

Exchange Report

Monash University, Australia



2022-2023 Fall
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Part 1 – Monthly Activity Log

July 2022

Although the school year officially starts in early august, I arrived in Melbourne in early July, since there was an orientation session in mid-July, while I gave myself some extra time to settle in and briefly explore the surroundings of where I was staying at. I opted to rent an apartment instead of staying in student accommodations offered by Monash, as the cost for the two types of accommodations were similar, while the student accommodation was located at the Clayton campus, which without a car, is quite inconvenient to navigate around. Monash abroad held an orientation for all exchange students, where we met new friends and learned more about Monash, including the facilities, course registration, and accessing course materials through Moodle. With the amount of free time I had, I walked around the city of Melbourne, exploring different attractions such as the Flinders Street station, State Library Victoria, the Royal Botanical Gardens and watched a bit of footy at the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG).



August 2022

In August, I went on a tour to visit the Great Ocean Road. I would recommend visiting there if you have not been to it before, as the views were amazing. I also spent some time hopping around cafes and coffee shops, as Melbourne is famous for its coffee culture. I was excited to start the semester, especially meeting classmates and professors from diverse cultural backgrounds. Towards the latter part of August, Monash held a carnival, ON CAMPUS! It was fascinating for me to experience authentic food, music, and rides (A FERRIS WHEEL) set up on campus for us to enjoy a night with friends and family!! As it was nearing the end of the winter season in Australia, I also visited Mount Buller, where I had my first-ever snowboarding experience!



September 2022

In September, I joined 3 tours offered by Monash in partnership with Discover Melbourne, which allowed me to explore more unique parts of Melbourne. The first tour I joined was a tour to Philip Island, in which I had a chance to enjoy amazing views of the sea with a penguin parade to end such an amazing day. The second tour I joined was a tour visiting Werribee zoo, in which I got to visit animals in an open-range environment. Lastly, I joined the Walhalla historical gold mining tour where I visited underground mines and experienced the unique walk through the gold mining town while ending the day with a Goldfield Train Ride from Thomson River to Walhalla. I would recommend joining these tours offered by Monash, especially when it is FREE!



October 2022

Before the final examination period, and the hectic deadlines fast approaching at the end of October, I went on a 6-day trip to Sydney.

During the trip, I visited famous attractions such as the Sydney Opera House, fireworks at Darling Harbour, Scenic railways exploring the Blue Mountains, and the Sydney Fish Market for amazing and fresh seafood! This trip was great to relieve some stress before the final push! After the trip to Sydney, the rest of the time was mostly spent on completing assignments and preparing for the final examinations in late October and early November.

November 2022

After submitting all my assignments and completing all examinations, I went on a 9-day trip to visit Cairns, Brisbane, and Gold Coast. This trip challenged me in the sense that I tried activities that were outside my comfort zone. I tried snorkeling and scuba diving at the Great Barrier Reef. I also conquered my fears and attempted skydiving in Gold Coast. I also had many other memorable experiences such as patting a koala, feeding kangaroos, enjoying night views of Brisbane at Mount Coot-Tha, and having fun at Sea World, Warner Bros. Movie World, and Wet'n'Wild water park at Gold Coast. After the trip, I spent my final 2 weeks exploring and relaxing in Melbourne before flying back to Hong Kong,



Part 2 – General Study Abroad Information

1) Visa Application

- The procedures were straightforward. Applications are submitted online with the following required documents: Confirmation of Enrolment (COE), Certificate of Insurance, Overseas Health Cover (OSHC), Passport, Biometric submission, and a Body Check. I hold a Hong Kong passport, and the visa fees were around HKD 3,300. The “Student (Subclass 500) visa” should cover around half a year of your stay.
- COE – Issued by Monash
- OSHC – This is insurance required by Monash, which costs around AUD 423 and is different from the one covered by HKUST.
- Biometric submission and Body check – This is done at Biometric Centres and medical centres physically. Bookings are required.

2) Orientation Activities

- Orientation by Monash Abroad is mandatory and occurs 2 weeks before the start of the semester. It is more like a factual information session introducing Monash and relevant details rather than an orientation for you to meet people.

3) International Services & Activities

- Airport pick-up services – Monash offers airport pickup services to student accommodation at the Clayton campus. Booking is required at least three days before the date of arrival.
- Monash Student Association (MSA) offers voluntary activities for exchange students during orientation week, including visits to the Queen Victoria night market, and Royal Botanical Gardens + Southbank. They also organize a range of events before the start of the semester: Bowling night, City Scavenger Night, Moonlight Cinema, etc.
- Monash Overseas and Exchange Club (MOVE) organizes a Buddy Program, which pairs 2-3 exchange students with local students, socializing and enjoying different activities together.

4) Accommodations

- On-campus student accommodation is available and provided for exchange students at the Clayton and Peninsula campus. Depending on the type of room offered, the cost may differ slightly. The average weekly cost is around AUD 264 all-inclusive. Application is done online and processed by the Monash Residential Services (MRS) office. I opted to rent an apartment near the city with a friend, which costs around AUD 260 all-inclusive (wifi, electricity, water).

5) Courses Registration

- Conduct online research for the courses offered by Monash. Note that courses are offered at different campuses and that some may not be opened for exchange students due to having prerequisites. The course

syllabus is NOT provided online, therefore, email the Chief Examiner if you need the syllabus for credit transfer purposes.

- You will indicate your interest in specific courses when accepting the offer from Monash. Depending on availability, 3 or 4 courses will be allocated to you. To make changes to the timetable, this can be done through a system called Allocate+ Student Monash, where you can also view your examination schedule at a later date. To add or drop courses, exchange students must email Monash Abroad, which without a clash in the timetable, is relatively easy to add/drop the courses you want.

6) Teaching & Assessment Methods

- Depending on your courses, a class may be offered fully face-to-face, fully online, or in mixed mode. Tutorials are mostly held in person and are in groups of around 20 students. Most tutorials are discussion-based and required active participation from students. Lectures are mostly one-way, with some courses having pre-recorded lectures. Assessments may include essay submissions, final examinations, class participation, short quizzes, etc.

7) Finance & Banking

- It is suggested to open a bank account upon arrival (CommBank recommended), as most payments are made on cards in Australia, making it more convenient. One thing to note is that prices in Australia are relatively high, with an average weekly expense of around AUD 400.

8) Climate

- Melbourne is known for experiencing “four seasons in one day”. Climate and temperature can change drastically in Melbourne within a day, so it is important to always have a sweater with you when going out. Heavy rain does not occur that often.

9) Health & Safety

- Melbourne is generally quite safe, the OSHC from Monash and insurance from HKUST should be enough.

10) Food

- Melbourne is famous for its coffee and cafes, it is a must to hop around different coffee shops and cafés in the city. On-campus options (Clayton campus) are quite good, however, the prices are also slightly higher. Large grocery stores such as Woolworths and Coles offer affordable pre-prep food to consume. The quality is quite good with the price.

11) Transportation

- Public transport: Trams (Only tap on), Train and Bus (Tap on and off).
- Payment done through Myki Card.
- Trams are free within the city, not needed to tap on!

- Remember to apply for a concession Myki card, it costs 50% less than the adult fare. Get a form on WES and submit at a Public Transport Victoria (PTV) hub.
- Monash offers free inter-campus shuttle bus services.

12) Communication

- Telegram, WhatsApp, Facebook, and messages are common tools for communication. Optus' Prepaid Mobile Sim plan is really good and convenient, providing you with easy top-up options for data, and an allocated mobile number! Having a mobile number is a MUST! It makes your life easier in Australia.

13) Sports & Recreational Facilities

- Access to facilities requires bookings and payments through Monash Sports (this is separate from Monash Sports membership). Membership for Monash Sports costs AUD 249 per semester, which allows you to access the Fitness centre, Group fitness classes, and the pool, spa, steam room, and sauna at Caulfield, Clayton, and Peninsula Campus.

14) Social Clubs & Networking Opportunities

- During orientation week, clubs will recruit members to join them on campus, be sure to check them out!

15) Cautionary Measures

- Aussies love to have a joke, and at times it may feel uncomfortable. Just remember it is not personal and that is just a part of the Australian Culture! Wear SUNSCREEN at ALL TIMES!

Part 3 – Items to Bring

To prepare for your flight and enter Australia, it is recommended to print the following items:

- Passport
- Confirmation Of Enrolment from Monash
- IMMI Grant Notification (VISA)
- HKUST Academic Transcript
- Vaccination Records (Covid-19)
- Overseas Health Insurance (Monash)

For general clothing, towels, showering, etc. Many of the items can be bought in Australia. However, it may cost quite a bit, so it is recommended to bring items you already own in your luggage, especially a few Universal plugs. REMEMBER to always have a jacket in your bag!

Part 4 – Useful Links and Contacts

Monash Course Information:

<https://handbook.monash.edu/search>

Monash Residential Service – Student Accommodation:

mrs.applications@monash.edu

<https://www.monash.edu/accommodation>

Monash Abroad Email (Add/drop courses and general enquiries):

monashabroad.inboundstudents@monash.edu

Allocate+ - Timetable and Examination schedule:

<https://www.monash.edu/students/admin/timetables/allocate/login>

Web Enrolment System (WES) – Update personal information, access to concession form:

<https://my.monash.edu.au/wes/>

Monash Moodle - Access course material:

<https://lms.monash.edu/my/>

Overview of Events/Tours offered by Monash:

<https://www.monash.edu/students/support/international/events>

Monash Sports:

<https://www.monash.edu/sport>

Monash Clubs Overview:

Caulfield campus - <https://www.monsu.org/clubs/>

Clayton campus - <https://clubs.msa.monash.edu/joinnow/clubs-and-societies/>

Peninsula campus - <https://www.monsupeninsula.org.au/clubs/>