Exchange Report

University of Warwick, United Kingdom

Fall Term 2025–26

Warwick Business School

Fall Term 2025–26

Yuhan Zhang

BBA in Operations Management and Finance

Study Abroad Experience – Monthly Activity Log

Late September – Arrival

I arrived in the UK in late September. I landed in London on September 25th and took an Uber to Coventry. My first impressions of the campus and surrounding area were that everything was very spread out, and that the weather was noticeably cooler and windier than in Hong Kong. I settled into a 1b1b rental I rented myself in downtown Coventry, about 15 minutes by bus from the campus. During the first few days, I attended WBS's orientation events and met lots of friends, which helped me feel less nervous about starting in a new academic environment. Over the first weekend there, I travelled to Leamington Spa, a small town near Warwick, with my new friends. The view there was super chill and beautiful.

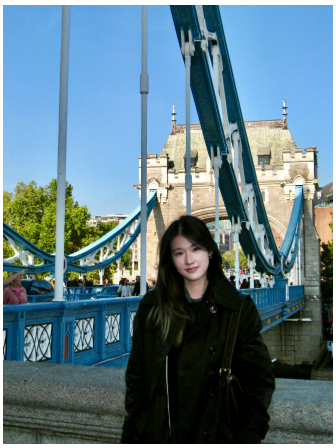


(View in Leamington Spa)

October – Adapting to Courses and Daily Life

In October, teaching was fully underway, and I started to adapt to Warwick's academic style. I took four modules: Project Management, International Financial Management, Investment Management, and Econometrics, which together provided a good mix of qualitative and quantitative learning. In Project Management, I worked on group tasks that required planning, scheduling, and identifying risks, which helped me understand how theoretical frameworks are applied to real projects. Outside class, I went to London on the first weekend in October, visiting tourist attractions there.



November – Deepening Learning and Weekend Trips

November was the busiest month academically, with assignments, group projects, and assessments in all three modules. In International Financial Management, I learned about foreign exchange markets, multinational corporations, and how financial decisions are affected by currency risks. Econometrics required more independent work with data, including using statistical tools to run regressions and interpret empirical results, which strengthened my analytical and coding skills. At the same time, I tried to make use of weekends to travel: I took trips to Birmingham and Windermere, which allowed me to experience the natural scenery of the Big City and the Lake District. The short trips helped me appreciate different sides of the UK and also gave me a mental break from coursework.




Early December – Final Projects and Trips in Europe

In early December, I focused on completing final essays for the four modules and wrapping up my exchange. There were final major assignments for my modules, and I had to manage my time carefully to revise lecture materials, finish group work, and polish written reports. Packing up my flat and preparing to leave also made me reflect on how quickly I had adapted to living independently in a new country, only to have to leave it behind. I also travelled to other European countries, such as France and Norway. I spent a few days enjoying the good sea views in Cannes, France, and also, luckily, saw the Aurora in Norway.





<u>General Study Abroad Information</u>

1) Visa Procedures

I travelled with a mainland passport and applied for a simple short-term tourist visa (6 months) for my exchange period. The application required documents such as the offer or confirmation letter from the University of Warwick, financial proof, a valid passport, and a recent photo, and it had to be submitted online before booking a biometrics appointment. I applied for the visa in early July. The visa processing time can vary, so I recommend that future students start preparing early, carefully read the latest requirements on the official UK government website, and allow enough time for the visa to be issued before the start of the semester.

2) Orientation Activities

Warwick organised orientation activities at the start of the term, including welcome talks, campus tours, and briefings for international and exchange students. Attending orientation was helpful because it allowed me to meet staff and fellow students, ask

questions about practical matters, and become more familiar with the campus.

3) International Services & Activities

The international or exchange office provided information via email, websites, and in-person support throughout the semester. They offered guidance on enrolment and general student support.

4) Accommodations

During my exchange, I lived in an off-campus 1-bedroom, 1-bathroom apartment that I found and rented on my own. This arrangement gave me a high level of privacy and a home-like environment, with my own kitchen and bathroom, but it also meant I had to manage rent, utilities, and daily commuting myself. The University of Warwick also collaborates with an accommodation partner that provides en-suite rooms for students. For those who prefer to arrange their own housing like me, I recommend searching early on reliable rental platforms or agents, checking commuting routes, reading tenancy contracts carefully, and budgeting for additional costs such as utilities and council tax.

5) Courses Registration

Course registration involved selecting modules before or around the start of the term according to Warwick's timeline and procedures. I had to check module availability, prerequisites, and any restrictions for exchange students, and then submit my choices through the university's online system. There was a limited add/drop period, so it was important to attend the first classes, confirm that the content and schedule suited me, and communicate quickly with academic coordinators if a change was necessary.

6) Courses Taken

EC338-15 Econometrics 2: Microeconometrics

IB357-15 Investment Management

IB382-15 Project Management

IB394-15 International Financial Management

I have taken the 4 courses above. For the fall semester student exchange, we can take at least 3 courses and up to 4. The SBM exchange student will be exchanging with Warwick Business School, and economic classes are not included in the WBS program. So I have to apply for ECON classes in the social science college, especially. The registration process differed from that of normal WBS courses and for

students want to take ECON or other common core classes, it will be better if you search and ask how to register those classes in the orientation sessions.

7) Finance & Banking

The local currency is the British Pound (GBP), and the main expenses include rent, groceries, transportation, study materials, and occasional travel. I mainly relied on the HSBC Mastercard and kept some cash for small purchases when needed. No need to open a UK account there if you only exchange for one semester.

8) Climate

From late September to early December, the weather in Coventry and the surrounding area was generally cool and rainy. Temperatures gradually dropped from mild early-autumn levels to colder late-autumn conditions, and daylight hours became noticeably shorter as winter approached. I found it useful to bring and wear layers, including a warm coat, a waterproof jacket, and comfortable walking shoes for wet weather. Sunlight is very rare in winter there, so it’s better to bring some vitamins to stay energetic.

9) Health & Safety

There are health services in and around campus, and students can register with local healthcare providers for non-emergency medical issues. On campus and in Coventry city center, I generally felt safe, but I still followed basic precautions such as keeping valuables secure and being aware of my surroundings, especially at night.

10) Food

I mainly cooked in my own kitchen in the off-campus flat, which helped me save money and eat according to my preferences. There were supermarkets like Sainsbury's and M&S in the Coventry city centre where I could buy ingredients, and I could also find some Asian food like hotpot sauce in Chinese convenience stores. The Foodpanda app is also really helpful when you want to order delivery, and it offers various Chinese restaurants.

11) Transportation

Living in downtown Coventry was very convenient for transportation. Coventry has a train station with frequent services to nearby cities and towns, and it is only about 20 minutes by train to Birmingham Airport, making flying in and out quite efficient. Buses are commonly used to commute between the city centre, campus, and surrounding areas, so it is helpful to become familiar with local routes and passes.

12) Communication

I purchased a local SIM card and data plan in the UK, which allowed me to use mobile data for navigation, messaging, and calls. Campus and many public places offered Wi-Fi, so staying connected with family and friends through apps such as WhatsApp or other messaging platforms was easy. Communication with local people and staff was generally smooth in English, although it took a short time to get used to different accents.

13) Sports & Recreation Facilities

Warwick has sports and recreation facilities such as a sports centre, gym, and various courts and pitches. Students can usually access these facilities through memberships or pay-per-use arrangements, and some activities require advance booking. The gym there needs to be paid for, unlike UST.

14) Social Clubs & Networking Opportunities

There are many student societies and clubs at Warwick, ranging from academic and professional societies to cultural and hobby-based groups. I joined the dance club there and attended several events and classes. It was really fun.

15) Cautionary Measures

It is important to be aware of cultural norms and practical issues when living abroad. For example, being punctual, queuing politely, and respecting personal space are common expectations in the UK. Students should also pay attention to safety in crowded places, keep an eye on their belongings, check the last bus or train times when travelling, and be cautious when signing rental contracts or making large payments.

Items to Bring

- Passport, visa, and printed copies of important documents for customs (offer letter, insurance documents).

- Bank cards that work overseas and some GBP cash for initial expenses.

- Warm clothing suitable for the UK autumn, including a coat, sweaters, a waterproof jacket, and comfortable walking shoes.

- Laptop, chargers, and a UK plug adapter, plus any study materials you like to use.

- Basic medicines like Panadol and any personal items that might be harder to find or

more expensive abroad.

Useful Links and Contacts

- Official website of the University of Warwick and its international/exchange pages. https://warwick.ac.uk/services/studentopportunity/studentmobility/studyatwarwick/

- Local transport and train information websites covering Coventry and nearby areas.

- UK emergency number (999) and information on campus security and support services.