

Exchange Report

Spring 2025

The University of Warwick
United Kingdom
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BBA (ACCT & MARK)



Monthly Activity Log

January

Coventry – London – Birmingham – Oxford – Bath - Exeter

Arriving at Birmingham International Airport early in the morning, I began my three-month exchange program greeted by bright sunshine. Soon after, I made my way to the student accommodation called *City Village*, located in the heart of Coventry. Its central location and convenient transport links made it easy to get around.

During the first few days, I wandered through the city centre, allowing myself to slow down and adjust to a more relaxed pace—bit by bit, slower and slower...

The semester soon began, marking the start of my new university life. I met many fellow students from Hong Kong, as well as new friends from Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia through mingling events and board game nights organized by Warwick.

Before long, I settled into a weekend routine of traveling around the UK with my exchange friends. We explored London, Birmingham, and Oxford, where Harry Potter references and Jellycats seemed to be everywhere. Amidst the historical charm of Victorian architecture, we also discovered Roman-style buildings in Bath, where the atmosphere felt like a slice of ancient Rome.

With Chinese New Year arriving early in late January, we celebrated with different groups of friends. I had a hotpot lunch with my lovely buddies from Warwick, and even enjoyed karaoke with the exchange friends we met during board game night!



CNY celebration with my exchange buddies

February

Windsor castle – Warwick castle – Leeds – Peak District – Edinburgh – Prague – Budapest – Vienna

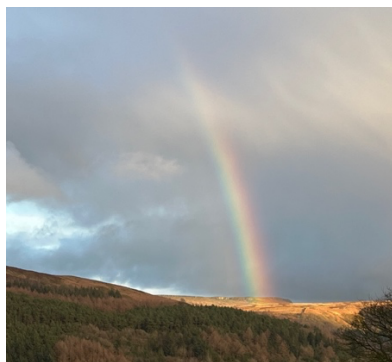
Although the semester is only just beginning back home in Hong Kong, mine at Warwick is already halfway through. That means group projects and assignments have started rolling in. Thankfully, I managed to complete our group project on time and met some really nice groupmates along the way!

In between study sessions, I enjoyed exploring different parts of Coventry on my own, especially discovering cozy cafés to study in.



Triumph Brewhouse, CV1 2NE
My favourite café in Coventry

At the same time, I was blown away by the natural beauty across the UK. From climbing Arthur's Seat in Edinburgh to hiking in the Peak District, I experienced scenery that felt almost magical. I even saw a real rainbow for the first time in my life! The weather changed so quickly—rain at first, then a rainbow twenty minutes later, followed by sunshine. Nature's timing was incredible.



Beautiful scenery captured in the Peak District

This month was full of firsts—including my very first cross-country trip from the UK to Prague in late February. I traveled to Eastern Europe with a friend I met during the orientation board game night, and it was an unforgettable experience.

There was so much to see and explore, and the atmosphere felt completely different from the UK. The food was incredibly affordable and delicious—every meal was a pleasant surprise!



March

Malta – France – Athens – Spain

For our second trip, in the early days of March, my friends and I visited Malta—a small island nation that's a popular summer destination for many people from the UK.

The sea views in Malta were absolutely stunning! Even without a set itinerary, simply wandering around was fun and full of surprises. We went hiking and soaked in the natural beauty around us, feeling truly connected to the world.



My lovely friends, from HK and Singapore

After a whirlwind of travels, it was time to return to reality—project deadlines loomed as the end of term approached. I didn't travel much during the final two weeks, instead spending time with the people who made this exchange so special.

I had many farewell gatherings with my exchange buddies, new friends, and my relocation host, Roger, whom I met through the relocation program organized by HKUST. He generously shared his experiences of living in Coventry, which gave me deeper insight into the city.

Beautiful scenery, meaningful conversations, and unforgettable friendships—these were the highlights of my journey. To capture this wonderful experience, I created a postcard for my friends, a small token of gratitude and memory.



After the term ended in mid-March, I began traveling with a friend I met in our Marketing course. Walking through streets steeped in different cultural backgrounds was an incredible experience — I especially loved chatting with locals, like restaurant owners, and hearing their stories.

"*What a Small World*" isn't just a song—it truly came to life when I unexpectedly met my Hong Kong exchange buddy's father in France. What are the odds? It felt like pure luck and fate colliding. Even now, as I write this exchange report, I still can't believe it happened—and not just because I got treated to a free dinner that night!



Free Meal served at a Thai restaurant in France

That unexpected coincidence made me feel even more grateful for every kind person I met along the way. The farewell to this exchange journey isn't the end—it's just the beginning of many future reunions. One day, I hope to visit my friends in their home countries, and if they ever come to Hong Kong, I'd be thrilled to show them around.

"See you soon, it's not a goodbye."

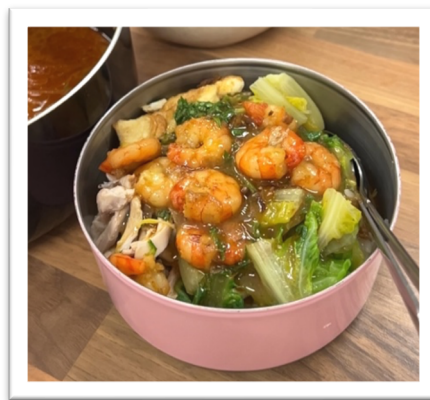
April

Coventry – Munich – Berlin – Den Hagg – Rotterdam – Amsterdam – London – Hong Kong

After my trips around Europe, I soon returned to Coventry. My accommodation contract had ended, so I stayed at my friends' place—huge thanks to them! Living together was so much fun and made the transition feel easy and comforting.

Then came the essays—five of them waiting for me. Although I had done some prep work during the term, it was still quite a challenge, especially since my major at HKUST rarely requires essay writing. Thankfully, I had my full-time friend by my side, mentoring me and sharing tips to help me write more efficiently.

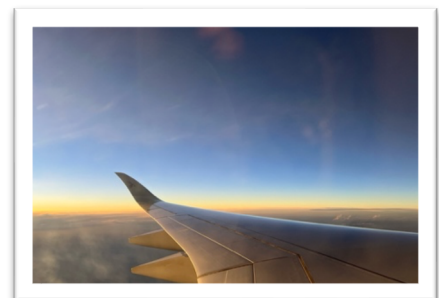
Those days weren't extraordinary, but they were truly lovely. We worked, cooked, and slept under the same roof, sharing simple moments that now feel unforgettable.



***KuChing Laksa** made by one of my lovely exchange buddies*

After finishing my coursework, I set off on a solo adventure during the Easter holiday. I traveled to Munich and Berlin, where I tried Germany's famous pork knuckle all by myself. After a 13-hour FlixBus ride, my solo journey came to an end as I reunited with an exchange buddy who had studied at HKUST last semester. She warmly welcomed me to her home country—the Netherlands—and showed me around. The blooming flowers and gentle spring winds felt like a soft farewell, carrying me back to London.

Back in the UK, I took one final trip to London to say goodbye to my besties. My last meal in Coventry marked the farewell to the University of Warwick, the city, and the friends who made it feel like home. As the airplane ascended, the sunset over the horizon symbolized the end of my exchange journey—a chapter closed, but without regrets.



General Study Abroad Information

1. Visa Procedure

Although permanent Hong Kong residents don't need a visa to enter the UK, starting in 2025, you'll need to apply for an Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA). The ETA costs £16 (as of late June 2025) and is valid for two years, allowing unlimited entries during that period.

To apply, download the **UK ETA** app. The process takes about 10 minutes, and confirmation is sent immediately after payment. Be sure to screenshot your application email—immigration officers in both Hong Kong and the UK may ask to see it.

Additionally, print out key documents for border checks and travel:

- Proof of accommodation
- Acceptance letter from Warwick
- Financial proof (e.g., bank statement)

2. Orientation Activities & International Services

Warwick organizes a compulsory welcome event for exchange students. You'll need to visit **Senate House** to collect your student ID and complete immigration procedures.

Optional mingling events and board game nights are held during the first few days—I highly recommend joining! That's where I met exchange friends from Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia.

Also, consider joining the **Buddy Scheme**, where I met my mentors—full-time Warwick students who made my experience even more enjoyable.

3. Accommodation

If you're attending both the spring and summer terms, Warwick offers on-campus halls. I visited a friend's hall in **Tocil**, near FAB, which had three shared bathrooms among six flatmates.

For one-term exchanges like mine, you'll need off-campus housing. Warwick partners with **City Village** and **Albany**:

- **City Village**: Centrally located, great transport links, £145/week. I lived on the top floor with five flatmates—shared kitchen, private bathroom.
- **Albany**: Farther from Coventry station and shopping malls, but has excellent common rooms with pool and table tennis tables.

Other options include:

- **Trinity View** (near Coventry station)
- **Vita Students Cannon Park** (walkable to campus, pricier, but includes weekday breakfast and weekly room cleaning)

4. Course Registration

Courses I enrolled in:

- EN123-30: Modern World Literature
- IB373-15: Advances in Management Accounting
- IB3L7-15: Global Issues in Marketing
- IB3M5-15: Advanced Analysis for Marketing Decisions
- IB3N9-15: Managing People in a Complex World

Course registration begins one month before the exchange. Do your **course mapping** right after enrolling in September—it takes time. Most students take four courses, but you can take up to five.

Moreover, it is advised to check the **WBS UG Student Handbook**—not all courses listed in HKUST’s credit transfer database are offered every semester.

5. Teaching & Assessment

Courses are structured into:

- Lectures (no attendance taken; recordings available)
- Seminars (attendance required; case studies and discussions)
- Asynchronous tasks (must be completed before class)

As a one-semester exchange student, I didn’t have exams. Most courses offered essay-based assessments instead.

6. Finance & Banking

I used my **HSBC HK debit card**, which had no overseas transaction fees. Online banking apps like **Monzo** and **Revolut**, and most credit cards, are widely accepted.

7. Climate

Coventry is generally sunnier than London, but still expect windy and rainy days that feel quite cold.

In winter, daylight fades early—by 3 p.m. in December and January. Days gradually get longer as spring approaches.

8. Health & Safety

Coventry is safe overall. Avoid engaging with strangers and try not to walk home alone after 10 p.m. Campus is very secure. In tourist areas like **Chinatown in London**, be extra cautious with your belongings.

Besides, do register with **International SOS**—they offer prompt and helpful advice during health emergencies.

9. Food

Dining out in the UK is expensive, but groceries are reasonably priced—some items like beef, milk, and bread are cheaper than in Hong Kong.

Supermarkets:

- Aldi: Cheapest
- Sainsbury's & M&S: Better quality, moderate prices
- Coventry Market: cleaner version of HK's wet markets, with affordable and tasty hot food

Favourite spots in Coventry:

- **Cafés:** Triumph Brewhouse, Bagel Brunch, Baxter Baristas
- **Asian food:** BiB Noodle Bar, To Pho
- **Chinese food:** See You Again Café (Coventry Market), TIAN Restaurant and Bar

10. Transportation

Bus:

- Contactless payment accepted
- Monthly pass (£49) covers Coventry, Birmingham, and Leamington Spa—watch out for outer-zone restrictions

Train: Get the **16–25 Railcard** for discounts

Coach: A budget-friendly alternative—usually 50–60% cheaper than trains

11. Communication

I bought a **Three UK** SIM in Hong Kong (10GB for £10). It's helpful to bring 1–2 SIMs from HK and buy more in the UK.

Providers I used:

- **Three UK:** Average experience, pricey, poor reception on trains
- **Lebara:** £5/month for 20GB with EU roaming—affordable and stable
- **O2:** Best connection, even in airports and trains—£10/month

12. Sports & Recreation

Warwick's **Sports Centre** (15 mins from WBS) offers gym, swimming, etc.—but gym access requires payment. The **SU Building** has a pool room (£1/game).

I didn't use campus facilities much because **City Village** had free gym, pool table, and even a mahjong table—perfect for hanging out with flatmates.

13. Social Clubs & Networking

Warwick offers many societies. For one-term students, I recommend **Warwick Volunteers**—flexible events and a great way to meet people.

14: Finances

- Air ticket between the place of departure and destination (round trip)
HKD 8700
- Accommodation (for the entire study abroad period)
HKD 15000
- Program fee (if applicable)
N/A
- Personal expenses (per month)
HKD 8000 – with travel expenses included

Checklist

Clothing

- Hats
- Down jackets
- Gloves and Scarfs
- Formal wear and leather shoes (for online interview)
- A small suitcase for European travel
- Sunglasses
- Sunscreen

Immigration

- Passport
- ETA approval email
- Offer Letter from University
- Bank statement
- Proof of Accommodation

Hygiene

- Personal Medicine
- Hand cream
- Personal hygiene products
- Hairdryer

Finance

- Credit and Debit Card
- Bank Card
- Some GBP, EURO Cash

Others

Umbrellas

Optional

- Beddings, Pillows and Duvet
- Cooking Utensils
- Snacks

Useful Links

Official UK Government Information on ETA

<https://www.gov.uk/eta>

Warwick Business School Exchange Module handbook

<https://warwick.ac.uk/services/studentopportunity/studentmobility/studyatwarwick/moduleinformation/partyearstudents-examinationmethods/>

HKUST credit transfer database

<https://registry.hkust.edu.hk/credit-transfer/credit-transfer-database-undergraduates-only-institutional-courses>