

## Report on Participating Special Exchange Programme at Kyoto University

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2018/12/03-2019/02/01

I am writing to report on my study experience on the exchange programme at Kyoto University in Winter Term 2018/2019. What I hoped to gain from this programme were academic knowledge, personal development, and career development. However, the outcome of this programme exceeded my previous expectations in several ways. This programme has provided me with more than just academic knowledge, it also enhanced my creativity and opened up my vision towards the world. This paper will be divided into four parts: educational outcomes, experiences at Kyoto University, the content of the programme, and the impact on my career plans, all of which will be demonstrated in the following paragraphs.

Firstly, this programme has improved my academic knowledge and understanding of the business world. Also, it was a good opportunity to share my opinions and discuss them with friends and professors, as a result I could get out of my comfort zone and enjoy discussions with people from different backgrounds and cultures. I gained a lot of knowledge and new ideas from both in and out of the classroom.

I had a chance to visit Kyoto Makers Garage and Keihanna Innovation Center Kyoto. Kyoto Makers Garage is a workspace that provides equipment and consultation service to small business or individuals who have an idea for a start-up project, whereas Keihanna Innovation Center Kyoto aimed to promote innovation, research, and development at a regional or national scale. These two places broadened my perspective about innovation, which is a crucial factor in the success of business nowadays. Companies around the world seek new ideas and new technology to gain a market advantage. For my study plan, this programme inspired me to become more interested in the study of entrepreneurship and innovation management. I found that leadership and management skills are essential competencies for people.

Secondly, this was the first time for me to study abroad, and I have gained much from the experience of the Japanese education system. I felt very comfortable in class, where I could share my opinion and discuss with friends and professors in an international atmosphere. Everyone in the classroom is open-minded and accepts the different views and the different ways of thinking of each other. This allowed me to develop my cross-cultural communication skills.

In terms of life outside of university, it was an excellent opportunity to experience the beauty of this old city "Kyoto," where I could explore rich aspects of culture in every corner of this town. I have learned Japanese culture from inside the class and from real experiences. Moreover, I appreciate the quality time I could spend by myself in this quiet city away from the busy life in my hometown. Also, I learned how to adapt myself to a new environment, interact with new people, and enjoy Japanese food, culture, and weather. So, I enjoyed spending my time as a Kyoto University student.

Moving on to the content of the program, the content is very concise, useful, and up-to-date. The programme provided not only the content from textbooks, but it also offers a chance to learn from a guest lecturer who works in that specific area. Therefore, I got a lot of real experience and opinions of experts who are directly involved in a specific field. For example, the International Development Assistance Policy class changed my

perspective towards international development by learning from many experts who came from the public sector, the private sector, and NGOs. Before attending the class, my attitude towards international development was skeptical, yet this course provided more information about the benefit of each project. Also, the guest lecturers shared many exciting case studies from which I could learn, the successes and failures of each case study are a useful reference for my future career.

The Qualitative Research Method course helped me to reflect on my own research in progress which I conduct in Thailand. It identified what I have to adjust in my previous research plan. Another course I took was “Cross-cultural Management”, the professor provided many exciting case studies from multinational companies around the world, which I can apply to real life. I have learned that diversity could create creativity and business people do not need to assimilate into another culture entirely, but we need to accept differences and know how to work with others.

Lastly, this programme has had much impact on my future career plans because it has opened up my vision towards the world and to see a business opportunity for my future. I had the chance to discuss with highly experienced professors, guest lecturers, experts during the field trips and my classmates from various countries. Also, I had time to observe the businesses, see how staff deal with customers in Japanese culture, and the behavior of customers. Thus, I discovered many new ideas, processes, and systems, which helped me to see a unique business opportunity that I can apply with my current business in Thailand. So, it has also inspired me to start a new business.

As an exchange student at Kyoto University, I have gained knowledge, friendship, and new ideas. Thank you for the warm welcome and kindness from everyone at Kyoto University. It will be a precious memory in my life.