

# Uppsala University, Sweden

## Exchange Report

Yau Lui Ching, Annie  
2024-25 Spring

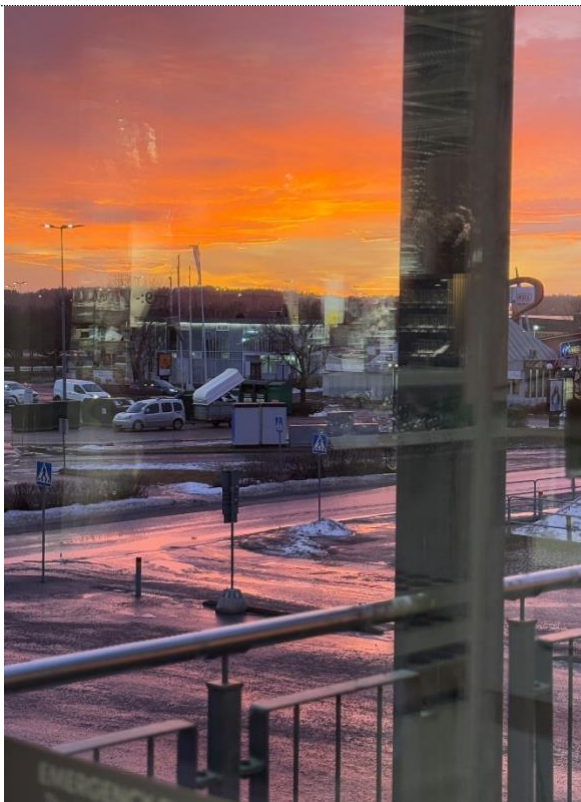
## Study Abroad Experience - Monthly Activity Log

### January

I arrived in Sweden in mid-January, which was the recommended arrival day from Uppsala University. Upon our arrival, the shuttle bus took us to the university building "Segerstedtshuset," where there was a welcome center. The staff there helped us activate and pick up everything we needed and brought us to our housing address (highly recommended for all of you to arrive on the recommended arrival day). After check-in, I went to the nearest IKEA and ICA to buy all the daily necessities that I needed.

I joined a welcome party in Flogsta, which is the student dorm where many international students lived. I am super lucky and grateful to live in Flogsta and meet many great people from all around the world. They are the most important factors that make my exchange life unforgettable and memorable, and I really cherish those moments with them.

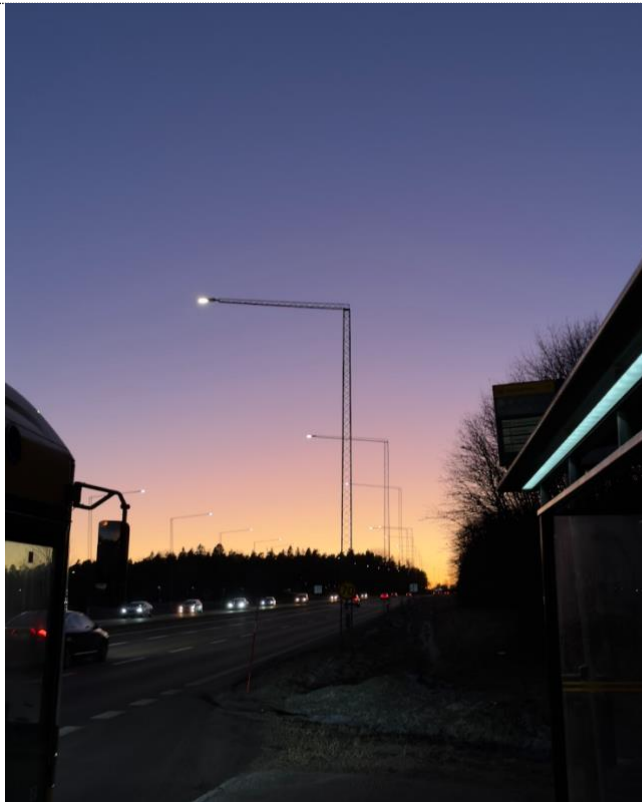
I also started my semester with the course Perspectives on Management Control. The class was full of international students, which made it very diverse. The professor emphasized our own opinions and asked us to share our thoughts a lot, which made me much more immersed in the lessons and helped me get to know more about managerial concepts and how they worked in real-life scenarios. At the end of the first month, I had started to get used to the short daylight and the cold weather, but also the warm people and the great nature everywhere.



## February

I continued my studies in February. The courses were more intensive than at UST, as each lasted only about two months. We needed to submit a report and ppt slides on the given cases each week. I worked well with all of my groupmates, and we all worked very hard for each presentation. The professors in Uppsala were also very supportive, and we always sought their advice.

Apart from studying, I did lots of “first-time-in-my-life things” in February. I saw the most beautiful sunset at the bus stop outside ICA with my friends, and I went to the reception of the Gasque at Snerikes nation, which is a Swedish student party that starts with a formal dinner and dancing. I went skiing and ice skating, and I couldn’t believe I would fall in love with skiing that much. February was unbelievably amazing.



Besides that, I also went to London and Iceland with friends who were also on exchange in Europe. I saw the aurora, glacier, black sand beach, sea cliffs, and geyser, all in one trip, and I was overwhelmed by how beautiful the world can be. It was an unforgettable experience.



## March

Life became busy in March as the final exam for the first phase was approaching. I revised with my classmates and got familiar with the materials. It wasn't difficult to pass the exam, as they used absolute grading, which meant you would pass as long as you reached certain scores. But give yourself around a week to revise, as exams here required both memorization and how well you could apply the concepts you learned in class to other cases.

I went skiing before the exam to motivate myself, and I got the chance to visit Stockholm, Milan, Venice, and Copenhagen with my friends that I met in Uppsala after the exam. I would say March was the happiest month during my exchange. I started to get to know new friends better, we became closer, and we still had a lot of time to spend together. The city views of Copenhagen and Stockholm were gorgeous and modern, the ski resort made me feel like I was in paradise, and Venice was magical.



We also discovered a hidden gem in Møns Klint, Denmark.

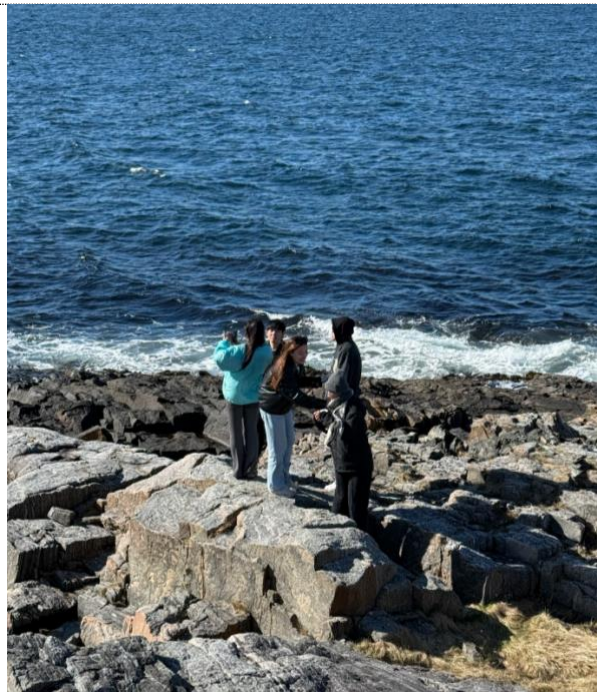
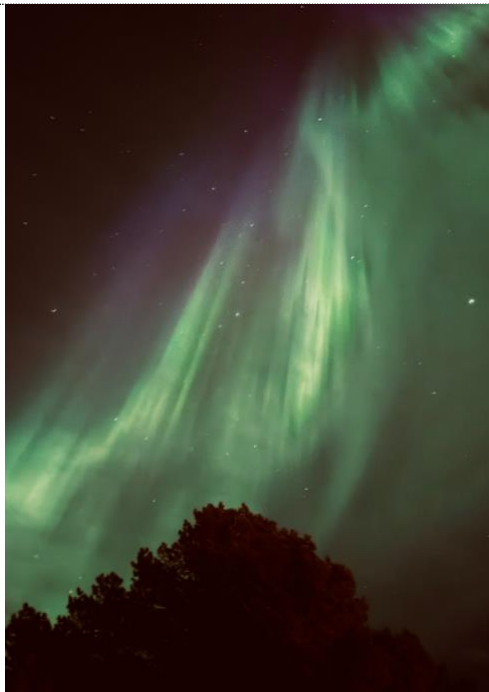


## April

In April, we had already started the new course: Business in Networks. This course focused on different aspects of analysing and performing business in networks, and it stressed the complex interdependencies that exist between companies through their interactions. I was very engaged in this course, as it was a topic that is very common in life but I had never thought about deeply.

We had lectures and seminars, both taking place once a week. In lectures, the professor explained the basic concepts and explored a variety of real-life business cases that applied to those concepts. In seminars, we were assigned certain concepts explained in lectures and gave our own opinions on how these concepts work and how we could improve them in real life. These study approaches made me more familiar with the materials, and I could feel that the professor really wanted us to learn something meaningful from the course.

Apart from studying, I took trips to the Netherlands and Norway. April was the bloom period for tulips, my friends from Paris and I got the chance to visit the Keukenhof Gardens, which is the world's largest tulip-themed garden. I also went on a road trip starting from Bergen, Norway, with friends from Taiwan and Malaysia. Norway's scenery was absolutely on par with Iceland's, it was a destination well worth visiting. We were surprised to see the aurora on the day before the trip ended, as it was already April, when auroras are rare, and the weather that day was not very good. We were very blessed.



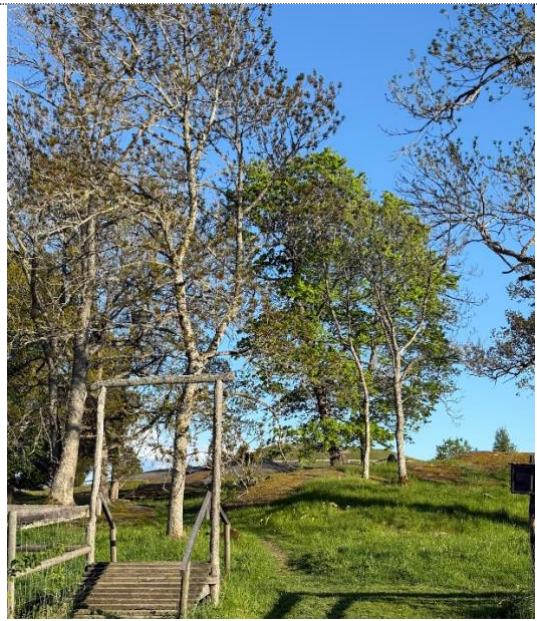
Speaking of April, we couldn't forget Valborg, also called "the last of April." It is one of Sweden's most cherished spring traditions. It started as a way to mark the change of seasons and scare away bad spirits, but it later became a happy community celebration. Uppsala is one of the Swedish cities that celebrated Valborg in a big way. I highly recommend all of you to join Valborg, it is a special experience that you couldn't experience elsewhere.



## May

In May, as the semester approached the end, I started to revise the course material and prepare for the final exam. For Business in Networks, it was a take-home exam. I wrote an essay on the given topic, just like what we did at UST. The exam was not hard, but you definitely needed to dedicate some time to work on it.

As the daylight became super long in May, I got the chance to walk around Flogsta and Uppsala Central and appreciate the great nature there. It was a healing process for me after a long day of study.



## June

As all courses ended, June was the end of my exchange journey. I started to bid farewell to friends as they went back to their own countries earlier than me, which was a very sad process, but I knew we would definitely meet again somewhere else around the world.

I started to pack all my stuff and went on my last journey to the Faroe Islands. The scenery there was very surreal, like many moments when I couldn't believe I was on earth. Although the weather was bad throughout the year there, I learned to appreciate nature more and understood that that's what shaped the Faroe Islands.



When I returned to Sweden after my trips, I knew my exchange was over. Before checking out of my dorm, a friend who studied in Uppsala told me to deep-clean my room very well. It's best to set aside at least four days for cleaning so you have enough time and don't lose your deposit.



Looking back on my exchange journey, it was very rewarding and definitely one of the best choices I've ever made.

# General Study Abroad Information

## 1. Visa Procedures

I hold an HKSAR passport. If I stay in Sweden for more than 90 days, I need a residence permit. The Swedish embassy in Hong Kong does not handle these applications. You can visit the Swedish embassy in Beijing or Shanghai. Alternatively, you can wait for a pop-up for ID and passport checks in Hong Kong. I know a lot of friends take this approach, and it works. In my case, I didn't know this at that time, so I went to the Swedish embassy in Shanghai. After I arrived in Uppsala, I went to the office there to take my photo and fingerprints.

## 2. Orientation Activities

As I mentioned before, I highly recommend you arrive on the recommended arrival day. The staff will be at the airport and take you to the university. They will help you sort out everything you need to know and bring you to your housing address.

## 3. International Services & Activities

There are many welcome events besides the orientation. The Uppsala Business & Economics Students Association runs a welcome event for new students, arranged by the Welcome Committee. The Welcome Weeks and Homecoming Weeks are held each term, and sign-up opens a few weeks before.

## 4. Accommodations

Uppsala University offers a wide array of housing choices. You can visit their website and choose based on your preferences. I lived in Flogsta, where most exchange students live. I had my own room with a private toilet and a shared kitchen with my 11 corridor mates. I recommend living in Flogsta if you love to socialize and want to meet more friends. But the cleanliness of the corridor really depends on luck. If you are concerned about this, you can also choose Klostergatan 16, which is very centrally located. The building was a hotel before. Each room has its own kitchen (light cooking is allowed) and toilet. Uppsala University will send you the application link before your arrival, please check your email regularly.

## 5. Courses Registration

Uppsala University will send an email outlining your eligibility to take different courses. Just follow the list and you can finish course registration step by step. Some courses can be transferred back to our school, which you can find in the credit transfer database.

## 6. Courses that I Have Taken

- Perspectives on Management Control
- Business in Networks
- Basic Swedish

Most of the assignments are written essays. The assessment methods vary from short questions to long essays. The workload is a bit heavier than at UST because one course here only lasts for two months. The courses are not challenging, but you definitely need to revise well before the exam.

## 7. Finance & Banking

You can only have a Swedish bank account if you stay in Sweden for more than 12 months and have a personal identity number. But it is totally fine if you don't have a Swedish bank account. You can just use your own credit or debit card. I didn't use any cash throughout the five months in Sweden. Find a better exchange rate credit or debit card before you go exchange.

## 8. Climate

I arrived in Sweden in January, when it was very cold and dark. The sun set around 15:00. Daylight started to get longer around March or April. In May, the weather was warmer and the days were much longer. In June, it was still bright in the evening.

## 9. Health & Safety

A doctor's visit in Sweden costs around SEK 3,000. If you aren't a resident with a personal identity number, I advise you to check your insurance coverage if you need to visit a doctor. As for safety, Uppsala is quite safe, but do pay attention when you go out.

## 10. Food

There is an ICA near Flogsta where most students nearby buy their groceries. You can also visit Willy's or Coop. I'd advise you to check your receipt after purchase, because some items need manual weighing and the staff may accidentally enter the wrong item. You can also go to the student nation for discounted lunch, fika, or dinner. Eating in a restaurant cost on average SEK 150 to 200.

## 11. Transportation

Most students ride bicycles or take the bus in Uppsala. I bought a discounted 90-day ticket on the UL app. You can only buy this with a valid student ID with the SL logo, otherwise, you may be fined. I bought a weekly ticket at the adult price before I got a valid student ID on the Mecenat app to avoid a fine.

## 12. Communication

Swedish people speak English very well, as do other European students, you can easily communicate with them. I bought data roaming SIM cards in Hong Kong.

## 13. Sports & Recreation Facilities

You can find a gym at Campus1477. They also offer the widest variety of training and group classes in Uppsala. You can find bouldering, volleyball, basketball, tennis, etc. there. The membership is affordable, and you can visit their website to check out more details.

## 14. Social Clubs & Networking Opportunities

Uppsala University has 13 student nations, which make student life special. They are at the heart of student life. The nations started in the 1600s and have been like a second home for students ever since. At a nation, you can have coffee, study, borrow books from the nation library, or join choirs and bands. You can also go to the nation pubs or dance at their clubs.

## 15. Cautionary measures

- Most people speak excellent English, but learning a few Swedish phrases is appreciated.
- Swedes value calm, respectful communication.
- Queue properly and respect personal space, don't cut in line.

- Fika culture: coffee breaks are common, join in, but keep voices moderate in quiet spaces.
- Alcohol rules are strict, don't drink on street and buy strong alcohol only at Systembolaget (ID required).
- Winters are cold, dark, and icy. Wear layers, a warm coat, hat, gloves, scarf, and waterproof boots.

## Items to Bring

- EU plug adapter and a small power strip
- Waterproof boots with good grip
- Thermal base layers and wool socks
- Lip balm and rich moisturizer
- Reusable shopping bag (stores often charge for bags)
- Printed prescriptions and medications in original packaging
- Copies (digital and paper) of passport, visa/permit, and insurance
- Earplugs and an eye mask (noisy housing, bright summer nights)
- Portable power bank

## Useful Links and Contacts

Uppsala University Housing Office:

<https://housingoffice.se/applying-temporary-housing/>

Uppsala University Nation Guide:

<https://www.nationsguiden.se/>

Mecenat:

<https://mecenat.com/se>

Swedish Embassy: Applying for residence permit cards:

<https://www.migrationsverket.se/en/word-explanations/residence-permit-cards.html>