

Exchange Report



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1. INTRODUCTION

London is currently ranked as the fifth best student city worldwide and the second best in the Europe¹. There are so many opportunities available and I would simply call it the European NYC.

The University of Westminster's Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment has recorded 94% student satisfaction for undergraduate architecture courses. I has a strong reputation and very good connections with industry leaders and the professions.



UoW, Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment, Marylebone Campus

2. PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Architectural Technology course at the University of Westminster is very similar to the one we study at KEA. I went for an Erasmus as a student of the 5th semester together with a student from the 3rd semester. We attended the same classes even though we were in the different semesters at KEA. Our semester started at the beginning of January and finished at the beginning of May.

We studied 3 subjects, called modules in UK and they were already set up for us before, so we did not have to worry about choosing relevant subject for our exchange semester. The modules consisted of a lecture and a seminars divided into 2 days - Mondays and Tuesdays,

¹ <http://www.topuniversities.com/city-rankings/2016#sorting=rank+custom=rank+order=desc+search=>

the rest of the weekdays was free. There was no group work and as a KEA students we had slightly different requirements for examination as their 1st and 2nd semester of the year were related to each other. In every module we work on a different project.

We studied:

- Building Design Studio
- Construction Site Practice
- Construction Technology.

Building Design Studio

This module covered design work for 4 flats located in Central London. As we entered the 2nd semester of the year, local students were already done with their own flats designs and the 2nd semester included a technical stage of the project. To save our time, lecturers gave us a flat design of a formal student but we were free to change anything we wanted to. For the project work we could use any software we wanted and there were schools computers with different software we could use in a studio at any time.

There were no lectures in this module, only tutorials (consultations) and a presentation from CIAT². We visited Barbican Centre³, Ecobuild 20016⁴ (Danish equivalent of Building Green) and Foster+Partners⁵ office.

As an exam for this module we were required to hand in a Portfolio, both a hard copy and electronic version.

Construction Site Practice

The module was very interesting, more focused on Construction Management and I think I have learnt most in this subject. The lectures were very interesting to listen and enriched by presentations by formal students and different companies from the field like e.g. Considerate Constructors⁶. Seminars helped us to practice and apply the knowledge into practice from the lectures.

Exam consisted of 3 parts - 2 written coursework and a written exam.

Construction Technology

This subject was very similar to DMP at KEA. We calculated U-values and did ventilation -, domestic water - and heating calculations. We were supposed to do the calculations and interpret them on the project from Building Design Studio.

² <https://ciat.cgiar.org/>

³ <http://www.barbican.org.uk/>

⁴ <http://www.ecobuild.co.uk/>

⁵ <http://www.fosterandpartners.com/>

⁶ <https://www.ccscheme.org.uk/>

Exam included a report, calculations and drawings with HVAC and domestic water.



Ecobuild 2016

3. SOCIAL AND CULTURAL EXPERIENCE

All people were very kind and willing to help with anything at any time at the university. I didn't have much chance to make new friendships at school as we only attended the uni twice a week and work on the projects was individual.

In my free time I met up mostly with my friends who have been living in London for quite long and as I already found a job as an Architectural Technologist during my studies, I was pretty busy working and studying at the same time.

I travelled a lot around London, there's always something going on and always something new to visit.



London Eye





The Shard



Skygarden, Walkie Talkie Building



Windsor

4. PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE



Oyster card

The best travel option is by tube, bus or DLR. The UoW will give you an opportunity to apply for a student oyster card, which will give you 25% discount on your fares during your stay in London. You can either pay as you go or buy a monthly or weekly pass.

Accommodation in London is very expensive. You get a chance to apply for a student accommodation at one of student housings of the UoW. I got a room in a dorm but as I knew I will stay here for my internship, I wanted to avoid moving in and out more times. I stayed for a week at my friend's place and later on found a room through a Real Estate Agency. The best websites to find an accommodation:

<http://www.rightmove.co.uk/>

<https://www.gumtree.com/>

<http://www.spareroom.co.uk/>

Food and drinks: I found eating out and grocery shopping a bit cheaper than in Denmark. There are some really good supermarkets like Waitrose, Tesco, Sainsbury's. To try variety of different food, I recommend to visit Camden Town food market but also China Town, Shoreditch and Soho.

5. CONCLUSION

I am very happy that I chose London for my exchange semester. I extended my stay here as I am doing my internship here as well. I fell in love with the city and planning to come back for the Master's studies.

I highly recommend to choose the UoW in London for your exchange semester and if you have any questions, don't hesitate to drop me an e-mail to: rena0338@stud.kea.dk.