

January –

April 2023

Spring Sem



Uppsala University (Sweden) Exchange Report

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BBA (IS & ACCT)

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Monthly Activity Log

December

Due to the newly implemented rule by the Swedish Migration Agency, which was the passport checking procedure before granting us the residence permit if it is the first time applying, my friends and I decided to go to Sweden for passport checking. We entered Sweden on 26/12/2022 using our visa-free status since HK passport holders can stay in Schengen Area for 90 days within 180 days. After undergoing the passport checking procedure in Vasteras, we went to Prague, Vienna, Budapest, Salzburg, and Munich for a 2-week trip.



January

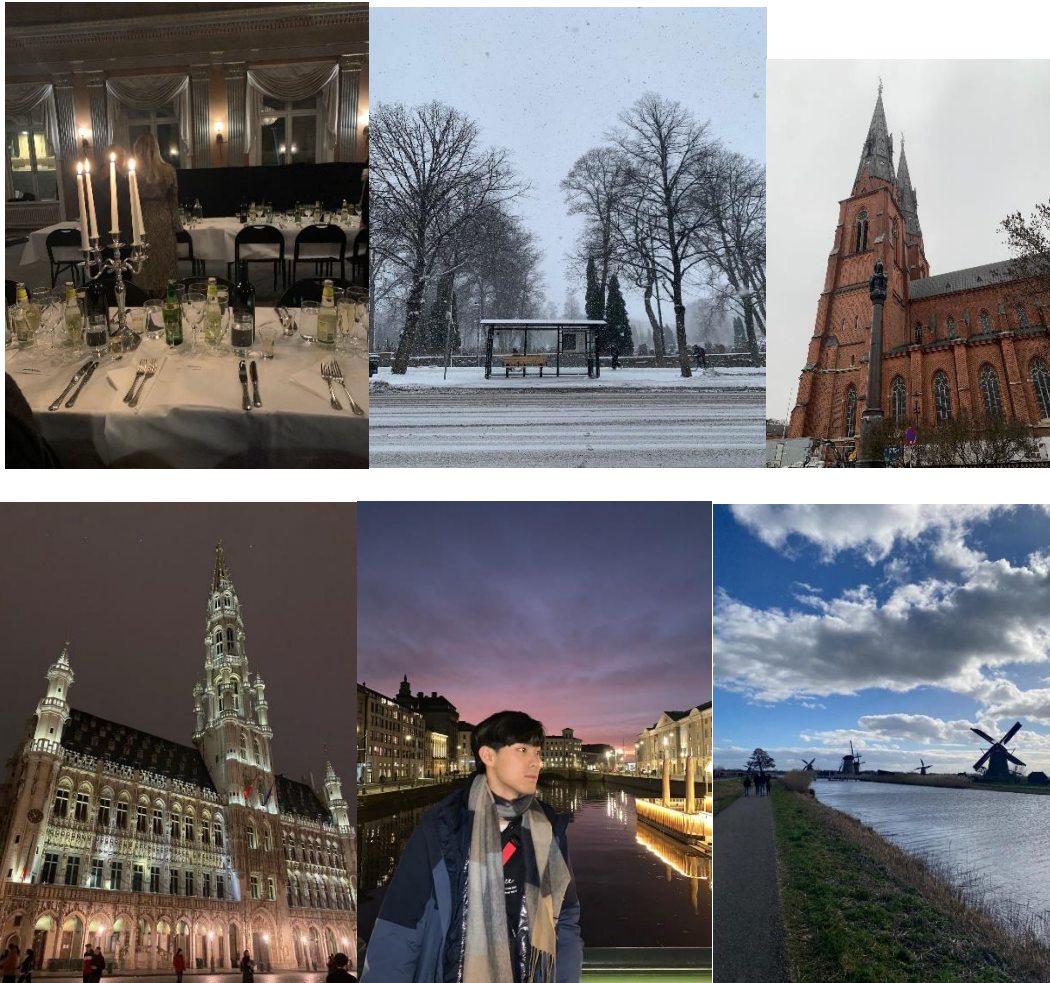
Unfortunately, I still hadn't received the granted residence permit before the commencement of the semester. Usually the previous Friday of the beginning of the semester is the recommended arrival date of Uppsala University and I returned to Sweden on that day. I got the key from the landlord and checked in to the student dormitory, where I lived in Flogsta. There was an individual washroom and a spacious closet in the room. The size of the room was more or less the same as the double room dormitory in HKUST, but just for one person. After that, I went to Ikea and the supermarket to buy daily necessities and food. And it's time for school. It took around 20-25 minutes from my dormitory to the business school of Uppsala University. Besides attending lectures, I also walked around the town, went to some Japanese restaurants for ramen and sushi, went to Asian markets to buy rice and mixian to heal my homesickness.



February

I joined Stockholm Nation, which was one of the student societies for networking and getting to know more people. Being a member of nations, I could go to their cafe for food at a cheaper price given that eating outside in Sweden was quite expensive. Moreover, I could go to their student club for free and party all night long. Indeed, I tried my first clubbing experience in Uppsala, which was so amazing. Also, I joined the Homecoming Weeks, which was a series of orientation activities hosted by the Business Student Union. The first event I joined was the bar night. We went to a famous bar in Uppsala, having shots and chatting with each other. The second event I joined was the final banquet. We had an astonishing night, starting with a traditional Swedish dinner, followed by lots of singing and dancing.

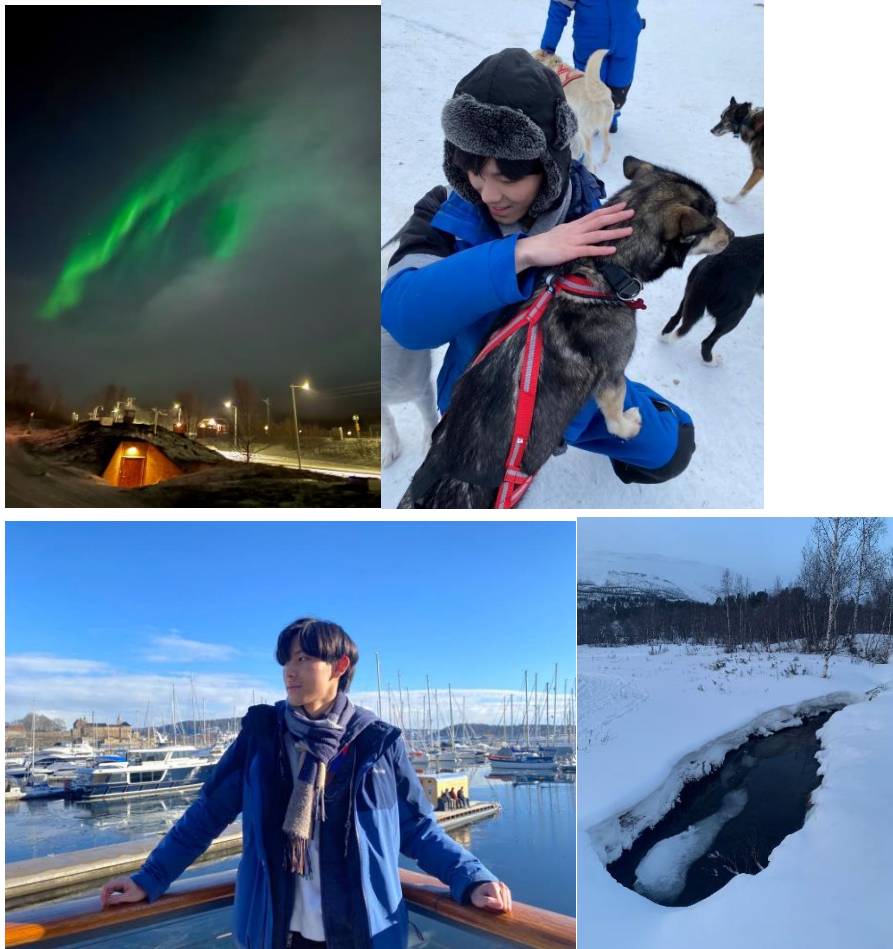
I also travelled to Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands with my friend. I like Brugge and Rotterdam. The architecture in Rotterdam is novel while Kinderdijk, which is located near Rotterdam, still preserves its iconic 18th-century windmills.



March

The long-awaited aurora trip happened in March. We used the cheapest way heading to Abisko, our destination for aurora, which is taking a 16-hour train and spending one night on a triple bunk bed. Unfortunately, we couldn't see aurora light on the first night since the weather was extremely windy and cloudy. Even the tour had to be cancelled. On the second night, the weather was still bad, yet we could finally witness aurora light, which enthused us on a cold night. Moreover, we went to Abisko National Park for sightseeing and played husky sledding. Huskies are born for running and they are so energetic and affectionate. This experience was definitely worth the price. After this trip, I started preparing for the final examination and final assignment. The exam was about writing a couple of short essays and the assignment was about a report of organizational change. Then, the most miserable thing of my exchange journey happened – my application for residence permit was

still pending. It implied that I could no longer stay in Sweden and I had to leave the Schengen area. Therefore, I went to the United Kingdom, planning to wait in the UK until I get the residence permit and return to Sweden for studying.



April

I lived in the UK for one month, hoping that I could get the residence permit soon. I went to Edinburgh to visit my friend and then stayed in London for 3 weeks. Unfortunately, on 17th April 2023, I received the decision of rejection on my application since my remaining study period is less than 3 months, which is the minimum period for granting a residence permit. I immediately contacted the Swedish Embassy in London and I was kindly advised by the consulate officer that I can apply for a student visa instead of a residence permit because my remaining study period is less than 3 months. However, I failed to apply for the student visa as the staff claimed that they could not handle the application because there is no student visa option for people holding Hong Kong passport in their system.

Knowing that I had no chance to return to Sweden for studying, I started my last trip in Europe going to Bath, Cambridge and Brighton. I loved all these cities as they marked the end of my exchange journey.



General Study Abroad Information

Visa procedures

Starting from 1st November 2022, people who are first-time applying for residence permit are required to show their passports to the Swedish Consulate General/ Embassy before the application gets approved. Swedish Consulate General in HK doesn't provide visa service anymore so you can only go to the Consulate General in Beijing or Shanghai for passport checking. Do this in advance and make sure you get the residence permit before setting off to Sweden. Even if u don't, make sure you get the residence permit before 3 months of the end of the semester. Otherwise, your application will get rejected just like mine. And the predicted time to a decision is around 4 months so get things done as soon as possible.

Orientation Activities

Orientation Activities would be organised by the Business Student Union. There would be a couple of activities, including party night, bar night and banquet in the first few weeks. So remember to join if you are interested.

International Services & Activities

Pick-up service would be provided on the recommended arrival date of school. On that day, you can take the coach from Arlanda Airport to campus for free and finish those orientation procedures.

Accommodations

Uppsala University Housing Office provides quite a number of choices of student dormitories. Ranging from 2 people sharing 1 kitchen to 1 corridor which consists of 10-12 rooms sharing 1 kitchen, rent varies. Therefore, you can choose whatever type of room you like. You will receive an email from the housing office around 2 months before. Submit your application and you will get a housing offer within 3 weeks.

Courses Registration

You will also receive the course registration link around 2 months before. Follow the link and read through the course details. Remember to submit your registration before the deadline and not select credits that exceed the credit limit since the calculation method of credit is different between HK and Sweden.

Teaching & Assessment Methods

Classes usually consist of 30-40 people while some less popular classes only have 10 people. Classes are divided into 2 parts, lecture and seminar. Lecture for teaching and seminar for presentation and open discussion. All kinds of discussion are encouraged in seminars so don't be afraid to share your thoughts. Usually we have to submit one report or assignment per week so the workload isn't as small as expected.

Finance & Banking

In general Sweden is a cash-free country. You can pay with cards anywhere so just apply for a Visa/ MasterCard. My rent is about 3400 HKD per month, which is the cheapest amongst all dormitory choices. Prices of goods in supermarkets are more or less the same as those in HK so don't worry too much.

Climate

Winter is the only season I lived in Sweden. Winter in Sweden is much colder than in HK. Wear gloves, scarf, heattech, down coat and whatever which could keep you warm. Daytime in winter is quite short, in which you can expect sunset starts from around 3 pm and it is completely dark at 5 pm.

Health & Safety

Uppsala is a safe town; the crime rate is low. Just remember that drinking in public areas is prohibited.

Food

Dining out is quite costly in Sweden so I prefer cooking at the hall. You can simply buy all the common food and ingredients from nearby Ica, Willys and Coop (common supermarkets in Sweden). Moreover, you can go to Asian markets located at the Uppsala centrum to buy Asian food and seasonings. There are also some Thai and Japanese restaurants in the town, but I would say the taste is quite different from those in HK. Therefore, cooking is still my first preference when living in the dormitory.

Transportation

Bus is the only public transportation in Uppsala. You can purchase a monthly student ticket after receiving the student card which presents a UL logo on it, which costs around 450 HKD per month. You can also take the UL bus from Uppsala to Arlanda Airport in Stockholm. If you want to go to Stockholm, you can take the train from Uppsala centrum. Nearly all transportation in Sweden has a student discount.

Communication

No worries, you can easily understand English spoken by most of the Swedish. They are friendly and very willing to communicate with foreigners. Comviq is a common telecommunication company in Sweden. You can simply buy the sim card in a convenience store and buy your data plan through its apps, which require real-name verification. 20GB per month costs about 180 HKD.

Sports & Recreation Facilities

You can go to Campus 1477 in the campus for gym and doing sports, which provides a variety of sports facilities.

Social Clubs & Networking Opportunities

There are 13 student nations at Uppsala University, each with its own character and traditions. These nations function as social clubs, providing opportunities for us to meet new friends and attend events. You can participate in events of all the nations after becoming a member of one of the nations. Basically there is a clubbing night every day, hosted by different nations. Moreover, you can work in the Nation, earning salary and meeting new friends at the same time.

Cautionary measures

Be careful when traveling in Europe, where thieves and robbery is pretty common. Always look around if there are suspicious people beside you. Also, be careful when you try to withdraw cash from an ATM. Always use an ATM with a well-known bank logo.

Items to Bring

Passport, HKID, Acceptance letter, residence permit

Cash and credit cards

Travel adapter

Router

Laptop, tablet

Phone and charger

Clothing (gloves, scarf, heattech, down coat, hat)

Snow boots

Personal Medicine

Spare phone

Useful Links and Contacts

A. Migrationsverket (Swedish Migration

Agency) <https://www.migrationsverket.se/English/Private-individuals/Studying-inSweden.html>

B. Uppsala University Housing Office <http://housingoffice.se>

C. Course Catalog <http://fek.uu.se/student-en/incoming-exchange-students/courses/>

D. Transportation in Uppsala: UL <https://www.ul.se/en>

E. Transportation in Sweden (Train): SJ <https://www.sj.se/en>

F. Student Nations http://www.uu.se/en/admissions/student-life/the_student_nations/

G. International Mobility Office - Incoming exchange Email: incoming@fek.uu.se Tel: +46(0)18-471 1407 (EU, EES) or +46(0)18-4716801 (Non-EU)