

Exchange report  
Term in Ireland, Waterford



## Title sheet

### Erasmus report:

- 4. Term, Ireland

### Author

- Halfdan Runge ([Half0110@stud.kea.dk](mailto:Half0110@stud.kea.dk))

### Name of the host institution:

- Waterford Institute of technology Ireland (WIT)

### Name of sending institution:

- Københavns erhvervsakademi Denmark (KEA)

### Period of study:

- 14-Jan-2019 until 17-Mai-2019

### Contact persons:

- Andreas Berg (KEA international coordinator [andb@kea.dk](mailto:andb@kea.dk))
- Damien O'Connell (WIT Office for International Relations [doconnell@wit.ie](mailto:doconnell@wit.ie))

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## Introduction

I choose to study abroad because I wanted to have a new experience and to learn more about myself when I am out of my comfort zone. So, I decided to take a term in Ireland. There were many reasons why I chose to study in Ireland the four most important ones are listed here.

- WIT is the partner school of KEA and known for its high Autodesk standards
- Improve my English skills
- Improve my Revit skills
- The Irish culture

I decided to take my fourth semester abroad. That meant that I would attend the term in Ireland instead of Denmark. What I did not know was; That there is a big difference between the school system in Denmark and Ireland the program I am studying in Denmark is BA Architectural Technology & Construction Management, where the program in Ireland is Architectural Structural & BIM.

There are to major differences between the two schools:

- The first one. Is that at KEA there is estimated 90% groupwork/teamwork and 10% individual work. And at WIT is there 90% individual work and 10 % groupwork.
- The second one is that at WIT they are working a lot more in Revit and other Autodesk programmes. That has two effects. Because they are working so much with Revit the learning curve in that program is high. But on the other hand, is there not that much time for so many other subjects or programmes. Such as: Microsoft office, law and teamwork.

## Experiences at the host university

I had five different subjects at WIT. I chose all of them before I went abroad, by making a learning agreement. That is the documentation, that makes sure that you will get the same learning standards abroad. At WIT you do not have to follow a given class. If you want to take a different course, it would be up to you. But I would recommend following the same courses as the rest of the class does. That would make it easier to get to know everybody and make new friends. So as mentioned before I choose the five different courses before I went abroad. The most impotent thing is that all the courses are giving a total of 30 ETCS - points. In my case, I followed a 4. term class with the different courses listen here.

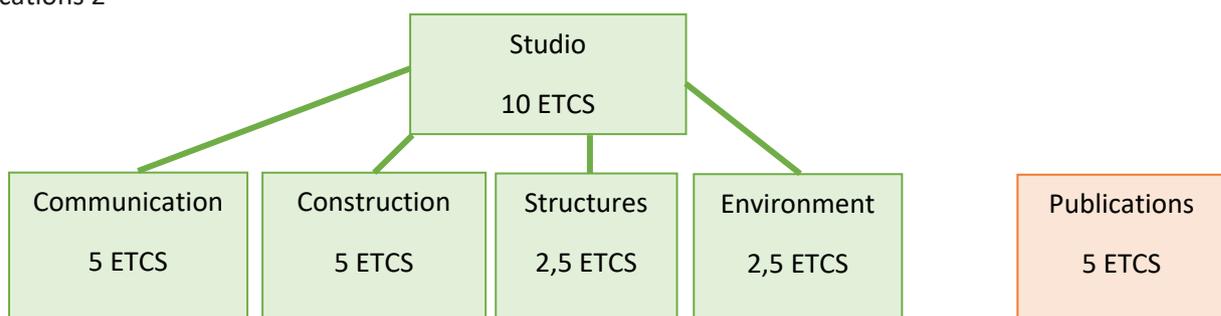
Architectural & BIM Studio 4

Architectural Communication & BIM 4

Construction Technology 4

Structures & Environment 4

Publications 2



The image above is showing how the different courses are rated and how many ETCS points they are giving. The first one and most important is Architectural & BIM Studio 4 also just called Studio. You could say that this course is the “main project” for the semester. You will make a project in Revit and work through all the different stages such as how the site should be built up, the structural model and the architectural layout. And then there will be a small presentation on A1 sheets ones a month or so. (See the appendix)

Architectural Communication & BIM 4 also just called Communication is a course where you are working with a lot of different programmes such as Revit, SolidWorks, InRoads and many more. The idea is to make sure that the students are “getting hands on” different programs and are getting comfortable using them. Furthermore, this course can help you if there should be difficulties with Revit in the studio project. So, it is a kind of a course where you can get help for the semester project.

Construction Technology 4 is about the different subjects listed below:

- Material selection  
What kind of materials are good to use in houses, are there any kind of advantages or disadvantages with the different materials. And if there are what could it be.
- Resurge Teknik's  
How do we resurge for information. Are there different ways to use the information? And learning about notetaking teknik's.
- Buildings survey  
Learning how to make a survey on different parts of a building. What is imported to notice, and how to explain/communicate it to another person.
- Regulations  
Get to know the building regulations. What is given more attention and how to read/understand the Irish building regulations.

Structures & Environment 4 is two courses combined in one. The first one is Structures in this course, it is all about the structure of the building and the structure of different kinds of materials. The main focus is to learn about the forces we are operating with as an architect. But also, to be able to link it into the studio project. Environment is the other course, in this course the focus is on the heat flow and heat loss in the building. The environmental impact different materials have on the planet. And how to incorporate it into the studio project.

Publications 2 is something completely at itself. As you can see on the image above, it has nothing to do with the other courses. In publications you will learn about design and how to publish something. But mostly how to use Adobe programs such as Photoshop and InDesign. So, to be honest I have not yet been able to see the relevance of the course.

For most of the courses you will be rated in something called CA (Continuous assessment). That means that every hand up is being marked with a number from 1-100 and to pass the course you will need to have over 40 marks.

## Teaching methods and the teachers

The biggest difference between the teaching methods from Denmark to Ireland is that nothing in Ireland is groupwork. Therefore, the lectures are normally hold by a lector where he/she is going through a PowerPoint presentation, giving the lecture, by using an overhead projector or simply doing what the, class should do on his computer. So, the class can see what they need to do.

I had five different teachers and they where all teaching in their own way. So, I would say that is individual how you prefer to learn. But I can defiantly recommend my environment teacher Brian Dempsey ([BDEMPSEY@wit.ie](mailto:BDEMPSEY@wit.ie)) He has always time to explain a problem and his way of explaining/teaching is really good. I will also recommend Gordon Chisholm ([GCHISHOLM@wit.ie](mailto:GCHISHOLM@wit.ie)) He was my primary teacher on the term. He can sometimes be a bit hard to understand because he is from Scotland. But he is always prepared to help. And a true wizard in Revit. I persuaded him to record all his lecture. So, I could see the lectures again afterwards.

## Learning experience

I would say that I learned a lot by studying abroad. But the two major learning experience while I was studying abroad, was;

- to work on the skill to adapt to any given situation. I think this was/is the most important thing that I learned, always to be able to model it around so you can work with a problem or challenges instead of against it.
- The second things was probably, that I needed to work so much in Revit. Because, compared to Denmark, they are using Revit much more than we do. So therefore, can I feel that my Revit skills have improved a lot over the past 5 months.

## Choosing courses at the receiving school

This was quite easy for me because I needed 30 ETCS - points to get my term abroad acknowledge. So, before I left Denmark, I needed to choose what I would like to study. And because there only are five courses at WIT there are giving me a total of 30 ETCS-points I could just take them. So, it would fit in the same way, as if I just would be beginning in a new class.

## What study experiences did you find the most rewarding?

I would say that my most rewarding study experience has been to be use Revit in my studio project. There is so much in that programme that I did not know. And because my fellow classmates where so advanced in the program, there was always somebody to help or answer any kind of questions. So, it did not feel it was too difficult, because we were all working on the same project individually. But where still able to help each other.

## What study experiences did you find least relevant?

As described earlier in the text.; publications was interesting to learn about. But if I am being honest, I can not see the relevance of this course in my study. It is true, that now I know a little about how to work in photoshop and InDesign. But I do not think, that I am ever going to use it.

## Social and cultural experiences

### Challenges while being abroad

First and foremost, I think that the biggest challenges were in the beginning, everything was new, and I did not know anybody. But if you have an open mind and just “go” with the situation everything will be fine. Other than that challenges in the beginning, there was a small adjustment period from the Danish teaching model, to the Irish model.

### Was the receiving school helpful in this process?

Yes, I would say that WIT were really welcoming especially the teachers. As I have written before all the teachers were more than happy to answer questions and explain problems. Furthermore, the WIT social club and WIT international did a great job to make all the international students feel welcome and they were making sure that there was a place to meet after school and different social events.

### What was the best personal experience during your studies abroad?

I think that my best personal experience from my studies abroad are the friends I got from being there. I got to know so many people from the Erasmus events and from my class where I was studying. So, I would say that the best personal experience must be the friendships and network, you make while being abroad.

### What advice would you give other KEA students going to study abroad at the receiving school?

Make sure that you are a part of an Erasmus group and that you attended some of the different international events. And I can also really recommend that you get to know your fellow classmates. I would say, that is the best way to learn about the culture and having somebody to hang-out with.

## Practical experiences

### How was the application process?

In my case I would say that the application process went smoothly. I had a lot of help from KEA's international coordinator Andreas Berger. I will admit, that it is more work on top of the normal study. But KEA will give you all the help you need.

### What did KEA help you with?

When I decided to take a term abroad, KEA helped me decide where to go. They gave me advice on how to choose the different courses and how to go with the “flow” when I arrived at the host school. Additionally, I did also get help to fill out the learning agreement and everything else that needed to be ready before I could go. And of course I could ask all the questions that I had about going abroad.

### Did you have any practical difficulties settling down in at your destination?

When I first arrived in Waterford everything was very confusing, because I did not know where to go and how to find my place to stay. But to be honest WIT was very helpful and they have somebody who will show you around in the city. So, there was no problem/difficulties settling in.

### Where did you live?

WIT have three different accommodation that you can rent. The first one and it is also the main accommodation is called Manor village. It is here where most of the international students are living. But I would not recommend it. The place is expensive, and you will pay so much just to be able to use the electricity and hot water. The second accommodation is called Riverwalk it is not as expensive but there is a lot of security and you are not allowed to do anything. The last place was where I lived and is called Roncalli house. It is just a normal house with room for 11 people one big kitchen and bathrooms with your own room. It is also the cheapest solution, but it works perfectly for me. Looking back, I am glad that I lived at that house. It is close to the main campuses but 3 km away from the place where the architectural students are studying. So, I would recommend buying a bike.

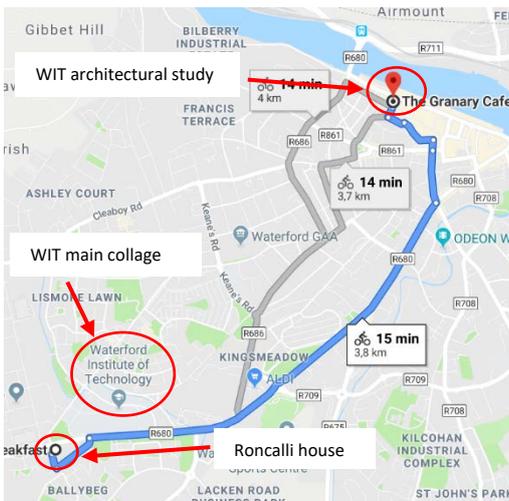


Figure 3 Map there is showing different locations in Waterford



Figure 2 Map there is giving an overview over WIT main campus



Figure 1 Administration building WIT main campus



Figure 5 Front of Roncalli house Waterford



Figure 6 Front of WIT main campus



Figure 4 The Granary Where the architectural students are studying



Figure 7 Inside of Roncalli house Waterford

### Was it difficult to find accommodation?

No, WIT is helping with everything so the only thing you need is to write to Alison Redmond ([aredmond@wit.ie](mailto:aredmond@wit.ie)). She will help you set up everything so that it is all prepared when you arrive.

### Was it expensive?

The house, I was living in (Roncalli house) cost 3500 DKK. every month and then everything were payed:

- Water, electricity, internet and heat.

### What kind of expenses did you have in general?

As you can see on the financial accountings below, I have spent around 30.000 DKK. In total being abroad.

Category	Year 2019						DKK.
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	
Accommodation	3503	3503	3503	3503	3503		
Mobile	150	150	150	150	150		
Insurance	1445	350					
Food	359	1063	772	1152	320		
Eating out	339	75	185	380	340		
Transportation	700	200	52	400			
Plane ticket	1000					600	
Study		140	163	55	109	17	
Socializing	90	165	399	110	375	136	
<b>In total</b>	<b>7586</b>	<b>5646</b>	<b>5224</b>	<b>5750</b>	<b>4797</b>	<b>753</b>	<b>29756</b>

### Did you spend more or less money than you budgeted with?

When I left Denmark, I had made a budget on 50.000 DKK. Where I calculate that I had around 10.000 DKK. from the Erasmus grant, 30.000 DKK. from my SU and 10.000 DKK. from other different grants that I had applied for. So, in overall, I would say that I spend around the amount of money that I budgeted with.

## Cultural and travel experiences.

I think because I was traveling/going abroad alone I was more social. So instead of sitting at home I was normally out with the Erasmus group or some of my classmates. That meant that we had a lot of cultural experiences. Where we travelled around the countryside or went to the St. Patrick parade.



Figure 8 St. Patrick parade



Figure 9 Drinking beer with classmates



Figure 10 Trip to Lismore castle



Figure 11 Trip to Connemara National Park

So, to be honest I would say that to be social is the most important thing when you are going abroad. It will always be confusing in the beginning, but it is making it a lot easier if you have classmates and friends to share the experiences with.

## Backpacking through Ireland



After finishing my term in Waterford at WIT, I decided to go backpacking in Ireland. I can only recommend go traveling in Ireland if you have the time for it. As you can see on the map, I had a plan of, what I wanted to see. Most of the different locations my classmates in Waterford helped me find, and they recommended a lot of different places that I should go. I started out in Dublin. Which I really can recommend. After that I hiked a beautiful trail called The Wicklow way there is going from Dublin to Clonegall. From there I hitchhiked to Cork and further down to Killarney, where some of Irelands most amazing nature is. From there I slowly worked my way up to Belfast.

## Conclusion

When I decided to take a term abroad, I knew that the main purpose of the semester should be: Learn a lot, make new friends and see as much as possible from other cultures. I also knew that I would focus on getting better in the programme Revit, hand drawing and networking. So now here when I am back, I can say that taking a term abroad meant a lot of challenge, but at the same time, it gave me much more opportunities than I ever could imagine. So, if you have the time and courage, I will always recommend taking a term abroad. It does not matter if you just are going to Norway or all the way to South Korea but having the opportunity to travel is a gift not many students have.

## Appendixes

- Some of the schoolwork that I did at WIT.



Figure 12 Presentation sheet 1

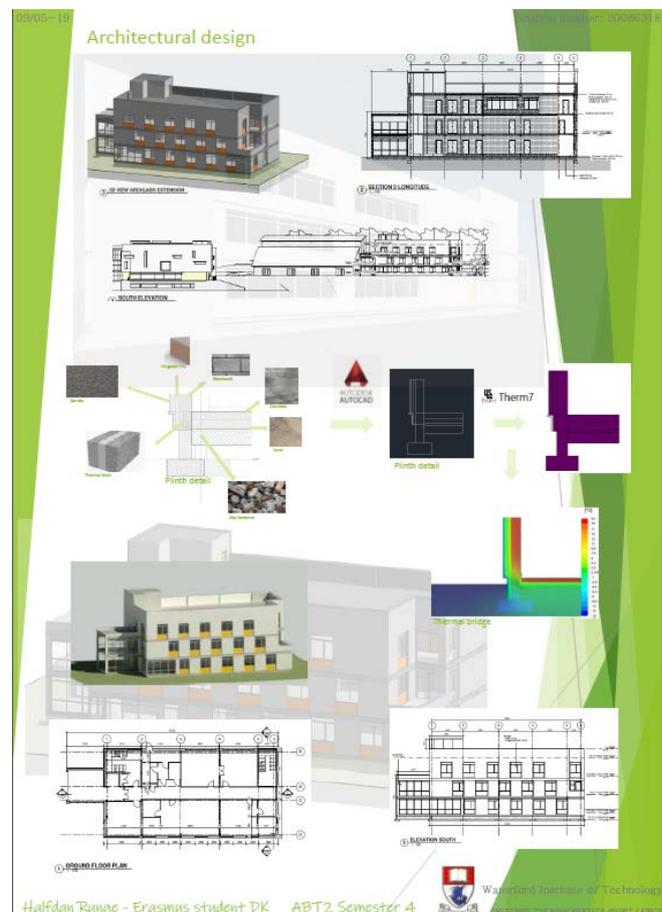


Figure 13 Presentation sheet 2



Figure 14 Presentation sheet 3



Figure 15 Presentation sheet 4

The four images above are showing the final presentations sheets from the term. On Presentation sheet 1 I am going through face one. It is about the locations, the site and the structural model. After that I am continuing to presentation sheet 2 where it is the architectural model, choosing different kinds of materials, Renderings and finding the heat flow/heat loss in the building. On presentation sheet 3 a new canteen is added to the building. Here I am showing the process of modelling it in Revit. And finally, on presentation sheet 4 I decide and draw different junctions and showing different analyses of the buildings.