so give it a check when you arrive – you don't want to be stressing out on which medicine to get when you are sick.

Warwick's Campus Safety team is always around to help anyone out, you can call them if you are in danger or suffered an accident. Warwick campus is pretty safe but Coventry is a bit dodgier. I would avoid walking alone at night in Coventry. In general, the UK is not as safe as Hong Kong so keep an eye on your belongings, as petty crimes are a lot more prevalent.

In addition, the NHS is free of charge for everyone so remember to register with a doctor beforehand. I, unfortunately, had the great privilege of being sent to A&E once during my exchange (it was an accident), where they fixed me up free of charge. Praise the unsung heroes at NHS!

## Food

You'll be cooking yourself most of the time on campus so remember to buy pots and pans when you arrive, either on campus (will run out of stock very very quickly) or at Coventry/Leamington Spa (will run out of stock slightly less quickly). Poundland and Tesco are your friends.

When it comes to dining out, Great Britain is not famed for its culinary culture and it shows. There are not too many choices around Coventry and they are not particularly good either. The quality goes up when you are in London but so does the price.

## Transportation

Warwick has an app which tells you when the next buses to Coventry and Leamington Spa are arriving so don't forget to download that! Buses are somewhat sparse during normal times but are a bit more frequent in peak hours. Uber (and its alternatives, e.g. Bolt and Freenow) is quite a lot cheaper than the cabs but still somewhat expensive (8-12 pounds from Warwick to Coventry, depending on the time/demand). You can check all 3 apps to see which is the cheapest.

More importantly if you are looking to travel within UK, the rail is not reliable at all. Avanti West Coast which serves Coventry and Birmingham has an on time rate of 33.3% in the semester I was there, with 18.9% trains cancelled. There are also often strikes by the rail industry. Unfortunately, we are stuck with them since there aren't many alternative travel methods to/from major cities in the UK (apart from coaches but those are very uncomfortable). Always make back-up travel plans and pay close attention to the news. Also remember to get a 18-25 railcard as it provides a discount that is dearly needed – trains are expensive!

Air travel is a lot cheaper than Asia, with prices going as low as a few pounds for a one-way flight on budget airlines like Ryanair. That said, anything extra costs money so it is good practice to compare prices with all extras added.

## Climate

West Midlands climate is honestly not the best there is. It was comfy at the beginning around September, but by November it is cloudy half the time. It also rains a lot during the winter, which is bearable until the temperature drops to around/below zero. You'll need heattech undergarments. Also, as a side note, it is not common for people in the UK to use umbrellas, simply because the wind + rain makes them pretty useless. Raincoats or water resistant jackets are absolutely needed.

## Communication

I got a PAYG (Pay-As-You-Go) plan from Voxi on discount, which was I think 75GB per month (w/ unlimited social media and video data) for 15 pounds. It was an excellent deal and the service was pretty good. After Brexit, I think only giffgaff have free Europe roaming data left on their plan, but giffgaff was known to have pretty bad reception in major cities, same goes for Three. When you travel to Europe, you'll need to pay or a pass on Voxi, which was about a pound a day, and has a 20GB limit – you'll definitely survive with 20GB.

## Cautionary Measures

Always look after your belongings and pay attention to your own safety, no matter where you are. Hong Kong is truly among the safest places on Earth and sometimes you forget that it isn't the same across the globe. I kept getting asked by friends in Hong Kong if I was stabbed yet and even though it is a joke, violent crimes occur way more frequently than in Hong Kong (shocking isn't it?). It is the same when you go on trips to Europe/Africa. France in particular you'll have to pay very close attention. My friend who visited Paris had his phone stolen, while another witnessed a robbery right in front of her eyes. Now that does not mean Paris is dangerous – I was there and I came back just fine. You'll just have to take extra care of yourself and your valuables.

Also, always remember to budget your trips before you go onto them. Spendings can get out of hand very quickly. Always look for travelers passes and discounts if you are visiting other countries, most countries should have them readily available for visitors.

Scam/con artists are also very prevalent, not just in mainland Europe but any tourist spots in the UK as well. Always think twice about betting for anything on the streets.

## Other Notes

Transcript will be given out on Gradintelligence after the end of semester, so pay close attention to emails from Warwick even after you've come back to Hong Kong.

As a student, you are eligible for Unidays discount and 6 months of free Amazon Prime – they are lifesavers and helped me save a ton of expenses!

### iii. Items To Bring

Get yourself a reusable bag for grocery shopping.

Take a look at places you might want to travel to and their climate – it can differ very greatly from the UK, for example the Mediterranean.

Raincoats or water resistant jackets are absolutely needed.

Don't forget to bring heattech undergarments! You will find out the hard way if you don't.

Bring some medicine over from Hong Kong just in case.

Passport, cash, credits cards, the usual.

### iv. Useful Links and Contacts

University of Warwick Accommodation: <https://www.accommodation.warwick.ac.uk>

Warwick Business School Study abroad Team: <https://warwick.ac.uk/study/studyabroad/>

Warwick Business School Contact: <https://www.wbs.ac.uk/contact/>

Warwick Interactive Campus Map: <https://warwick.ac.uk/about/visiting/maps/interactive/>

Your on-campus address for deliveries<sup>^</sup>: <https://postroom.warwick.ac.uk/my-address/>

(<sup>^</sup>accessible once you have your student account set up)