

Exchange Report

Spring 2024

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.

January

My exchange experience embarked with my arrival at the London Heathrow Airport on 14 January 2024, greeted by London's shivering weather. I spent my first 2 weeks discovering London. I met up with some friends and went to some hot tourist spots, such as the British Museum, which was definitely an eye-opening experience considering the multitude of historical artefacts. Besides that, I have also visited the famous Tower Bridge, and went to the Borough Market which was just a few streets away. The market was a huge marketplace with food from all around the globe, from Spanish paella to American burgers, to British apple crumble.

February

I soon moved in to my off-campus accommodation, which was located at an extremely convenient location, around 10 minutes away from the main campus and 3 minutes away from the nearest metro station (Farringdon). I had my own bedroom and shared a common area with 4 other roommates, which are from diverse backgrounds. It was a great opportunity to connect with people from other parts of the world and learn more about themselves and their culture.

The orientation started on 24/1, with a series of event to get us familiar with the campus, the teaching style and allowed us to connect with each other. It was a greatly enjoyable 2-days orientation program, and I've ended up making a few friends which accompanied me throughout the semester. I attended my first class on 29/1 and officially kickstarted my exchange study journey. I experienced a unique yet enjoyable teaching style which I liked a lot. The classes were very interactive and the teaching materials were very practical. The ongoing class discussions really sparked our interests and enhanced our understanding on the various topics covered.

I was fortunate enough to have registered for 4 courses and still have 3 day offs a week. I spent my first few days of the month enjoying the city life with my friends. We went to Chinatown and enjoyed a long-missed Chinese meal (which was surprisingly delicious!). I've also attended my first ever real-life football match with a friend, played in Chelsea FC's stadium Stamford Bridge. The atmosphere was still ecstatic and it was an unforgettable experience for sure! I then continued exploring the city, visiting the Buckingham Palace, Hyde Park etc..

I then started visiting nearby cities such as Brighton and travelled across Europe to Spain and France. I went to Madrid and Barcelona within Spain, and visited the legendary Bernabeu Stadium and other iconic landmarks like Casa Mila. As for France, while the Eiffel Tower and Arc de Triomphe were stunning, the food attracted me the most! The steak, French fries, foie gras, escargot and onion soup were all top-tier!

March

March was another month filled with exploring and adventures. I went to Netherlands at the start of the month, starting off with Rotterdam to visit a few friends having their exchange programs there. While the weather was not ideal, I managed to explore the major parts of the city within a day and moved on to Amsterdam, where I spent 2 days visiting the Heineken factory, Van Gogh Museum and many more hidden gems within the city.

I then spent a week visiting other parts of the UK. As a fervor football fanatic, I visited cities with deep-rooted football history including Manchester and Liverpool. I also managed to watch a European cup match played in Manchester! I've also spent a few days travelling to the upper and western side of the country, including St. Andrews, Dundee and Edinburgh in Scotland, as well as Newcastle and Sheffield on my way back to London. It was great to catch-up with old friends and meet new foreign friends throughout my visits, and meeting new people definitely stood out as the highlight of my journey.

Later that month, I started spending more time on academics. One thing I really enjoyed was the nature of the course assignments. Most were designed as group projects, where we had the opportunity to work alongside different people on different projects. One of the projects I enjoyed the most was a class focused on international finance, where we had to build an excel model to develop an investment strategy. While it was academically fruitful, I mostly enjoyed the experience working with people from different backgrounds. It gave me a great insight into how people from different background behave and how I could best interact with them.

April

As the end of the semester was approaching, I spent my first few weeks discovering other cities before fully devoting into academics. I visited different stadiums within London, including Chelsea, Arsenal, West Ham and Tottenham Hotspurs, and visited clubs in other cities, such as Aston Villa, Wolverhampton, Leicester City and Nottingham Forest. It was truly amazing to visit these stadiums in person and explore the cities. I've also went to Bristol and Bath to meet some old friends and visited the Bath Spa Museum, which was an unforgettable experience! Exams started mid-April, with most concentrated within 2 weeks. I spent most of the two weeks on campus studying and finalizing my several end of term projects. After that I spent a week in Switzerland and several cities in Italy.

May

I spent the last half-month of my exchange program visiting the places I loved most within London. I attended another match held in Chelsea, and almost every night in sports bars near my accommodation to watch live football with my mates. I went on one last trip to Spain before coming back to Hong Kong mid-May.

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

Visa is not required for HKSAR passport holders provided you stay for less than 6 months. You should still prepare documents including your proof of short-term study (such as the acceptance letter from the host university, accommodation proof) when entering the UK border.

What are the course(s) that you have enrolled at the host institution?

IF3101 International Finance, IF1201 Introduction to Visual Basics, FR3202 Real Estate Finance & Funding, FR2105 Corporate Risk Management

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)

We were given the list of courses to choose from in late September 2023. The procedure is simple, you just have to enter the modules which you ought to take part in in the application form. You can take up to 5 modules (maximum 4 business modules). You can access information related to course registration about the time when you receive the application form, where you would be provided with the login details for the university's internal portal to seek for more information regarding the courses.

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 lived in a student accommodation which is arranged by the host university. It should be noted that you are NOT guaranteed an accommodation spot. The application process simply involves sending an email to the university (study-abroad@city.ac.uk) to initiate your request for a student accommodation. I lived in Romano Court, which was close to a metro station and is just 10 minutes away from the main campus. We lived in single rooms and share a kitchen and 2 bathrooms with 4-5 roommates.

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

While I personally have not visited any health centers or clinics, I am aware that there were several pharmacies nearby the main campus and the accommodation. It is suggested to purchase additional overseas insurance to cover the medical expenses spent just in case you get ill. In terms of safety, it is suggested to be extra cautious especially during night time. There were instances where phones and even bikes were stolen.

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 40,000

Program fee (if applicable)

N/A

Personal expenses

HKD 50,000

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

FR3202

IF3101

IF1201

Favuoite Food

Flat Iron

Old Spitalfields Market

Borough Market

Hang-outs places on campus

Business School Library

Main Campus Garden

Study cafe in Business School

Must-dos in the city

Visit the British Museum

Visit the London Bridge

Head to the Borough Market

Not-to-dos in the city

Leave your belongings unattended

Go out alone at night

Get drunk

Useful local apps or websites

Uber Eats

Co-op

Rail Planner

Words to describe my study abroad experience

Exhilarating

Eye-opening

Relaxing