Exchange Report

Fall 2023

City, University of London

United Kingdom

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Monthly Activity Log

Write a log of one paragraph for each month highlighting some of your interesting exchange experiences, activities, impressions & places of interest. Please describe your study, learning and life experience. This section should be at least 600 words long.

September

I arrived in London mid September. To my understanding, you do not need to arrive in London so early, considering the first day of orientation being on the last few days of September. You should have enough time to settle down, but I decided to arrive 2 weeks prior to the orientation as I visited friends in Guildford and I do not live in a school-hosted student accommodation. You never know what could go wrong so better safe than sorry.

Most of September was just me trying to figure out how to go places and getting comfortable with the surroundings. I went to a few tourist attractions in London such as the Tower Bridge, London Eye, Buckingham Palace and many more. I strongly recommend exploring more of London early on in your exchange, because the sun sets at 4pm starting late October.

October

October is when the real studying part starts. I took 4 courses in total, 2 of which being Historic London and Performing Arts in London. Note that you really have to sit in front of your computer when course enrollment starts in order to secure your quota for the culture modules. The class sizes aren't the largest and people are so eager to get into this course. The courses themselves were a lot of fun and enriching.

In Historic London, we would visit different important tourist attractions/historical establishments in London to better understand the formation of the civilization of London and the role that London played in the middle ages. This course does involve a lot more European history and can be very fun for a history enjoyer. But I will say that if you are not a good listener or memorizer, this is not the course for you as the entire examination is based on information talked about during the city walks. It is literally impossible to drop notes during these city walks and the in-class powerpoint slides aren't exactly the most useful resources.

Performing Arts in London is another culture module that I enrolled in. This course covers every aspect of modern and the historical development of multiple forms of arts such as ballet, theater, operas and etc.. We go really in-depth by reading literature, scripts, video clips and live performances to learn how to appreciate these art forms. In general, I find it pretty interesting and I definitely recommend it if you are somewhat interested in middle age art and how European history influences the transpose and development of different art forms.

November

The first half of November was really enjoyable and pleasant. I visited a few other cities such as Birmingham, Brighton etc.. I personally enjoy short trips and occasional escapes, but only when the weather is pleasant. We all know by now that London rains a lot. However, the tricky part is that the rain isn't heavy enough for me to use an umbrella, but more than enough to soak my coat. This is a very consistent observation and sometimes you cannot even use an umbrella because the wind will definitely flip your umbrella inside out. Other than that, I think it's really worthwhile to visit different cities apart from London because different parts of the UK give off really different vibes.

I also took a trip to Gothenburg with a friend during November. We went to a museum, a theme park and many local food courts. The most enjoyable part of the trip for me was the food, but the most not-so-enjoyable part was again the weather. I guess I'm just not built to live in a 0 to -8 degree climate with very strong wind and rain. I was already so exhausted on day 3 of the trip because of the unpleasant weather.

Another significant part of November are the deadlines. My overall workload was definitely not heavy compared to what we usually have in UST, but a lot of my assignments were either essays or group reports, which do require quite a bit of reading and writing. In general, the workload was definitely handleable.

December

Final exams took place mid to late December. I was lucky as most of my courses did not have final exams. We did group projects and research essays instead. Exchange students take their exams in December, whereas home students do it mid to late Jan after the Christmas holiday.

I am a free soul after exams. I did quite a lot of shopping over Christmas and met up with a bunch of friends who were studying in London. Christmas celebrations in London are really next level. The Lucifer decorations in Regent Street are iconic as always and the Christmas vibe is really on point. Only drawback is that the city center is flooded with humans and public transportation does not operate on Christmas day to my surprise.

January

Nothing much really happened in Jan as the holidays are over and the home students have to take their exams so nobody is free to hangout, so I did some vintage hunting in Camden market and Brick Lane and picked up a few statement pieces to add to my wardrobe. It was also a struggle to pack my luggage because I may or may not have brought too many things and I cannot fit everything in my luggage. I ended up having to send separate packages back to Hong Kong prior to my departure. If this ever happens to you, just visit your local post office and the staff will tell you about the details.

Please briefly describe the visa application procedures, including
1) Type of passport/travel document you are holding
2) Type of visa you are required
3) Required documents

4) Visa fees
Our programlast less than 6 months, so we do not need to apply for any visa. We entered the UK as a visitor

What are the course(s) that you have enrolled at the host institution?
Historic London, Performing Arts of London, Strategy in Business, International Business Strategy

Please briefly describe the course registration procedures, such as
1) When did you receive the course registration details
2) What is the course registration procedures
3) Where can you access information related to course registration (e.g. websites)
I received information about course registration a few months before departure. You need to fill out a google form that is separated from the normal course registration procedure for home students. City will send you a checklist prior to your departure so you can think it all through and check your credit transfers

Where did you live during the program?
Off-campus student dormitory offered by NGOs or private companies

Please briefly describe the accommodation at the host destination, including
1) What type of accommodation
2) What is the application procedures (If you are staying at accommodation offered by the host institution)
3) How did you search for the accommodation and where did you book your accommodation (If you need to arrange your own accommodation)
4) Facilities in the accommodation
I found mine through personal connections in London. Remember to start looking for a place as early as possible becauses a lot of people book up to 6 months before they arrive.

Please briefly describe the health and safety support provided at the host institution, including
1) Whether there is health centers or clinics available on campus
2) Any safety matters that you are concerned about
Not sure about the clinic part. Becareful of pickpockets

Finances
How much did you spend (in HKD) on the following items? (Please input "0" if not applicable to you)

Air ticket between the place of departure and destination (round trip)
HKD 8,000
Accommodation (for the entire study abroad period)
HKD 120,000
Program fee (if applicable)
N/A
Personal expenses
HKD 80,000
Others, please specify
N/A

My Top 3s
Please share with students some of your top 3s. If it is best to provide the information in the language of the host destination, please do so, but provide an explanation in English.

Courses at the host institution
Historic London
Performing Arts in London
International Business Strategy

Favourite Food
Canto
Five Guys
Viet

Hang-outs places on campus
campus coffee shop
library
Business School reception

Must-dos in the city
Tower Bridge
Black Friday Regent Street Oxford Street
New Year Countdown

Not-to-dos in the city
Not bring an umbrella
Jaywalk
Engage in conversation with suspicious looking people

Useful local apps or websites
Trainline
Oystercard
TFL Go

Words to describe my study abroad experience
Enriching
One-in-a-lifetime
Memorable