### Participant#1

### Academic and Career Factor

**Researcher: What aspects of the UK/Asian education system are attracting you to pursue a master’s degree here?**

Interviewee: 首先，英国的研究生只需要一年，而且我在这里读本科，申请英国的研究生比较有优势。我不用再考一次雅思了。其次是我习惯了这里的教学和环境，如果要我再花时间适应一个新的国家，会让我觉得很累。还有一点是，英国有我非常想去的学校，学校的排名和认可度对我来说很重要。

去香港的话意味着有更多从大陆考来的研究生同学，我感觉压力很大，因为大陆的教育风格比较制度化，也更严格一些，我担心自己跟不上这些来自中国大陆本科同学的学习节奏。

First of all, the postgraduate study in the UK only takes one year, and I am an undergraduate student here, so it is more advantageous to apply for postgraduate study in the UK. I don't have to take the IELTS again. Secondly, I am used to the teaching and the environment here. If I have to spend time adjusting to a new country, it will make me feel tired. Another point is that there are schools in the UK that I really want to go to, and the ranking and recognition of the schools are very important to me.

Going to Hong Kong means that there will be more graduate students from the mainland, and I feel a lot of pressure, because the mainland's education style is more institutionalized and more strict, and I worry that I can't keep up with the learning pace of these undergraduate students from the mainland.

**Researcher: Do you believe that the academic achievement in the UK/Asia will influence your career destination, why?**

Interviewee: 我觉得影响挺大，因为现在竞争很激烈嘛。最开始考虑要来英国读书也是因为英国的大学很好，HR在筛选简历时不至于看到我的学历就把我排除出去。我的职业规划是与国际教育相关的，所以我有一个留学的经历会比较有说服力，甚至可以说算刚需吧。而且现在就业市场偏向国际化，外企的待遇还是挺好的，我也有考虑过以后进外企工作。所以留过学意味着我有不错的英文沟通能力，能适应更多岗位要求。

I think it's a big deal because there's a lot of competition right now. At the very beginning, I considered to study in the UK because the universities in the UK are very good, and HR would not exclude me based on my academic qualifications easily. My career plan is related to international education, so I have a study abroad experience will be more convincing, or even just needed. And now the job market tends to be international, the treatment of foreign companies is still very good, I have also considered to work in a foreign company in the future. Therefore, having studied abroad means that I have good English communication skills and can adapt to more job requirements.

**Researcher ：Ok，do you think this master degree will boost the chance of getting a job?**

Interviewee：是的。如果我有研究生学历，找工作会更受欢迎一些。其实，现在研究生越来越多了，我至少不能落后于别人。杜伦大学虽然在英国认可度很高，但是现在留英工作很不现实，政策也不支持。就比如说新首相提高了工作签证的颁发要求，大部分应届毕业生都很难达到这个水平。我不考虑在英国找工作，我还是更想回家。国内HR很看中QS排名，杜伦这两年的排名趋势下降，我很担心HR对我们学校的认可度降低。所以，我想尽可能申请到一个排名较高的学校读研，中国的学历认可度主要还是取决于QS排名的。

Yes. If I had a graduate degree, I would be more welcome to get a job. In fact, now that there are more and more graduate students, I can at least not lag behind others. Although Durham University is highly recognized in the UK, it is unrealistic to work in the UK now, and the policy is not supportive. For example, the new prime minister has raised the requirements for issuing work visas, which are difficult for most new graduates to meet. I'm not thinking about getting a job in the UK. I'd rather go home. Domestic HR attaches great importance to QS ranking, and Durham's ranking trend has declined in the past two years. I am worried that HR's recognition of our school will decrease. Therefore, I want to apply for a graduate school with a high ranking as much as possible. The degree recognition in China mainly depends on QS rankings.

### Security Concern Factor

**Researcher：Have you experienced any safety issues when you were studying in the UK?**

Interviewee：总的来说杜伦是一个比较安全的城市，但是其他大城市就不一定了。就我身边同学的经历来看，我们基本没有经历过抢劫、枪击这种严重的犯罪事件，但是或多或少都遇到过醉鬼，尤其是晚上。杜伦最大的安全问题可能就是山路多，很多小路没有路灯，晚上回家会很害怕。

我遇到过两次，一次是半夜三点多，有醉鬼不断地用力敲打我住处的门，我和室友非常害怕，因为我们的住处陈设老旧，门不牢固，这个人一直在门口待到天亮才离开。还有一次，是我从图书馆回来，当时大概十一点多，街上有很多从酒吧出来的人，有一个醉汉试图过来和我说话，不停地问我要去哪里，好在对方没有跟着我。但是在这件事以后，我不会再这么晚回家了。

Durham is generally a safer city, but the same cannot be said for other large cities. From the experience of the students around me, we have hardly experienced serious crimes such as robbery and shooting, but we have encountered drunks more or less, especially at night. Perhaps the biggest safety problem in Durham is that there are many mountain roads, many of which have no street lights, and it is very scary to go home at night.

I have met twice, once at three o’clock in the morning, a drunk man repeatedly knocked hard on the door of my residence, my roommate and I were very afraid, because our apartment was old and the door was not strong, and this man stayed at the door until dawn. Another time, when I was coming back from the library, it was about eleven o 'clock, and there were a lot of people out of the bar in the street, and a drunk tried to come and talk to me, and kept asking me where I was going, but luckily he wasn't following me. But after this, I won't come home so late again.

**Researcher`:Do you believe this experience determine your final choice in postgraduate school?**

Interviewee：嗯，其实没有。尽管这些问题让我很担心，而且我决定去的研究生学校在伦敦，只会比杜伦更危险。我听说过很多起伦敦抢劫手机的案件，还有枪击等，其实我的父母家人都很关心这一点。但是除了更加注重保护自己，我并不能做些什么，毕竟我已经收到了很好的offer，我不能放弃这个机会。

Well, not really. Although these problems worried me, and the postgraduate school I had decided to go to was in London, it would only be more dangerous than Durham. I have heard many cases of mobile phone robbery in London, as well as shooting and so on, in fact, my parents and family are very concerned about this. But there is nothing I can do except pay more attention to protect myself, after all, I have received a good offer and I can't give up this opportunity.

**Researcher：Are there any special safety concerns facilitate your choice to study in one place over another?**

Interviewee：从杜伦转移到伦敦的话，我要考虑的安全因素更多了。首先是路上要更注意保护好自己的手机和钱包，减少夜间出行，然后我会选择学生宿舍而不是社会房源，这样一来有门禁，不会有外部人员进入。最主要的还是出门保持低调，看好随身物品。

When I move from Durham to London, I have more security to consider. First of all, we should pay more attention to protect our mobile phones and wallets on the road, reduce night travel, and then I will choose student dormitories rather than social housing, so that there is access control, there will be no outsiders to enter. The main thing is to keep a low profile and look after your belongings.

### Financial Factor

**Researcher：What do you think of the cost of education (e.g. tuition fees, rent and transportation) in the UK during your undergraduate years?**

Interviewee：本科这三年花费挺大的，占比最高的还是学费和房租。其实杜伦大学的生活成本相比其他学校不算高，我在租房之前也对比了很多房源，最后挑选了性价比最高的。所以和其他同学相比，我生活开销不算大。但消费水平和国内肯定不能比，买东西时尤其不能考虑汇率，不然会很心疼。有时候，我会因为舍不得买东西而特别想念国内。

The three years of undergraduate spending is very large, accounting for the highest proportion of tuition fees and rent. In fact, the cost of living at Durham University is not high compared to other schools, I also compared a lot of housing before renting, and finally chose the most cost-effective. So compared with other students, my living expenses are not big. But the level of consumption and domestic certainly can not be compared, especially when buying things can not consider the exchange rate, otherwise it will be very distressed. Sometimes, I miss China so much because I don't want to buy anything.

**Researcher：What are the financial aspect (transportation, rental issues, tuition fee and exchange rate) in your decision to pursue a master’s degree in the UK versus Asia?**

Interviewee：我的父母也考虑过香港以及其他亚洲地区。新加坡虽然也很好，但是不太适合我，而且我也不想再去适应一个新的环境了。香港是很不错的选择，相对来说花销会小很多，而且周末可以去深圳购物，这样的话更划算。但是出于其他因素我还是选择在英国读研，因为只有一年。我就觉得三年已经读下来了，最后一年成本高一些也不是大问题。

My parents also considered Hong Kong and other parts of Asia. Singapore was great, but it didn't suit me, and I didn't want to adapt to a new environment. Hong Kong is a good choice, the cost is much less, and you can go shopping in Shenzhen on the weekend, which is more cost-effective. However, for other reasons, I still choose to pursue a master's degree in the UK, because it is only for one year. I think that three years have been read down, and the higher cost in the last year is not a big problem.

**Researcher：Does the potential return (successful rate of gaining the degree, job opportunity after graduation and whether the future salary can offset the cost of pursuing this degree)on investment from a UK master’s degree justify the higher costs for you? Why or why not?**

Interviewee：其实我并不确定，留学的回报和付出很大概率是不成正比的，我没有信心能在未来的几十年里挣到很多钱。但这份学历能为我未来提供一定程度的帮助，至少求职会轻松一些。而且我已经在英国读了三年，有个词叫沉没成本，既然已经投入了很多，我能做的只有努力完成学业。

In fact, I am not sure. The return of studying abroad is not proportional to the high probability of paying. I am not confident that I can earn a lot of money in the next few decades. But this degree can help me in the future to some extent, at least it will be easier for me to find a job. And I have been studying in the UK for three years, there is a word called sunk cost, since I have invested a lot, I can only try to finish my studies.

### Cultural and Social Factor

**Researcher：Have you experienced any racism in the UK?**

Interviewee：还好，至少我没有感受到很明面上的恶意。大部分人很友好，可能有一部分人有种族歧视，但他们没有明显表现出来，那我就不在意。

Well, at least I didn't feel outright malice. Most people are friendly, and maybe some people are racist, but they don't show it, so I don't care.

**Researcher：Are cultural or social factors in either the UK or Asia pushing you away from studying there?**

Interviewee：对我来说，亚洲大学吸引我的点就在于熟悉的文化，以及饮食习惯。我就是因为这些考虑是否要去香港读书，英国的饮食文化我还是不太适应。我认为在香港生活更舒适。但如果香港作为研究生目的地，我觉得不一定会更好。虽然我在英国没有参与很多本地传统的文化活动，但我还是比较喜欢这里开放的文化环境，例如鼓励表达自我看法和批判性思考，而不是一味地听从权威。而且总的来说，英国比较包容和多元，不用担心其他人的眼光，这点是亚洲少见的氛围。东亚的学习氛围比较紧张，对我来说压力很大。香港比大陆要更国际化一些，但还是以东亚文化为主的。

For me, the attraction of Asian universities is the familiar culture and eating habits. It is because of these considerations whether to go to Hong Kong to study, I still do not adapt to the British food culture. I think living in Hong Kong is more comfortable. But if Hong Kong is a postgraduate destination, I don't think it will necessarily be better. Although I did not participate in many traditional local cultural activities in the UK, I still prefer the open cultural environment here, such as encouraging self-expression and critical thinking, rather than blindly obeying authority. And generally speaking, the UK is more inclusive and diverse, and you don't have to worry about other people's opinions, which is a rare atmosphere in Asia. The study atmosphere in East Asia is very tense, which is very stressful for me. Hong Kong is a bit more international than the mainland, but it is still dominated by East Asian culture.

**Researcher：Have you gained a sense of integration in the UK?**

Interviewee：学校确实做出了一些努力来包容来自不同地区的学生，也鼓励国际学生融入这里。例如学院组织过一些跨文化交流的活动，让大家感受和理解不同的背景文化。但我觉得，有没有起到作用还是因人而异。比如说一些外向的、爱社交的中国学生，他们很容易和本地人打成一片，我有一个朋友在美国读的高中，她更能融入这里的文化和社交风格。但大多数留学生不太适应，还是更喜欢和其他留学生一起玩，没有语言障碍，也有更多话题。至少中国留学生内部是很团结的。如果待在英国的时间更长，我相信融入感会更好。

The Uni does make some efforts to include students from different regions, and also encourages international students to integrate here. For example, the school has organized some cross-cultural communication activities to let people feel and understand different backgrounds and cultures. But I think whether it works or not depends on the individual. For example, some Chinese students who are outgoing and social, they can easily blend in with the locals. I have a friend who went to high school in the United States and she is more integrated with the culture and social style here. But most international students don't fit in well, and still prefer to hang out with other international students, there is no language barrier, and there are more topics to talk about. At least there is solidarity among Chinese students. If I stay in the UK longer, I believe it will be better to fit in.

**Researcher：Does this affect your decision to stay?**

Interviewee：不是非常重要，我的社交圈不大，所以有没有融入感没什么影响。

Not really. I don't have a big social circle, so it doesn't really matter if I fit in.

**Researcher：Are global events (e.g., political climate, pandemics) acting as push or pull factors in your decision? Why?**

Interviewee：在我申请本科时，疫情问题困扰着我，当时的情况非常严重。我的父母认为杜伦比伦敦要更安全，因为人少，传染率会低一些，而且学校有不错的应对政策。在那时，香港对我的吸引力更大，我也考虑过是否要选择香港的学校。但现在疫情已经不构成什么大问题了。我认为疫情展露出了不同国家应对危急事件时的应对能力，在宏观控制能力这一方面，英国的表现没有让我们满意，这是一个负面因素。其次是疫情的出现可能加剧了种族歧视问题，国际关系不太稳定，似乎还是亚洲周边更安全一些，这是另一个负面因素。

但香港的政治情况也不是很稳定。据我所知几年前曾爆发过独立暴乱，很多本地香港大学生都参与了进去。坚持统一的大陆学生在立场上是他们的对立面，如果再次爆发冲突，我担心安全会受到影响。

When I applied for undergraduate study, I was troubled by the epidemic, which was very serious at that time. My parents thought Durham was safer than London because there were fewer people, the infection rate was lower, and the school had a good policy. At that time, Hong Kong was more attractive to me, and I also considered whether to choose a Hong Kong school. But the pandemic is no longer a big problem. I think the epidemic has shown the ability of different countries to cope with emergency situations, and in terms of macro control capacity, the performance of the UK is not satisfactory, which is a negative factor. Secondly, the emergence of the epidemic may exacerbate racial discrimination, international relations are not stable, and it seems that the Asian neighborhood is safer, which is another negative factor.

But the political situation in Hong Kong is not very stable either. As far as I know, independence riots broke out a few years ago, and many local Hong Kong university students took part in them. The mainland students who insist on unity are on the opposite side of their stand, and if conflict breaks out again, I fear security will be affected.