

Monthly Report

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This is the final report of my studying abroad program. I have finally finished my exchange program and come back to Japan. I am really grateful for the people who helped me accomplish this exchange program. I describe my plans and events during the exchange program, so please read this report as one of the cases of studying abroad.

There were some reasons that made me decide to study abroad, but above all I was planning to go on to a graduate school in a foreign country. However, I did not have any confidence in my ability to cope with a life of a foreign graduate school. I wanted to test my ability and actually compete with foreign students. This was the biggest reason why I decided to study abroad.

After deciding to apply to the exchange program, I first chose a few universities in an English-speaking country from the school list of the exchange program. Then I planned to take the IELTS exam and get at least the minimum score to be accepted as an exchange student. I did not have enough time by the deadline of the application, so I took the IELTS test only once during the summer vacation of the 2nd year. I managed to get the minimum score, overall 6.0, which was actually not enough score to deal with the university life in the UK, but that was fine to be accepted as an exchange student at Warwick. I successfully passed the interview held at Hokudai in April 2016, and officially selected as an exchange student from Hokudai to Warwick.

As I mentioned earlier, I was planning to go on to a foreign graduate school, so I wanted to do the research work in addition to taking lectures. I searched research labs at Warwick, which suits my interest, and I tried to make contact with the supervisor. To be honest, I was unwilling to make contact with a foreign supervisor, so at first I tried to get in touch with a Japanese professor. Fortunately, he welcomed me as a visiting student, and my plan progressed very well. Until the beginning of the exchange program, I studied some contents in Biology in English reading "The Cell" and articles, and tried to get used to the English biological sentences. I also watched some biological lecture movies in English on the internet to get used to the lectures in English.

Although I made some efforts to brush up my English, I could not grasp what people said and I could not speak what I wanted to say at the first days. To catch up with lectures, I recorded lectures and listened to them again and again. Some lectures were officially

recorded by the university, so we students could use those recordings for the review. Although I could not fully understand what people said even at the end of the exchange program, I managed to get credits from all the modules that I took. I would say that you can get a good mark if you study contents of lectures again and again even if you are not good at English. It was also really lucky to be able to make some friends to study together and exchange information. I show all my results of the modules below just for reference.

Module	Credit	Mark	Grade
BS341. Final year research project	24 CATS	75	First
BS347. Oncology	12 CATS	71	First
BS354. Tutorial	12 CATS	80	First
LF305. Dynamics of Biological Systems	12 CATS	55	Lower Second

*BS341 is a distinct research work from the visiting research work.

*Grading system; First = 100 ~ 70, Upper Second = 69 ~ 60, Lower Second = 59 ~ 50, Third = 49 ~ 40, Fail = 39 ~ 0.

The university officially recommended students to take 120 CATS, but I only took 60 CATS. This was because I wanted to split my workload half-and-half between the study and the research work, but I felt that I should have taken more modules because I had enough time to study much more. To compensate for the gap time, I dedicated myself for the research work. I show a concise list of my research work during the exchange program below.

Month	What I did in the lab
10	Basic research training; Bacterial culture, DNA extraction, PCR, enzymatic digestion, electrophoresis, and so on.
11 ~ 2	Establishment of the double RNAi library. I made constructs for about 90 target genes.
3 ~ 6	RNAi and microscopic observation.

I am satisfied with my exchange program in terms of the study and the research work because I could get some good marks, establish the double RNAi library and get some useful data. This experience gave me a confidence to challenge new things. If you have at least a little interest in an exchange program, you should try it. It would give you some great experiences for sure. If you need a help and a support, please make contact with me casually via Biological Sciences (Macromolecular Functions) Administration Office (E-mail: hp_polyjimu@mail.sci.hokudai.ac.jp). Thank you for reading my reports.