



Study Abroad Report - Fall Term 2024-25

The University of Warwick

(United Kingdom)

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Study Abroad Experience – Monthly Activity Log

September:

I had the most complex emotion this month. This month was more about exploration and adoption. I was so excited to explore new life and study environment while also being nervous and insecure of visiting a new country alone. The welcome week provided a fantastic introduction to the university, helping me better adapt to the university life. My birthday was in September and it was the first time that I celebrated my birthday without my family. Celebrating my birthday away from family for the first time was bittersweet. It was heartwarming that one of the flat mates came to my room and sang me a birthday song when I borrowed her lighter. It truly made a difference when I was far from home. On the second day of my birthday, I went to Lincoln and stayed there for 3 days 2 nights to celebrate birthday with my friend. It was fortunate that I was able to create unique experience during the exchange.

October:

In my second month, I was more familiar with the distinct life and study atmosphere in the United Kingdom. Engaging in group discussions was stimulating and intimidating but enhanced my confidence to speak up. Outside the classroom, I met a Hong Kong girl and we had lunch at a restaurant called The Dirty Duck in campus together. That was my first time trying campus eatery and the food was quite nice. I also visited Mahjong society of the University of Warwick at the beginning of October. I knew different types of Mahjong there including Japanese Mahjong and Taiwanese Mahjong and met a lot of Hongkongers while also some westerners joining the activity. Japanese Mahjong was so difficult and I still haven't figured out how to play it. The visit was amazing and meeting Hong Kong people kind of solaced my homesickness. Moreover, I visited York with my friend and walked down the Shambles. Yet, the challenge of balancing academics with social activities emerged. I often felt overwhelmed by assignments and deadlines while wanting to explore the city. This taught me valuable time management skills, which I continue to apply.

November:

In November, there were more social activities. At the beginning of the month, I visited Coventry Transport Museum, offering a unique glimpse into Coventry history. In the mid-November, I went to boxing class at school gym with my flat mate. It was fun and exhausting but created a good memory. At there, I saw different energetic participants enjoying the atmosphere and exercise which really impressed me. I also visited Leamington Spa Autumn Market. This visit enhanced my understanding of local, British and artisan. There was snowing one day and I was thrilled to see snow. In late November, I watched Hong Kong movie, The Last Dance, in Birmingham, which was my first time watching movie outside Hong Kong. I also joined the school activity of Christmas Lights Switch On. There were different activities such as Christmas market and musical performance, which was joyful and so much fun! On the last day of

November, my friend and I went to Birmingham together and visited our first Christmas Market there. The Christmas Market was very festive and we tried red wine hot chocolate which was very tasty. However, as time flew, I started feeling sad because the farewell day was coming soon. I felt reluctant to leave and cherished the last period there.

December:

As my study abroad experience came to close in December, I felt a mix of pride and nostalgia. I not only completed my courses but also gained some invaluable life skills along the way. The last night chat with friends were bittersweet, we shared laughter, memories, and promises to keep in touch. We also took pictures individually to capture the memories. On the day I left, they gave me a hug and wished each other all the best in the future. The challenges I faced like language barriers, homesickness, and academic pressure, were all part of this transformative journey that helped me become more adaptable and resilient. I came home with a deeper appreciation for cultural diversity and a newfound confidence, ready to embrace future challenges with an open heart and mind.

General Study Abroad Information

1) Visa Procedures

I am holding Hong Kong passport so the visa procedure would be easier. As we would only study there for less than 6 months, we do not need to apply any visa and only use the visitor visa to enter UK. However, it is encouraged to provide supporting documents such as offer letter, accommodation proof, etc. for in case officer needs any.

2) Orientation Activities

During Welcome Week, which took place a week before the term started in late September, a variety of orientation activities were organised to familiarise ourselves with the university. Additionally, there were sessions specifically designed for exchange students to get to know each other and the institution.

3) International Services & Activities

University of Warwick offers an Airport Transfer Service allowing students travel directly to campus from London Heathrow Airport or Birmingham International Airport after touching down. Tickets were priced at £19.50 and £5 each respectively and include their standard baggage allowance. A team of helpers will meet students at the airport and a coach will take us to our accommodation block.

4) Accommodations

There are various accommodation options available on the accommodation website of the University of Warwick, differing in whether they have en suite or shared bathrooms and the location. Students can choose based on the price and personal preference. No meal plans were offered and students can cook themselves in the kitchen. In the application form, there are questions about students' personal preferences, hobbies, and living habits to help match them with suitable flatmates. I lived in Rootes, which has two shared bathrooms each floor and is accessible only by stairs. The launderettes for Rootes residents are located in a separate building, independent of our accommodation blocks.

5) Courses Registration

At WBS, all module applications are submitted online through the my.wbs module application system, which will be open for 2-3 weeks. During this time, students can both submit their applications and make changes to their choices. Applications are processed instantly on a first-come, first-served basis, so if a module is full during this round (fall is round 3), students won't have the option to select it. Once applications are submitted, the timetable for lectures will be available on the my.wbs homepage. Seminar times will be released in stages: the seminar times for IB3xxx modules will be accessible first and IB2xxx seminar times will be after that. Before registering for courses, students can explore the module catalogue to view all elective modules offered. The module application system will display all available modules and automatically check if students have met the pre-requisites. Additionally, students can find useful information on the my.wbs module information pages.

6) Courses that You Have Taken

I have taken four courses: IB2400 Managing Work and Employment, IB2B40 Digital Business, IB2D70 Management in Practice, and IB3D80 Corporate Strategy. All four courses assess participation and require an individual assignment, which is a 2,500–3,000-word essay. Additionally, IB2B40 includes a class test. Participation is evaluated in various ways, primarily through online discussions or a written assignment, depending on the course structure. The study load is manageable, but it is recommended to prepare beforehand for classes. The difficulty level of the first three courses is medium, while IB3D80 is relatively more challenging.

7) Finance & Banking

The currency is British pound (£). While contactless payments are widely accepted, it's also better to keep some cash on hand for smaller transactions. The university suggests that students budget around HKD 10,000 per month, which includes accommodation fees. But for my case, excluding accommodation and considering only food, daily expenses, and SIM card fees, the estimated monthly spending is about HKD 4,000. Cooking at dormitory is often a cheaper option.

8) Climate

The weather in the UK is unstable, with sunshine, rain, clouds and wind within a single day. In September, temperatures range from 14°C to 20°C. In October, the temperatures drop, ranging from 10°C and 15°C. The time went backward for an hour on the last Sunday in October, becoming British Winter Time. In November, the temperatures continue to decline, averaging from 5°C to 10°C and daytime become shorter. In December, the temperature usually between 0°C and 7°C. Rainfall increases as the month progresses.

9) Health & Safety

To be eligible, exchange students must study at Warwick for more than three months and register within their first week of arrival. However, most of us would study for only around three months, NHS coverage does not apply.

10) Food

On campus, there are a few restaurants and grocery stores for students to enjoy. There is just a 20-minute walk to a small shopping center, which features Tesco, café and a Subway. Additionally, the Piazza hosts Food Market Days with a variety of food trucks, offering a great way to explore different cuisines every Wednesday.

11) Transportation

The most common way to commute is by bus, with various routes connecting to Leamington, Kenilworth, and Coventry. A single trip costs £2, or £4.80 for a day pass. Additionally, the West Midlands Bus Scheme offers a season ticket that allows for unlimited travel on all buses throughout the Network West Midlands Area. Registering Swift card can enjoy a free four-week Regional nBus ticket. There are also other options of weekly passes, as well as termly or yearly bus passes. To travel in the UK by train, we have the option to purchase a railcard, which can be a more economical choice if the cost of the card offsets the total train fares.

12) Communication

We can use the same channels as in Hong Kong, such as WhatsApp and Instagram. I opted for the Giffgaff SIM card, which offers a no-contract monthly plan that can be canceled at any time and includes 5 GB of roaming throughout Europe. While there is campus Wi-Fi available, we often report a poor connection.

13) Sports & Recreation Facilities

The Sports & Wellness Hub offers a variety of sports classes, along with facilities for the gym, swimming, etc. Additionally, The Piazza hosts an Artisan Market every Tuesday, showcasing unique products and local crafts.

14) Social Clubs & Networking Opportunities

Students can join various SU events or network through WBS exchange events. Meanwhile, students can voluntarily join the Buddy Scheme, which is an informal peer-to-peer support scheme where students can connect and assist each other.

15) Cautionary measures

The UK weather can be unpredictable. It is better to dress in layers and always be prepared for rain.

Items to Bring

Clothing	Appliances	Miscellaneous	Medications	Documents
<input type="checkbox"/> Top <input type="checkbox"/> Pants <input type="checkbox"/> Pajamas <input type="checkbox"/> Slippers <input type="checkbox"/> Shoes <input type="checkbox"/> Socks <input type="checkbox"/> Beanie <input type="checkbox"/> Coat <input type="checkbox"/> Home shirt <input type="checkbox"/> Underwear <input type="checkbox"/> Crossbody bag <input type="checkbox"/> Canvas bag	<input type="checkbox"/> Electric kettle <input type="checkbox"/> Phone charger <input type="checkbox"/> Laptop charger <input type="checkbox"/> Adapter <input type="checkbox"/> Computer <input type="checkbox"/> iPad <input type="checkbox"/> Hair dryer	<input type="checkbox"/> Skincare products <input type="checkbox"/> Face masks <input type="checkbox"/> Sunscreen <input type="checkbox"/> Face towels <input type="checkbox"/> Bath towels <input type="checkbox"/> Wet wipes <input type="checkbox"/> Basin <input type="checkbox"/> Body lotion <input type="checkbox"/> Toothbrush <input type="checkbox"/> Toothpaste <input type="checkbox"/> Comb <input type="checkbox"/> Hair ties <input type="checkbox"/> Stationery <input type="checkbox"/> Tissue <input type="checkbox"/> Menstrual pad <input type="checkbox"/> Travel shower gel <input type="checkbox"/> Travel shampoo	<input type="checkbox"/> Po Chai Pills <input type="checkbox"/> COLTALIN <input type="checkbox"/> Peppermint Cure <input type="checkbox"/> Gastrointestinal pills <input type="checkbox"/> Eye drops	<input type="checkbox"/> Warwick offer letter <input type="checkbox"/> HKUST Testimonial <input type="checkbox"/> Accommodation offer letter <input type="checkbox"/> Financial support <input type="checkbox"/> HKUST offer letter <input type="checkbox"/> IELTS result certificate

Useful Links and Contacts

- Check if you need a UK visa, a very useful UK government website to check which visa should we use to enter UK - <https://www.gov.uk/check-uk-visa>