

Exchange Report

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Fall Term 2024-25

City St George's University of London, Bayes Business School, United Kingdom

Study Abroad Experience – Monthly Activity Log

September 2024

I arrived at London Heathrow in mid-September. The temperature was around 15-16 degrees Celsius, much cooler than in Hong Kong. I spent the first few days traveling to Brighton and Bath, visiting the renowned Seven Sisters Cliffs and Stonehenge. I also took a short trip to Liverpool but couldn't get tickets for the game, so I bought a jersey instead. In late September, I moved into Romano Court, the school's offered accommodation, and attended orientation day, where I met students from diverse backgrounds. I also joined two boat parties organized by the school, where I met freshers and other exchange students. It was a really fun way to start off the exchange semester.

October 2024

In October, classes began, and I enjoyed the lectures, which encouraged discussion and critical thinking. There were also group projects designed to foster understanding and apply knowledge to real-life cases. At the same time, I started exploring more of London, visiting the British Museum, Borough Market, Big Ben, and the London Eye. My roommates and I, along with other exchange students, also explored London's nightlife, visiting pubs and clubs.

In mid-October, I traveled to Switzerland, visiting Zurich and Grindelwald. The nature in Grindelwald was breathtaking, especially Jungfrauoch and Grindelwald First. I also did paragliding and mountain carting—both were once-in-a-lifetime experiences. I would definitely love to visit Switzerland again, particularly Interlaken for another paragliding experience. Zurich, on the other hand, felt a bit dull, but I had some wonderful encounters. I unexpectedly met a famous Hong Kong YouTuber, Torres Pit, by the river, and we had a quick chat and took a picture together. In a restaurant, my friends and I met a couple from Hong Kong who were so generous that they paid for our meal. It was truly heartwarming to meet people from my home city while traveling abroad.

November 2024

In November, I visited Italy and Greece. In Italy, I explored Milan and Rome. The Milan Cathedral was stunning, and the food in Italy was incredible—so fresh and flavorful. If you're a fan of Italian cuisine, you should definitely visit! I got gelato every day while I was there. In Rome, I visited landmarks like the Trevi Fountain and the Colosseum.

In Greece, I visited Athens and Santorini. While Athens had significant historical landmarks like the Acropolis, there wasn't much else to do. Santorini, on the other hand, was absolutely breathtaking. Since November is the off-peak season, the island wasn't crowded. The sunset and night views of the famous blue-and-white houses were gorgeous. I also drove on the island, which was exciting because it was my first time driving on the right side of the road.

As November came to an end, London started to transform with Christmas decorations. I visited Regent Street, and the holiday lights were truly magical.

December 2024

As my exchange semester came to an end, I spent time making final memories with my friends. We went to F1 indoor go-karting in Tottenham, visited Winter Wonderland, and played life-sized Monopoly. These experiences made for great memories before we all parted ways.

In mid-December, I was busy with my alternative assessments, but the workload was manageable. Later in the month, I went back to Tottenham to watch the Liverpool vs. Tottenham match. As a Liverpool fan, seeing a Premier League match for the first time was an unforgettable experience—especially since we won with an incredible 6-3 score!

On Christmas Day, I visited a friend's home to celebrate together. I was surprised to find that all shops, the Tube, and buses were closed for the holiday, so I'd definitely recommend planning ahead if visiting London during Christmas.

This exchange journey turned out to be totally unexpected. Initially, I thought I would spend most of my time traveling around Europe, but instead, I made lifelong friends from Canada, the U.S., and Switzerland. I never expected to form such strong friendships and spend so much time with them. While I wouldn't particularly miss London itself, as it reminds me of Hong Kong, I would definitely miss all the amazing people I met.

Shoutout to my incredible friends: Patrick, Lauryn, Bailey, Elina, Sam, Nathan, Mia, and Janik!

General Study Abroad Information

1) Visa Procedures

I am holding an HKSAR Passport, and no visa is required to enter the UK if the stay is less than six months.

2) Orientation Activities

I participated in the boat party and orientation sessions organized by City University of London. These events took place in late September, just before classes began.

3) International Services & Activities

International SOS provided updates on nearby events, including extreme weather conditions and strikes.

4) Accommodations

The university provided accommodation at Romano Court in Farringdon, which is about a 10-minute walk from campus.

- The school reached out to ask whether I wanted to take the accommodation.
- Laundry Room

5) Course Registration

About 1-2 months before the exchange semester began, the university sent a list of available modules. I had to fill out a form indicating my preferred courses, and the school enrolled me accordingly.

6) Courses Taken

I took the following courses:

- **Corporate Finance**
- **Derivative Securities**
- **Fixed Income Portfolio Management**
- **Mathematics for Finance**

These courses were relatively easy, with most having only online midterms and in-person final exams. There were few or no assignments.

7) Finance & Banking

I used a debit card for all transactions and did not use any cash during my stay.

8) Climate

It starts getting cold in October, so a down jacket is necessary. It rained less than I expected, but when it did, the rain was sudden. Carrying an umbrella is advisable when rain is expected.

9) Health & Safety

I did not use any health center services, but the NHS is accessible if needed.

- **Safety Tip:** Be cautious of pickpockets, especially in crowded areas.

10) Food

There are various restaurants near campus. You can also take the tube one stop to **Tottenham Court Road, Soho, or Chinatown**, where you can find a wide variety of food options.

11) Transportation

- The **London Underground (Tube)** is the most common way to commute.
- I also occasionally used **buses** and **Lime bikes** for short distances.
- Contactless payment with a **debit card** works for all transportation.

12) Communication

- I bought a **Three (3) SIM card** locally, which provided mobile data access.

13) Sports & Recreation Facilities

- Students can register for **CitySports**, which gives access to the university's gym and sports facilities.
- There was a special offer of **£40 for three months** during my stay.

14) Social Clubs & Networking Opportunities

- There are different social clubs, such as **ABACUS**, which organize various social events. These are great opportunities to meet other Asian students and expand your network.

15) Cautionary Measures

- **Pickpocketing** is common. Be careful if you usually keep your phone in your jacket pocket, as it can be easily stolen.