

Study Abroad Journal

Fall Term 2024-2025

University of Glasgow

Scotland, UK

CHOW, Ka Yi

Study Abroad Experience - Monthly Activity Log

September

I travelled to Glasgow with 3 friends I made in Glasgow newbies WeChat groups. They are all Mainland Chinese. We met at the Hong Kong Airport before we boarded the plane. One of the friends was accompanied by her dad. Her dad would stay in Glasgow for several days and cook for her before he left. I was so envious of her. I landed in Glasgow on 4 September, due to my careless mistake – I bought my air tickets one day earlier than planned – I had to spend a night in a hotel before I could move into the accommodation. My friends all live in different accommodations, so we parted at Glasgow Airport. They called Uber respectively, while I boarded the Airport Express Bus. I transferred to another bus when I reached the urban area. I met an Indian at the bus stop. She is an MBA student in Glasgow. We left the bus at the same stop. I obviously underestimated the weight of my suitcases, so she helped me to carry one of my suitcases to the hotel I live in. She is so nice!

On the second day, I planned to carry my suitcases to the accommodation one by one. However, when I arrived at the door of the accommodation, I found that I could not open the door. Fortunately, the house owner came to solve the problem of the door lock. The house is very beautiful and well-equipped, so I don't need to buy too many daily necessities.

After a day of rest, I asked a friend to go to the city center with me to buy toiletries. We walked around the city center, drank a cup of milk tea, and ran into two other friends. Later we went to IKEA. The IKEA in Glasgow is very big, but it is far from the urban area, so we took the bus. I bought a pillow and a quilt because the pillow and quilt provided by the house owner were not very comfortable and thick.

In the next few days, I participated in two university orientation activities, got familiar with the community, and got to know my neighbor. He is a local with a strong accent, and our communication is not very smooth, but he is very friendly. We occasionally invite each other to eat the dishes we cook.

Before the semester started, two friends and I signed up for a small tour group to the Scottish Highlands. It was really beautiful there. We were lucky because the first three days were sunny and only the fourth day was cloudy. I remember that I started school on September 24. The first week of classes was an introduction to the course content, so it was not busy, but I got lost on campus several times.

October

Regular classes required us to do a lot of pre-class readings, I also needed to work on a group project each week for the strategic management class. That was a lot of work. After groups were formed for digital marketing and the entrepreneurial ventures class, we started formulating ideas for our group projects. What's worth mentioning is that the group project for the entrepreneurial ventures class is a real-life business consulting project. Our group's client was a charity based in Glasgow. After meeting with our clients, we also met with our group's mentor, a consultant from a prestigious consultancy firm. She provided valuable insights to us. After class, I sometimes visit Kelvingrove Park nearby to feed squirrels and pigeons. They are all so fat and fluffy!

November

During the weekend, I travelled to Birmingham to visit my friend. She was an international student at the University of Birmingham. We met each other during the previous summer semester at HKUST. She was on her exchange studies, and we were classmates at that time. During my visit, my friend guided me around Birmingham. It is very modern and has many more stores in the city center compared to Glasgow. There was also a Chinatown packed with Chinese cuisines. I like the church in the city center because of its green bricks. It looks very pretty under the sun. The rest of November was spent studying, either working on group projects with my groupmates, or studying alone in the house. I also feed squirrels and pigeons in the park sometimes.

December

December is the exam period of the University of Glasgow. I had no more lessons after 4 December. I spent most of my time on my assignments, including a reflective essay for the Digital Marketing Strategy course, a group report and a reflective report for the Entrepreneurial Ventures: Management and Growth course, as well as the individual report for the Development of International Business course. The time for completing these assignments was quite limited because the submission deadlines were packed together after group presentations. After resting and hanging around in Glasgow for several days, I started packing my suitcases as I would travel in Europe for a month starting from late December. Before I left, I stored my suitcases in a garage of an MBA student in Glasgow and planned to get them back after travelling.

General Study Abroad Information

1) Visa Procedures: N/A (Only passport is required)

2) Orientation Activities:

In late August, I received an email from the University of Glasgow Exchange Team telling me that there would be an orientation in early September. It took place in an academic building. The main content includes how we should register for our courses, a session for introducing Scotland specialties, ice-breaking discussions with students sitting nearby, and promotions from the University of Glasgow's Art School on paid courses.

3) International Services & Activities:

There were some campus tours and city tours in early September, however, I did not join any as the quota was very limited and I discovered the activities not early enough.

4) Accommodation:

I booked my accommodation from Airbnb. Below is some information provided by the University of Glasgow on Private Student Residence:

West End:

1. The Ballet School, 261 West Princes Street, Glasgow G4 9EE
2. Bridge House, 180 Old Dumbarton Rd, Glasgow G3 8QB
3. Claremont House, 20 North Claremont St, Glasgow, G3 7LE
4. Dunaskin Mill, 5 Dunaskin Court, Glasgow G11 6OJ
5. Firhill Court, 150 Firhill Road, Glasgow G20
6. Gibson Street, 8-10 Gibson Street, Glasgow G12
7. Hyndland House, 10 Keith Street, Glasgow G11 6QQ
8. Kelvin Court, 30 Yorkhill St, Glasgow G3
9. Kelvingrove House, 1331 Argyle Street, Glasgow G3 8TL
10. Newton House, 457 Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow, G2 3LG
11. Thurso Street, 3 Thurso St, Glasgow G11
12. Tramworks, 107 Kelvinhaugh Street, Glasgow G3
13. True, Kelvinhaugh Street, Glasgow G3 8PX
14. Vita Student, Beith Street, Glasgow G11
15. West View, 2 Beith Court, Glasgow G11 6EH
16. West Village, Beith Street, Glasgow G11 6QA

17. Willowbank, 2A Willowbank Cres, Glasgow G3
18. Woodside House, 90 South Woodside Rd, Glasgow G20 6NL

City Centre:

1. 333 Bath Street, 333 Bath Street, Glasgow G2 4ER
2. Blackfriars, 4 Blackfriars Rd, Glasgow G1 1QL
3. Buchanan View, 35 Calgary Street, Glasgow G4 0XG
4. Collegelands, 10 Havannah Street, Glasgow G4
5. Collegelands, High Street, Glasgow G4 0UL
6. Dobbie's Point, 200 North Hanover St, Glasgow G4
7. Elgin Place, 240 Bath Street, Glasgow G2
8. Foundry Courtyard, 214 Kennedy Street, Glasgow G4 0DB
9. Gallery Apartments, 2 Port Dundas Place, Glasgow G2
10. George Street Apts., 151 George Street, Glasgow G1 1AB
11. Kyle Park House (UniLodgers), 171 Kyle St, Glasgow G4 0JQ
12. Kyle Park House by UNITE St, 171 Kyle Str, Glasgow G4 0JQ
13. Merchant Studios, 6 Havannah Street, Glasgow, G4 0AJ
14. Merchant City House, Queen Street, Glasgow, G1 1EB
15. Riverside, 260 Clyde Street, Glasgow, G1 4JH
16. St Mungo's, 200 St James Rd, Glasgow G4 0NT

5) Courses Registration:

Registration on MyGlasgow website under Academic Registration. After filling in all personal information required, there is a page for selecting courses. I listed the courses in order of my preferences.

6) Courses that I Have Taken:

4 courses in total, each of 15 credits.

MGT4023 Strategic Management (several group projects, 1 individual report, and 1 reflective essay)

MGT4060 Development of International Business (in-class group discussions, and 1 individual essay) (most content is about history and business events)

MGT4009 Digital Marketing Strategy (1 group project, and 1 reflective report)

MGT4019 Entrepreneurial Ventures: Management and Growth (1 group project, and 1 reflective report)

All courses are not difficult despite MGT4060 Development of International Business because I am weak in History.

7) Finance & Banking:

I registered for HSBC (HK) debit card before I went to Glasgow. My relatives gave me 300 pounds of cash and I only need to use my card with Google Pay and cash during the exchange period. I usually do my shopping in Lidl and Tesco, and cook my food to save money. My monthly expenses excluding rental and travelling fees are around 350 pounds.

8) Climate:

Glasgow is cold and humid. It rains a lot, but the rain is usually not heavy. It snowed once during my exchange period. In September, the temperature is around 15 degrees Celsius during the daytime. The coldest period is from late October till early December, the temperature can reach the lowest -4 degrees Celsius during the daytime.

9) Health & Safety:

Glasgow is quite safe as long as I stay at home from 8 pm to 7 am. However, the city center seems a bit messy, so I seldom visit the city center.

10) Food:

The Eatery I usually visit is Bao yu jiao (包与饺), it is relatively cheaper. For most of the meals, I cook my own food with an electric pot I brought from Hong Kong.

11) Transportation: As my accommodation is quite near the campus and the city center, I usually commute on foot. The apps Trainline/ Trainpal can be used to buy train tickets. For airline tickets, I bought them from Travel.com.

12) Communication:

I bought an EE sim card from Taobao before I went to Glasgow and used it throughout the exchange period. Fees can be paid on EE's official website/ app. I usually connect with my family and friends in Hong Kong using WhatsApp or WeChat with the messaging and the video call functions. As for communicating with local people, I usually use WhatsApp or Instagram.

13) Sports & Recreation Facilities:

There is a library and a gym on campus, but I have never used them. There are also several museums in Glasgow that are free of charge.

14) Social Clubs & Networking Opportunities:

The University of Glasgow arranged a mentor for me. He is a student from another part of the UK. He invited me to an orientation party arranged by a student union. I chatted with a lot of international students, local students, and exchange students and made some friends. During class, there are also a lot of group discussions. Group projects are also networking opportunities.

15) Cautionary measures: Emergency Contacts: If you are a student with an emergency, please contact the University's 24-hour emergency line on (+44) 0141 330 4444.

16) Others:

I encountered racists 3 times. They said something rude to me, but I did not respond. They also did the same to other people who are not white.

Items to Bring

1. Mobile phone card (if any, remember to bring the card pick-up pin)
2. Anti-theft fanny pack
3. Anti-theft small backpack
4. Bank cards
5. Small amount of cash (currently planning to bring £300) (small denominations)
6. Spare phone
7. Compression bag (bring a few more spare ones, it may leak after use)
8. A small amount of stationery
9. Computer
10. iPad
11. Various charging cables
12. Various batteries & power bank (carry-on)
13. Disinfectant wipes (for use on board)
14. Comb
15. Sturdy umbrella

16. Long down jacket (wear for the second half of the flight)
17. Jacket Set*2
18. Thermal underwear set*4 (the outer clothes don't have to be washed so often).
19. Some sweaters and trousers
20. 4-piece bedding set (said to be not very good in the UK)
21. Door resistors
22. Fold the kettle
23. Thermos mug
24. Girls bring a few menstruation pads just in case
25. Thermometer
26. Hair dryer
27. Medicine
28. Small humidifier
29. Folding hangers
30. Kitchen knife

Useful Links and Contacts

- Glasgow Essentials: <https://glasgowonline.gla.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=331>
(online, interactive, and personalised course covering the different aspects of studying at the University of Glasgow – Student Life, Studying at University, and Getting Around – each containing activities, checklists, and useful resources for getting ready for studies)
- MyGlasgow: <https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/>
(the student portal of the University of Glasgow)
- University's 24-hour emergency line: (+44) 0141 330 4444