

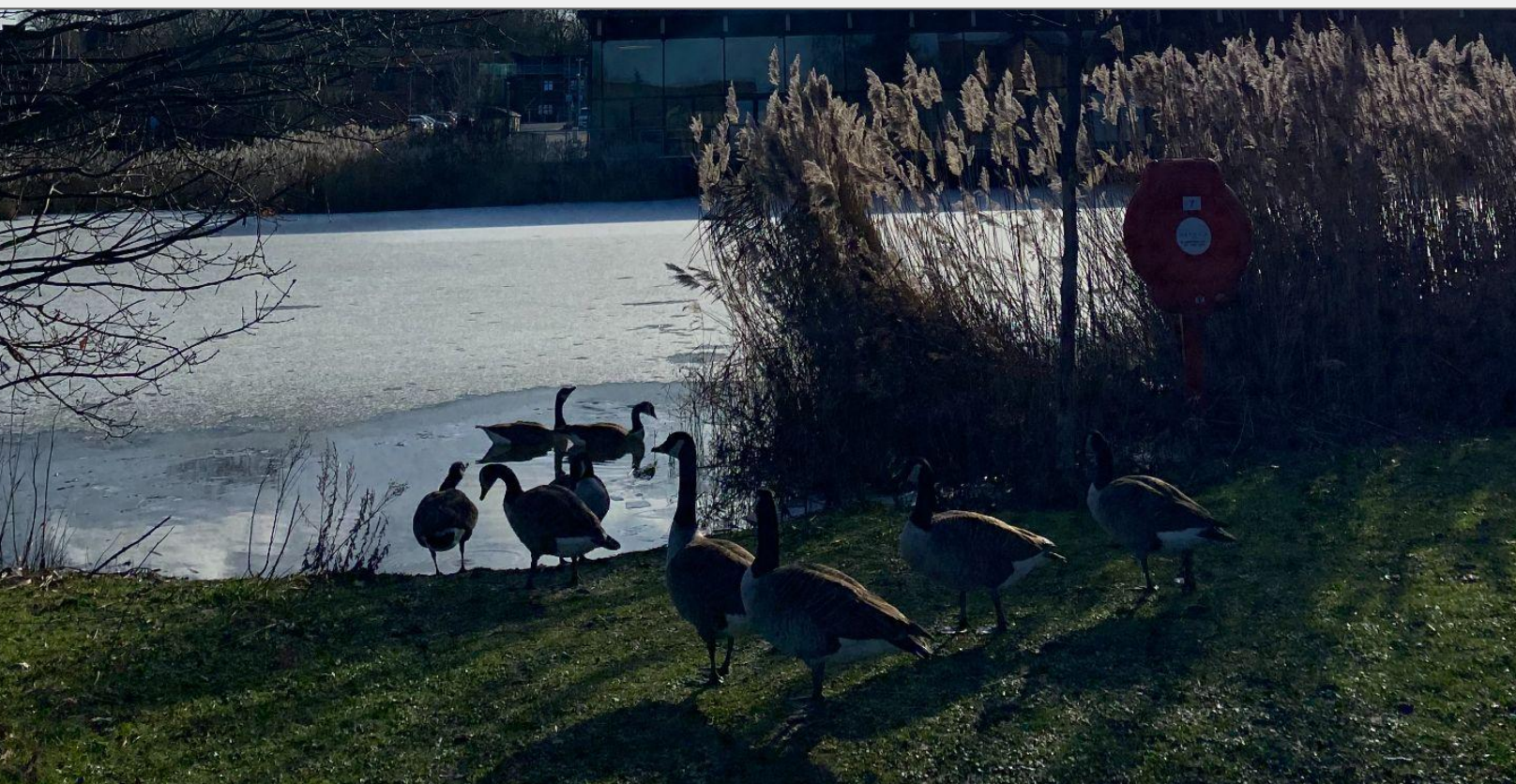


Exchange Report Spring 2023



Warwick Business School, University of Warwick
United Kingdom

BANSAL, Adhya



Study Abroad Experience – Monthly Activity Log:

January:

I moved to the UK for my exchange semester and lived in the Sherbourne Halls of Residence in early January. It is in Lakeside Village, just a short walk away from the Warwick Business School. I attended an exchange student orientation session on the 9th and spent my first month exploring campus and Leamington Spa, becoming a member of the Raising and Giving (RAG) society, and attending various social events and house gatherings with friends and flatmates. I also celebrated Chinese New Year in Birmingham with other exchange students from Hong Kong.



February:

In February, I attended various events in Leamington Spa and Coventry with my flatmates and friends. I also took a trip down to London to visit some primary school friends and explore its tourist spots, including Chinatown. Additionally, a high school friend from London came up to visit me. To stay in shape, I purchased a gym membership and went with two of my flatmates several times a week, which was enjoyable and easy to schedule since we lived together.



March:

March was a busy month with deadlines and exams at the beginning, but I managed to have fun on an overnight trip to Liverpool with friends and experience my first snowfall and Holi celebration. I also had lunch with all the HKUST exchange students as a nice end to the term. I then flew to Portugal to see and celebrate a HKUST friend's birthday and visit other cities in the France and Switzerland.



April:

In April, I returned to Warwick and caught up with friends before traveling to London and Nottingham. I then flew to Italy and Spain, visiting Milan, Madrid, and Barcelona. Despite having three essays due, I managed to complete them during my travels. I also visited Rotterdam, Amsterdam, and Groningen to meet up with friends. It was a busy and productive month filled with new experiences and great memories.

**May:**

May was a month of travel and celebration. I visited Nice, Monaco, and Malta with friends, learning about the history and culture of each place. Back home, I celebrated a friend's birthday before exploring Leamington Spa and London with a friend from Groningen. I also spent time on the Warwick campus, enjoying the outdoors. Overall, May was a month filled with new experiences and cherished memories with friends.

**June:**

June was a bittersweet month as I said goodbye to friends and flatmates and reflected on my exchange experience. I watched a beautiful sunset on my last day and felt grateful for the memories and lessons learned. On June 5th, I flew back home from Heathrow, cherishing the experiences I had gained during my time abroad.

General Study Abroad Information:

Visa Procedures:

If you are a Hong Kong passport holder, you do not need to apply for a visa to study in the UK for up to six months. However, you will need to provide a few documents to enter the country. These include your passport, a letter of acceptance from Warwick and a short-term study visa letter, which you can email Warwick to request. Additionally, you will need to provide a bank statement that shows you have sufficient funds to support yourself during your exchange and proof of your return flight.

If you plan to travel outside of the UK during your exchange, it's important to check the visa requirements for the countries you plan to visit. While you may not need a visa to travel out of the UK due to your passport, you may need a Schengen visa to enter certain countries in the EU.

I would recommend doing this quiz: <https://www.gov.uk/check-uk-visa> to check if you need a visa for your specific situation.

Orientation Activities:

Orientation activities for exchange students at Warwick were limited in Spring to a general induction session that explained the module selection process and expectations for the semester. Each student was assigned a personal tutor who was approachable and helpful, ensuring that students had the support they needed. The personal tutor was available for students to speak to at the beginning and end of the exchange term. This provided a great opportunity for students to get to know someone at the university who could answer their questions and offer support during their time abroad.

Accommodation:

Accommodation at Warwick is chosen by students through the university's accommodation portal. Students can select their preferences for where they want to live, what kind of flatmates they want, and more. Prices vary based on the type of accommodation selected. For more information on accommodation options at Warwick, please visit: <https://warwick.ac.uk/services/accommodation/>

I had a great experience living in Sherbourne at Warwick. I lived in an ensuite room and shared a kitchen with 12 incredible flatmates. The location was convenient for me, as it was only a 5-minute walk from Warwick Business School and 8 minutes from the library. Although the nearest Tesco was a 20-minute walk away, I found that using the rental bike stands made commuting around campus much easier and faster. You can find more information here: <https://beryl.cc/scheme/west-midlands>

Courses Registration:

Course registration started in early December of 2022. WBS keeps its module selection and everything else on its own portal, so it's important to keep track of deadlines and requirements. The undergraduate team sent an email with the module handbook, which I then had to map back to HKUST courses to fulfil my graduation requirements. It's crucial to do this before leaving for exchange to ensure that you don't end up taking courses that won't transfer back as credits.

I took an unusual option module (LL1A3) for my French module as it was not taught by WBS but by the School of Modern Languages. To enrol in this course, I had to seek WBS and the course teacher's permission. Information on this module was covered in the exchange student session held on the first day of school. There is no waiting list system, and the add and drop period lasts until the end of January. During my exchange, I took five courses:

- IB3L80 Digital Innovation Project
- IB3H80 Leadership
- IB3E60 Ethical Issue & Social Responsibility in Contemporary Business
- IB2B60 Marketing Research
- LL1A3 Introduction to French Language

Teaching & Assessment Methods:

During my exchange program at Warwick, I applied for both Spring and Summer terms, which started in early January and ended in late June. The Spring term finished in mid-March, followed by a 5-week holiday, before returning for the summer term, which included tutorials, classes, and exams. Each module had a different assessment method, ranging from essays and exams to group projects. For example, Introduction to French Language had a mandatory 3-hour class once a week, while Digital Innovation Project and Ethical Issues & Social Responsibility in Contemporary Business had group projects and essays. Leadership involved weekly journal entries and a 3,000-word essay, while Marketing Research had a group project and an online exam - which allowed me to do this exam in Hong Kong. WBS held all classes in-person with mandatory attendance for seminars, and lectures happening once a week for an hour.

Sports & Recreation Facilities:

For gym enthusiasts, Warwick offers a professional gym that requires a paid membership. The gym has over 200 fitness stations for cardio, resistance, and functional training. You can also join sports societies as well as dedicated strength training areas and lighter weights zones. Additionally, the Sports and Wellness Hub at Warwick offers swimming pools and fitness classes. For recreational activities, the campus provides a nice road surface and wooded areas that are great for running and exploring. Moreover, Warwick has a wide range of societies that cater to different interests, such as the bubble tea society, and has the most societies of all UK universities.

Finance & Banking:

Before I left Hong Kong, I opened a HSBC UK Account. I found this very convenient as I already had an account with them in Hong Kong. This allowed me to use their app and services easily, and I had a Visa Debit card with contactless functionality. I also used a credit card from Citibank when travelling outside of the UK, but my payments were counted in HKD with the exchange rate applied.

Throughout my trips, I found that contactless payment was widely accepted in almost all the countries I visited, and I used it for about 98% of my transactions. In the UK, contactless services are ubiquitous, with most stores and transport relying on a cashless economy. Other options that were recommended to me include Monzo and Revolut, although I was not able to get a Revolut account since the company does not allow people with short-term visas to use their services. Nonetheless, it's always a good idea to carry some of the local currency in case of any issues with the cards you are using.

Social Clubs & Networking Opportunities:

Warwick has a wide range of societies that you can choose from, no matter what your interest is. You can truly find anything that interests you. For more information, look through this link:

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

When it comes to networking opportunities, there are some societies that hold events, such as the Warwick Finance Society, allowing students to network with industry professionals in London's Shard. These are all advertised on the society's Instagram page so be sure to stay on the lookout for them.

Health & Safety:

In terms of health and safety while at Warwick, there are several things to keep in mind. Firstly, medication was readily available over the counter at drug stores, as well as at the on-campus Warwick Medical Centre.

When it comes to safety in the surrounding areas, Leamington Spa is generally considered to be safer than Coventry. This is because most students live in Leamington Spa. However, it's still important to exercise caution, especially at night. It's recommended to stick to groups and avoid going down alleyways alone.

If you need to travel at night or when public transport is not available, Uber and Bolt are safe options. Although, I would still say that taking the bus is the safest option as there will always be other students on board.

Food:

There are plenty of on-campus restaurants to choose from. While the food is decent, it can be quite pricey compared to prices in Hong Kong. As a result, many students opt to cook their own meals. You can find more information about them here: <https://warwick.ac.uk/services/retail/eat-drink/>

Grocery shopping can be done at several places, including the Cannon Park Shopping Centre, which has Aldi, Tesco, and an Iceland. The on-campus grocery store, Rootes, is also an option, but it can be a bit more expensive than shopping off-campus. In my flat, we would each have our own shelf in the fridge and freezer, and we each had a cupboard, shelf, and drawer for utensils. However, there were times when I wanted to treat myself to a meal out occasionally and so, Coventry and Leamington Spa have plenty of dining options to choose from. In addition to the on-campus restaurants and grocery stores, Warwick also has food trucks that park in the Piazza every Wednesday too. More information on that here: <https://warwick.ac.uk/services/retail/foodmarket/>

Transportation:

The Interchange is a central hub for buses, with routes that can take you to Coventry or Leamington Spa in just 20 minutes. The 11 or 12X buses go to Coventry, including the railway station, while the U1, U2, and U1A buses go towards Leamington Spa. For bus transportation, the Stagecoach app can be helpful in checking bus routes and schedules.

For those looking to save money on transportation, getting a railcard is a good option. The 16-25 railcard is available to students for £30 and offers a 33% discount on all train tickets. Trains connect to many destinations, including London and Birmingham. To purchase a railcard, apps like Train Pal or Trainline can be used.

For those looking to travel by air, Birmingham Airport is the most convenient option, as it is only 20 minutes away by car. While London may offer cheaper flights, it's worth considering the additional travel time and cost associated with getting to and from London by train or coach.

Climate:

The weather in Warwick can be quite unpredictable, but overall, there is more sun than one might expect. However, it's important to be prepared for a range of temperatures and conditions throughout the year. In January, it was quite cold so it's important to have down jackets, thick woolly jumpers, and thin sweaters. If it's raining, it's important to have a jacket with a hood to keep yourself dry. The weather does get warmer in April, May, and June, but it's always wise to be prepared for cooler temperatures. Bringing a mix of clothing options is a good idea, as well as being able to purchase additional items while in Warwick. This will ensure that you're prepared for any weather conditions you may encounter.

Communication:

I chose to use a pay-as-you-go SIM from Three. I loved its GoRoam option, which allowed me to use my phone abroad across all my trips. I would recommend it.

Cautionary measures:

It is essential to stay alert and keep your belongings close. Budgeting effectively can help you avoid unexpected expenses and overspending. Being responsible and representing HKUST positively is crucial. By following these measures, you can make the most of your exchange experience and stay safe while doing so.

Other notes (if applicable):

I want to finish my report by saying that these five months were some of the best times I had! Please do things outside of your comfort zone and have fun with it. Meet new people, make those new memories, and have fun! I hope you to look as fondly as I am right now at each memory. Enjoy <3

Items to bring:

- Passport and other identity documents
- Currency and Credit/Debit Cards
- Toiletries
- Clothes, Jumpers, Shoes
- Electronic Devices and Chargers
- Medicine
- Notebook and Stationery

Useful Links and Contacts:

WBS Portal: <https://my.wbs.ac.uk/>

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

WBS Study Abroad: <https://www.wbs.ac.uk/courses/undergraduate/exchange-students/>

Links for International Students: <https://warwick.ac.uk/students/welcome/internationalstudents/links/>