

Exchange Report

Lund University, Sweden

School of Economics and Management (LUSEM)

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--***“Be true, be naïve”***--

Many many thanks to all of you here.

Each and every one of you made my exchange complete & unique,
bringing countless memories into my life in Sweden.

I couldn't ask for more on this journey. 🇸🇪

Monthly Activity Log

December 2022

December was such a mess due to the new rules of passport checking for the residence permit. Even the Swedish officials themselves were puzzled and provide ambiguous instructions for the matter. The risk of not being granted the permit grew, putting many of us in a very tough spot. Eventually I stood firm in my determination to embark on this journey, and the experience and the friendships I made along the way left me with absolutely no regrets. The valuable outcome justified any obstacles in navigating the preparatory process.

January 2023

I arrived in Lund on the 14th January. The official arrival day was 9th January, so I missed a few of the orientation activities. Luckily, I did not miss the party night for exchange students where I met the people who became the essence of my exchange. Lund university offered exchange students loads of opportunities to connect with other internationals, such as ‘board games nights’, ‘Taste of Sweden’, ‘Pizza party’, ‘Pub night’ and so on. Both Lund Ekonomerna Student Union and Lund University hosted “Buddies Program” to pair us up with senior local students for catch-up activities, like treasure hunting, city & school tour, mingling events. I had lots of fun there.



Because the semester started in February, I had plenty of time to explore the city with my new friends. I spent some time wandering around town, exploring shops, school buildings, and museums. The good transportation network in Lund makes commuting easy and comfy but it's wiser to acquire a second-hand bike considering the ticket price. I bought my bike, 'Pink Warrior', from a Facebook group called "Sell & buy stuff in Lund" and he has been a great companion throughout the exchange period! I also took a day trip to Malmo and discovered one of the best ramen restaurants I've ever had!



Winter sports are popular here. Lund government set up a cute ice-skating rink in the city, with no entry fee and shoe-borrowing fee. Since then, ice-skating and having group dinner or "Fika" time became our daily routine until the rink was removed in spring. We also organized bike tours ourselves to visit around the city. I highly recommend cycling around cities whenever possible! One of memorable moments to highlight was the hotpot night together with all exchange students from Hong Kong to celebrate Lunar New Year. We had a total of 22 people but only with one pot ... so we had to rotate in groups to use the pot haha.



At the end of January, I decided to have a 5-days trip to Edinburgh and London since I didn't take the SUS course (introduction course of Swedish Language for exchange student) like others. Edinburgh's rich historical heritage was on full display as I wandered its medieval streets, and I found the experience deeply enriching. Edinburgh Castle, Calton Hill and Harry Potter-related spots are the must-go sights there. London, however, disappointed me and was pretty boring to visit. The semester began right after I returned from the UK.



February 2023

I only had two courses in each period, so my workload was relatively light. My classes only took 9 hours per week, giving me so much free time to unwind and go for trips. This allowed me to make the most of my exchange experience beyond the classroom. I watched "Everything Everywhere All at Once" with my friends in the cinema in Lund. FYI, movies there only provided Swedish subtitles. Then, we visited the gigantic Ikea in Malmo and purchased some furniture. We had a great time playing with the trollies there :) I also watched "Phantom of the Opera" in Kristianstad, a small town 45 minutes by train from Lund. Despite the smaller scale of the performance, the show was still very enjoyable!



We usually cooked and had dinner together at one of my friends' dorm. Sometimes we made special dishes, like handmade spring rolls this time. We had a good time chatting and joking as we were making a pile of spring rolls. One unique moment to highlight was the first heavy snowfall I saw in Lund. We built some tiny snowmen and engaged in a snowball fight with other international students. It was also a monumental moment that we founded our squad 'HK Nation'. Another special event that I joined was the "Sittning" held by the student union of Lund's business school. "Sittning" is a traditional school event where formally dressed students have a seated meal, sing Swedish folk songs and drink a few shots of alcohol. It was a fantastic opportunity to connect with both local and foreign students at business school.



This month, I traveled to Switzerland as well as Stockholm and Gothenburg in Sweden. Switzerland attracted me with its magnificent nature, whilst Stockholm and Gothenburg imbued a sense of tranquillity to me.



March

March was a month that left me with conflicting emotions. The first half of the month brought many meaningful and joyful moments, but the latter half left me with quite a bit suffering. I had a trip to Levi, Lapland in Finland for 5 days trip. We endured a torturing 25-hour bus trip from Lund to Lapland, but it was well worth it. I witnessed aurora the first time ever in my life and it was gorgeous and stunning when it appeared on the clean sky. During the trip, we also tried all kinds of winter sports, including skiing, snow-shoeing and cross-country skiing. We also visited the Santa-Claus village and took a picture with the Santa-Claus who can speak Cantonese lol. After returning to Lund, I visited Rabylund, a natural reserve area, to enjoy a moment of peace.



The tragedies struck right after the trip... I broke my pinky after a bike accident. I visited the hospital's emergency department to get an x-ray and some medication. The cost was covered by the insurance, but the pain persisted a long time... The exam period began at the same time, but there was a silver lining: I only had one 3000 word exam paper to submit.

After submission, I took a 10-days trip to Italy and Spain. I went to Milan, Venice, Florence and Barcelona. I visited lots of historical sites and enjoyed loads of cuisines, especially the gelato in Italy. I also watched the first live football match in Barcelona which ended in the worst possible way – a '0-0' draw.



April

The 2nd period of the semester just started so the workload was light again. The courses were FEKG95 and SASI06 which are finance courses and CC courses respectively. The workload of FEKG95 was a bit heavy compared to other courses, yet it was still manageable. Meanwhile, spring finally arrived here in Sweden and it's melting away that cold winter we had. Besides doing sports like badminton, basketball and cycling, I signed up for a hiking tour to Bronnestad with a couple of my friends. It was always a pleasure to immerse yourself in the beauty of Sweden's nature. One special moment to mention was that I had a second chance to see aurora again not at the arctic circle, but in LUND! It was extremely rare to witness the Northern Lights in southern Sweden, but I was fortunate enough to receive this blessing. This time, the colors of the aurora ranged from blue to green to purple, which really astonished me. Aurora is such a dazzling, elegant natural phenomena and I feel very blessed to be able to witness it again in Lund.



After a few weeks in Lund, I decided to visit Edinburgh (again), Glasgow, and St. Andrews. St. Andrews' beaches are the most charming and appealing beaches I've ever visited. The dawn and sunset there were among the best I'd ever seen in Europe.



May

Here it came the exam period again with only one take-home exam paper, one paper-based exam and a project, so there wasn't much pressure. I spent a full day with my friends in Tivoli, an amusement park in Copenhagen. Fun fact about Tivoli is that the business in charge of designing the facilities in Tivoli and Ocean Park in Hong Kong is the same. So, when visiting Tivoli, you surely notice the similarities of the designs. After finishing one exam, I went on a day vacation to Copenhagen to get a glimpse of the city known as "the Happiest Place on Earth." Following that, I took a seven-day journey to Middle Europe, visiting cities such as Vienna, Budapest, and Prague. During the trip, I enjoyed ship sightseeing, Rome baths, Ferris wheel rides, the Vienna Opera, and seeing various museums. The excellent cuisine I discovered is one of the highlights of this journey to Central Europe. The food is excellent, but it is also reasonably priced. It's indeed a "weight-adding" trip.



After returning to Lund, I attended the university's 2023 graduation ceremony. The student union president and the university president presented speeches to the attendees. There were choir and instrumental performances performed by the students. Although we were not officially graduating, the ceremony reminded us the incoming end of our exchange. Before June arrived, we went to Loma beach by riding bicycles. It was the last big gathering before people started returning to Hong Kong. Despite being sentimental, we still had a lovely day playing frisbee and also enjoying the sunshine and ocean there.



June

Around this time, people began to depart Lund, so we took lots of pictures in various spots to record our memories. Saying goodbye to this place and its people has always been a difficult one. We seized the last bit of time to appreciate the cozy, pleasing vibes of Lund. Before leaving, I had my last trips to Paris and Berlin. On the 22nd of June, I had a bittersweet farewell to Lund, filled with sincerest gratitude for every precious experience this journey gave me. As the train pulled away from Lund Central Station, it marked the end of my exchange in Lund. It had come to a close, yet the memories made here would remain engraved upon my soul forever.



General Exchange Information

Visa Procedures

A resident permit is required for trading in Sweden. This year, the Swedish Migration Agency (SMA) implemented a new rule that complicated the process. **Prior to** the new rules, the standard procedures will be as follows:

1. Start applying for permit after receiving the offer letter
2. Submit all the required documents (insurance proof/ financial proof/ offer letter etc.) and pay the application fee
3. Wait 1-2 months to receive the decision letter and you are good to go
4. Book an appointment in SMA (usually the Malmo one) to get the permit

The new rule stated that applicants must present their passport/ID to the agency or embassy or Consulate-General of Sweden in-person. However, the Consulate-General of Sweden in Hong Kong does not proceed permit application, so you must either visit the embassy in China (there is one in Shanghai) or visit the SMA in-person in Sweden.

Here comes the most troublesome part, ***you are not allowed to stay in Sweden after the passport check. You can only enter Sweden after receiving the decision letter.***

Therefore, it is not possible to stay in Sweden to wait for the decision letter if you visited SMA in-person. This new rule may be updated in the future, so please keep an eye on all information from school emails and the Agency's website. If the situation continues unchanged, I will recommend the following **only IF** you choose to see the SMA in person.

1. Book an appointment online to conduct passport check at any SMA that you chose
2. After checking the passport, leave Sweden immediately and go for a trip in other European countries.
3. Send the proof to the officer in charge of your application that shows you are outside Sweden (eg. Boarding pass or other valid proofs approved by the agency)
4. Return to Sweden after receiving the decision letter

5. Proceed with the permit application

**** Please consider carefully before making the decision!!! My information can be outdated so please do your own research.**

Orientation Activities

Lund University offers a variety of orientation programs for exchange students. It features a two-week orientation period with a plethora of activities to choose from. There are also buddy programs offered by the school and the student union, so take advantage of these opportunities to meet other students and seniors. They can assist you in a variety of ways so participate in as many activities as you can! And make your best effort to arrive on the official arrival day, as seniors will be walking you through the all your concerns only on that day. Don't be afraid to have fun!

International Services & Activities

Lund University has 12 student nations, which are equivalent to Hong Kong student societies. Every nation has its own distinct characteristics and offers unique benefits to students. You can learn more about them by visiting their official website. They will be introduced by your mentor group, and you can ask for suggestions. I chose Vastgota Nation since it offers privileges to its members when it comes to their party nights. Do join one nation as you can meet new friends there and benefit from their membership while it costs you nothing!

Accommodation

There are three ways to get accommodation.

1. LU accommodation

This is the official method to get housing directly from the school. Simply apply online and wait for the results. You may not get an offer like what I encountered, so you should apply for the AF Bostäder or Bopoolen.

2. AF Bostäder

This is a legitimate, approved student housing agent in Lund that provides student housing. To participate in its housing lottery system, simply create an account online. You must be a Studentlund member to enter the lottery, which costs 100 SEK. After getting your designated wait time frame, you can begin your housing hunt. If you want to get a house quickly, regardless of price or location, sort the housing list with 'your place right now' to find a house with the fewest people queuing. Also, check in on a daily basis to see if any new homes are being advertised.

I was lucky to get a housing in Parentesen that only cost 2900SEK per month while my friends had to pay over 4000SEK per month for a housing offered by LU Accommodation. So just wish for the best!

3. Bopoolen

Another student housing agent but I have not much information about it.

Courses registration

Lund University divides one semester into two periods, 1st period and 2nd period. It applies the ECTS system that students have to study at least 30 ECTS per semester, so averagely 15 ECTS per period (equivalent to 2 courses per period). Courses offered can be in 5 ECTS or 7.5 ECTS depending on the workload and pace of teaching. However, it is not mandatory to study only 15 ECTS (2-3 courses) so it is possible to study 3 courses in the first period and 1 course in the second period. After receiving email from school, you may start mapping out your choices of courses. Look through the course list and course websites to learn more about each course. Do not hesitate to email the professors in Lund for course details. They are very friendly and willing to answer all of your inquiries.

For credit transfer, search the UST database or the credit transfer system (which is more accurate and up to date) for courses that are transferable. Do the mapping as soon as possible.

Teaching & Assessment Methods

Academic matters shall be the least of your concerns as an exchange student in Lund University. Courses here prioritize interaction and conversation over lecturing and assignments. There are barely any assignments except for the take-home examination in all four courses that I enrolled in. However, reading is an essential component of their teaching style. Quite a lot of reading will be given to the students, and you are expected to read through all of them by yourself before the lesson starts. But overall, there won't be too much pressure from the academic issues.

1. SASH68 Critical Animal Studies - Animals in Society, Culture and the Media (7.5 ECTs)

Comment:

You will probably like this course if you are interested in learning the concepts related to animal cruelty, speciesism and animal justice. To me, it's quite boring.

Assessment method:

There are mandatory weekly workshops to attend. You have to do a simple compensation assignment if you miss one. There are also journal reflections to be completed after each chapter ends. If you fail to submit any required assignments, your grade will not be released. The course grade solely depends on your final exam paper. There will be a second submission deadline 3 months after the first submission deadline in case you are unsatisfied with the preliminary grade given or you fail it.

Workload:

Medium. There are assignments (reflections), mini projects, discussions during lessons, ONE final exam paper (20000 – 30000 characters)

Equivalent course:

SOSC1000SACC: 1000-level Course in Social Science

2. SASH55 Introduction to Scandinavian Culture and Society (7.5 ECTs)

Comment:

Quite interesting course to learn about the Scandinavian culture and history.

Assessment method:

This course lasts for 2 periods which mean the course starts in 1st period and ends in 2nd period. Only one final exam paper to be submitted. The paper requires you to discuss 3 distinct cultural representations of the Scandinavia (2-3 pages per example)

Workload:

Extremely light. No assignments. Just a final take-home exam paper and your grade depends on it.

Equivalent course:

HUMA1000HMCC: 1000-level Course in Humanities

3. SASI06 Greening the Economy - Achieving the Global Goals (7.5 ECTs)

Comment:

This course only opens to exchange students. Interesting course to learn about the how greening can be compatible with economy with actual real-life examples. Good professors.

Assessment method:

1 group project, 1 in-person paper-based exam and weekly Canvas discussion the project is about introducing a topic/ project related to greening economy that you find it

interesting. It consists of a 5 pages research writing and presentation in group. The exam only consists of 10 short questions only.

Workload:

Light. Only 1 project, 1 exam and weekly 200 words reflections on Canvas

Equivalent course:

Uncertain (still pending)

4. FEKG95 Business Administration: From Barter to Bitcoin and Beyond: Re-imagining Money for a Sustainable Future

Comment:

Very good course content. You will learn knowledge that is up-to-dated and applicable to real life. Professor is very passionate and helpful.

Assessment method:

1 Mid-term exam, 1 Final exam and some online canvas mc quizzes. The mid-term exam requires you to elaborate on the issues of the current money creation system in 500 words. Final exam is a project that ask you to create a monetary system based on the course content to solve issues that you chose and write a 5 pages proposal.

Workload:

Medium. Both exams are take-home exam and you have opportunities to resubmit if you fail.

Equivalent course:

FINA3000LEVEL: 3000-level Course in Finance

Finance & Banking

Sweden is a cashless society, and the vast majority of European countries accept credit card payments. Simply prepare your credit/debit cards and you're ready to go. It is not necessary to open a new bank account for payments. Prepare Visa/Mastercard cards because alternative payment networks are not often accepted in Sweden. Personally, I use HSBC's "World debit card" and Citibank's "CitiPlus debit card." I haven't had any problems with these two cards. I occasionally used the "MOX debit card" from Mox Bank, a Hong Kong digital bank supported by Standard Chartered Bank. Check to see if your card supports payWave so you don't have to enter the numbers every time you pay.

| Item | Amount (HKD) |
|--------------------|--------------|
| Flight Ticket | \$9000 |
| Accommodation | \$12500 |
| Living cost | \$30000 |
| Travelling Expense | \$50000 |
| Total Expense | \$101500 |

Climate

Lund's winters are bitterly cold. To keep the body wear warm, I normally wear heattech, basewear, and a heavy feather jacket. When it snows, you need scarves, gloves, caps, and thick socks. In the spring, a T-shirt and a light jacket will be sufficient to keep you warm.

Health & Safety

Lund is an extremely safe city. It has a very low crime rate, but you should still be wary of scammers who ask for money. Scammers may appear to be a family in severe need of money by claiming to have lost their wallet. In any part of Europe, never trust anyone who asks you for money.

Lund has a large hospital close to the city center. I had previously used their medical services after breaking my finger. Unless your case is extremely urgent, their emergency department normally has a long queue and everyone needs to wait. The medical costs are significant, however the insurance supplied by the Swedish government and UST will cover the expense. However, keep in mind that those two insurances only cover occurrences that happen in Sweden. If you wish to be insured while traveling outside of Sweden, you should obtain any type of international travel insurance offered by reputable insurance firms.

Food

There are plenty of food choices available in Lund. You can never get home sick for Asian food in Lund. Here are some restaurants that I recommend.

1. Falafel time

- good option to save money since you can get a 20 cm long wrap with only 20SEK

2. Mui Gong

- best Chinese cuisine you can find in Lund

3. Taiwan Café

- Cheap Taiwan cuisine and it provides bubble tea

4. Thai Corner

- Good Thai food

5. Five flowers noodles bar

- Best Mixian/ noodles you can find in Lund. Staff can speak Cantonese there.

There are only four brands of supermarket in Lund: Lidl, Willys, ICA, COOP (in ascending order according to their products' prices). If you want to purchase furniture or clothes at a fair price, visit Ikea in Malmo or the super big outlet called "Nova" which is a 10 mins bicycle ride from Lund C.

Transportation

Lund has a well-structured and extensive transport network. However, the single ticket / monthly ticket is super expensive so getting a bicycle will save you a big sum. To purchase the tickets, download “Skånetrafiken” and you are good to go. If your bike is damaged, there is a place called “Bike Kitchen” near Parentesen that guides you and provides you with the tools to fix the bike for free.

There are other options like renting a scooter. Download “Tier” or “Bolt” to rent one in Lund. It is very safe and common to ride a scooter in Lund. It is a must try activity.

Communication

The school will provide you with SIM cards when you arrived on the official arrival day. If you missed the arrival day, simply visit the International Desk to get one. You can choose either “Telenor” or “Lyca” depending on your preference. You have to pay monthly to enjoy their data plan. If you feel insecure in using their SIM cards, you can pre-purchase data cards that are enough to cover your entire exchange period in Hong Kong.

Sports & Recreation Facilities

There are lots of sports that you can do in Lund. Badminton, swimming, football, frisbee, ice-skating... you name it. Book the badminton court at Victoriastadion and go ArenaParken for ice-skating rink. You can rent any kind of sports gears in “Fritidsbanken”, a rental shop that you can borrow anything from this place for free.

Social Clubs & Networking Opportunities

Engage in orientation activities as much as you can and join any Nation that you're interested in. Your exchange life is all set if you can meet some friends in those events.

Cautionary measures

Do remember to bring the permit everywhere you go. Don't keep your passport in your pocket after receiving the permit. Do bring some cash in case of emergency. The most common thing to be stolen in Lund is your bicycle and the bicycles' lighting, so please do buy a strong metal lock for your bike.

Useful items

- ID & documents (All letters, passport)
- Payment cards (installed them in your Apple Pay/ Google pay)
- Cash
- Clothing (depends on how much your luggage can hold)
- Medicine
- Router for Wifi

Useful Links

Swedish Migration Agency

(<https://www.migrationsverket.se/English/Privateindividuals.html>)

Lund University Timeedit (<https://cloud.timeedit.net/lu/web/ehl1/>)

Lund Official Website (<https://www.lusem.lu.se/study/exchange>)

LU Accommodation (<https://applications.luaccommodation.lu.se/applications/>)

AF Bostäder (<https://www.afbostader.se/en/>)