

Monthly Report

September 2016

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[1] Preparation for studying abroad

The biggest event for me before the departure was getting a Tier 4 General Student Visa. Actually, I submitted wrong documents for the Tier 4 Visa application and felt panicked after submission. This process was complicated and often changeable (Caution; what I state here is at September 2016), so we should be careful. Hokkaido University students generally go to the British universities which are authorized as both of Tier 4 Sponsor and Higher Education Institution. Also, Japanese passport holders are generally considered as low-risk, so the Visa application process is simpler than other countries. Therefore, minimum required documents for me were only 3, my passport, my application form copy, and my CAS mail (Fig 1) copy. It seemed to be easy. However, I had misunderstood about the CAS: that is, I had thought that only CAS number was needed. CAS number contains all the necessary information about me, and officers at the university or the Visa assessment office can access to this information if they have my CAS number. In preparing the application form of Tier 4 Visa, this CAS number was asked to fill out. Because I noted my CAS number in the application form, I thought that CAS mail copy was not necessary. This was my failure. Although I did not submit my CAS letter, my Visa was somehow validated successfully. However, this was dangerous or disturbing, so I thought I should have submitted required documents carefully.

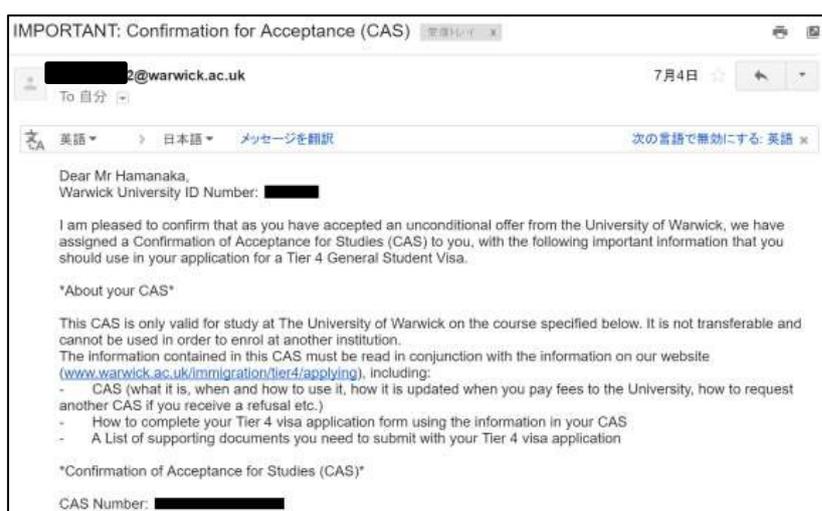


Fig 1. A part of my CAS mail.

[2] Departure from Japan and arrival in UK

My flight day to UK was on 27th September, which was an unseasonably hot and sunny day. I enjoyed my flight with eating foods, watching movies, listening to music, and sleeping (Fig 2). It was a little bit funny that the last Japanese meal I ate before arriving in the UK was a Yoshinoya's gyudon (Fig 3). Flight was a nice time but it was so long, about 12 hours and a half, that I felt fatigued.

When I arrived at the London Heathrow Airport, Warwick Welcome Students welcomed me and transported directly to the University by bus. At that time, I met another Japanese who has been living in the UK since he was a high schooler and he entered into Warwick this year. He taught me some interesting things such as about university entering exam system, weather, sports, and religion in the UK. His existence was encouraging for me. I must use English communicating with foreigners in order to improve my English, but I also think that being friends with a person like him here is important for me,



Fig 2. Movie and foods on an airplane.



Fig 3. Yoshinoya's gyudon on an airplane.

[3] The first week at Warwick

Although Hokkaido University is so big, Warwick University is much bigger and I was overwhelmed. It is like one city, and there are all facilities that we students need, from grocery stores or cafes to even theatres (Fig 4-6). Warwick is also filled with nature, so I can see squirrels (Fig 7-8). During the first week, welcome events for freshers were held, and I attended some of them, such as Warwick Campus Tour, Tea party, Language Café,

and Christian Union free BBQ. Through these programs, I felt my English skill was much inferior to other international students. I can manage to communicate in a one-on-one situation, but in a discussion or plural member situation, I cannot enter its conversation and feel frustration.

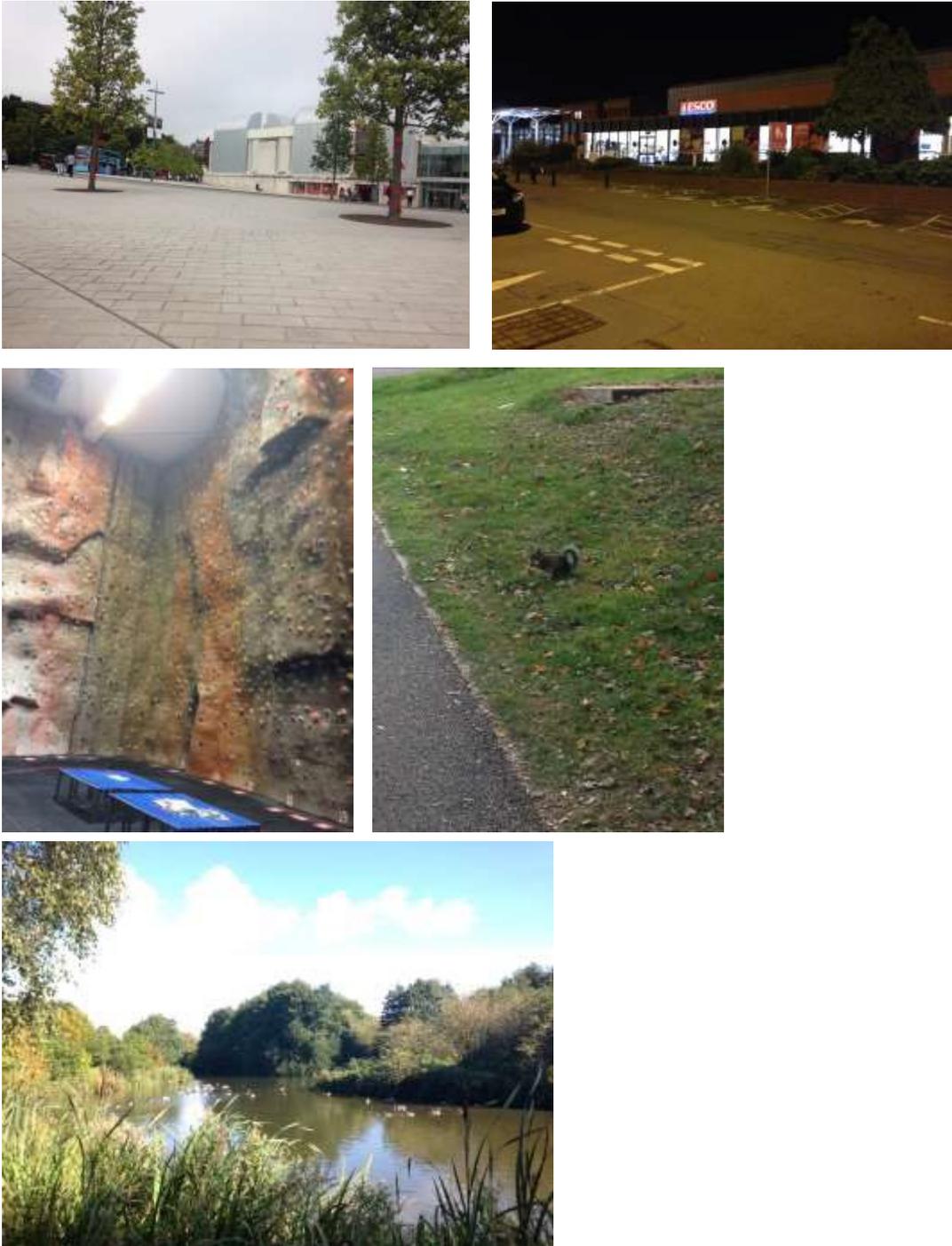


Fig 4-8. Pictures of the University of Warwick