



Alumnus Zhiwei Jiang
Subject MSc International Management
Graduated 2007
Place of Work Bank of China International
Position Research Associate



Bank of China International trades in commodities on behalf of its investors. It has subsidiaries in New York, London, Hong Kong and Singapore, and a sales network covering most major Chinese cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Chongqing.

Zhiwei graduated in 2007 with an MSc in International Management. As a Research Associate, he is responsible for market analysis, trading, and briefing investors on commodity prices.

Great minds *go on to* great places

What were your main reasons for choosing Royal Holloway?

First for the reputation. Royal Holloway had a great sense of history and culture, and my friend had recommended that I study somewhere with that sort of tradition. Second, the university is very near London, the financial centre of the UK. As my interests lie in the financial sector I wanted to be close to the city.

Did you live on campus?

I lived on campus, first in Penrose and then later moving to Gowar. When you live on campus it's much easier to organise your studies, to make sure that you are getting enough studying done! If you were to live off campus there are lots of other things to take into consideration, not least paying bills.

What was challenging about studying abroad?

I had learnt English before coming to the UK, but that doesn't prepare you for the difference in culture, and the different attitude towards learning. The professors at Royal Holloway are very friendly. You can pick arguments with them and chat about the course, and they will discuss fresh ideas and new topics with you. So you don't just find out about what's happening right now, but what will happen in the future. In China, the attitude is more

orientated towards the teacher giving you the right answer, so there's a lot less independent thinking.

Fortunately, before I started my Masters I attended a pre-sessional English course that took place at the College, so I was able to improve my English and have two months to prepare for the course.

Why did you choose International Management?

The School of Management at Royal Holloway offers a number of Masters courses, but International Management was the one that enabled me to build upon my finance knowledge by taking more courses in this area. Prior to starting at Royal Holloway I was working with a financial trust company dealing with stock investment. But I found that I liked trading much more, so I decided to study in that area.

Were you part of any societies?

I didn't join in with too many activities whilst I was studying because the workload is very intense and there's not much time to do anything else. It is a pity that I didn't join more societies or clubs because I didn't socialise as much as I would have liked. Given that the course only lasts for one year that might suggest that it is too short, and if you want to study abroad you should perhaps spend a longer period of time abroad.

What was your favourite aspect of the course?

The professors arrange teams to work on different projects, so the time spent discussing the topics with classmates was probably my favourite aspect of the course. I think that being part of a team makes you work harder and produce better work. You will find in your career that you have to work as part of a team, so it's a very valuable skill to develop whilst you are studying. Professors are willing to recommend additional reading to help you develop academically as well, which is great when you are pressured for time!

Have your studies helped in your career?

My studies are definitely helpful in my career, especially the independence that you acquire. At work, no one is going to tell you what to do so you have to be able to think for yourself. But you also gain independence from living by yourself, because when you first arrive you are completely by yourself. You learn to cope because you have to. In terms of the course itself, the Global Financial Markets module, specifically covering portfolio investments, is very helpful and relevant to my current job.



people *with* passion

“You must learn to be independent, so join more social activities in addition to committing to your studies.”



Do you have an outstanding memory from your time at Royal Holloway?

My outstanding memory is the graduation ceremony. My parents and wife flew to the UK for the ceremony. When you work and study as hard as we all did you get a great sense of satisfaction when you have finished, and you can look back with pride at your achievements. During exam periods we were spending so much time in the library preparing, but then you get out the other side of it and it's amazing. It was a great day.

What does your current role involve?

My work at the Bank of China International is focused on commodities. Many people are familiar with stock because it's quite straightforward – you know the company and you buy the shares. But commodities are very special for investors; the price is so closely linked with your daily life. When you buy a cup of coffee, for example, that's pushing the price of the beans up and somebody, somewhere makes some money. People aren't so familiar with commodities, so I advise people where to invest their money. My daily work involves analysing the markets and trading on behalf of the investors.

What is your favourite part of the job?

If you hadn't already guessed – trading! As an analyst you always try your best to correctly predict what the price will do, so if you are correct then it's a great feeling. Trading is financially beneficial for the customers and for the company.

How do you stay connected with the College?

I stay connected with some of my classmates, usually via email or MSN. I receive the School e-newsletters, check the website from time to time. I am also in touch with some professors; Brendan McSweeney (Professor in the School of Management), for instance, recently helped me write the application letter for this current job.

What is your role as a Regional Alumni Ambassador?

It's my honour to be the Regional Ambassador to Shanghai. I never thought that I would be able to give back to the College, especially after graduating, so I think that it's a great way for me to connect with the university and with friends in Shanghai. There have been things going on

informally in the past, but now we have the opportunity to connect more people together. A stronger alumni presence is also great for Royal Holloway's reputation, more students will hear about the College and more people will want to study there.

Do you have any advice for students thinking about studying abroad?

Study English! If you study hard then you will be in a much better position when exams come around. You will be able to make more international friends and know more about the local culture. Second, you must learn to be independent, so join more social activities in addition to committing to your studies.

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Royal Holloway, University of London
Egham, Surrey, TW20 0EX
T: 01784 434455
www.rhul.ac.uk