



Ida Maria Hvidberg

Birmingham City University BCU - International Jewellery Business

Diamond Grading & Event and Project management

School Contact: Kate Thorley

January 2020 - May 2020

## Tabel of Contents

Introduction	3
Academic Experience	4
Cultural and Personal Experience	5
Practical Experience	6
Birmingham	7

## Introduction

In this report, I will describe what it was like to study abroad, I will discuss my academic experiences such as which subjects I found interesting. The report contains also the cultural and personal experiences in school and practical experiences such as living in Birmingham. At last Birmingham as a city is introduced, where to shop, eat and what to see.

### Where and when did you study abroad?

I went on an exchange program to Birmingham City University (BCU). I studied Diamond Grading and Event & Project Management from January 2020 to May 2020. The last months I had virtual teaching due to Covid-19.

The university are placed in The Jewellery Quarter. It's a lovely area with a lot of different jewellery stores and jewellery factories.

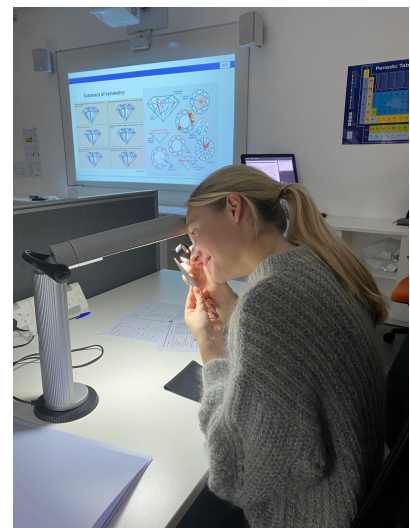
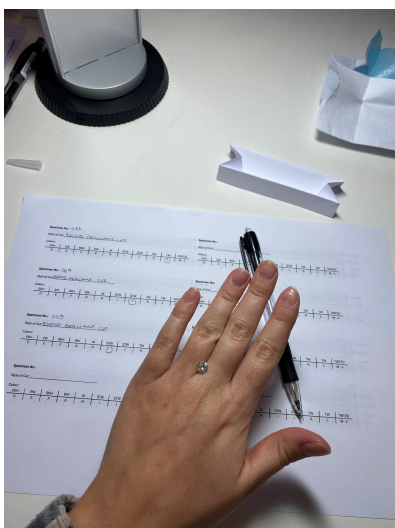
### What KEA program did you attend at the time?

In Denmark at KEA I Studied the danish version of PBA in Jewellery, Technology and Business.

### What classes did you take during your semester abroad?

The Diamond Grading class was about how to grade diamonds, to characterize the four C's Carat, Cut, Colour and Clarity. The class was very interesting and we were only 12 students which ment that the teacher had a lot of time to each student.

The Event & Project Management class was about finding a jewellery business and plan an event to make the business grow. This class was very helpfull to me, because I want to work with PR, production and Marketing in the future. I learned new business models such as SOSTAC and SMART which I have never heard about in Denmark.



## Academic Experience

How helpful was the receiving school in the process of choosing classes and settling you in?

Birmingham City University was very fast in the process of choosing classes for me. My first day of school was really great and the teachers showed me around. Kate and Glen my school contact and teacher secured that I was settling in alright.

What classes/study experiences did you find the most rewarding? Why?

Because of the few students in both classes I attended, the teachers had a surplus to pay attention to each student. For me, it meant a lot because I came from a class in Denmark with almost 40 students, where there wasn't much time to each student.

What classes/study experiences did you find least relevant or least valuable to you? Why?

My class and I went to a jewellery fair called NEC Jewellery and Watch Birmingham. I think it was a waste of time. The fair was clearly permanent and lots of them were selling the same jewellery. The quality of the Jewellery and watches were low, both craftsmanship and material wise. We spent a whole day walking around. It was a bit disappointing.

What classes would you advice other KEA students going to the receiving school to choose or not to choose?

It depends a lot on interest. If the person has the same interests in jewelry as I have, I would highly recommend Diamond Grading Class, it's hugely rewarding and educational. There are few students, a good teacher and the teaching is interesting.

## **Cultural and Personal Experience**

What challenges did you experience culturally while being a broad? How helpful was the receiving school in this process?

The only challenge was in school. I think it was a big challenge that 90% of the students were Chinese who couldn't speak English very well. I didn't feel like the school was trying to do anything about it. This is clearly a disadvantage, and it clearly impedes teaching to that extent.

What was the best cultural/personal experience during your studies abroad?

The best thing about study abroad are getting to know new cultures. I had a lot of great experiences from Birmingham and making new friends is one of them. Learning about their life sometimes puts things in perspective. It's important to be open and accommodating to other cultures when you live in another country.

In my case, I was the only Danish person, which meant that I really got to practice my English and that was a great experience.

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

The best advice I can give is to be open minded. It's the only way to make new friends and that's important when you are living in another Country.

## Practical Experience

### How was the application process?

The application process is a bit long. It took me a couple of months to get the acceptance letter from the university.

In the mean time I planned a meeting with Hanne Vang Hansen who is the International Mobility Coordinator at KEA she told me not to worry and that helped a lot.

Birmingham City University helped me which classes to choose and the formalities.

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

I didn't have any practical difficulties settling down. I researched a lot of different housing options before I left Denmark. I found an Accommodation company for students that I can really recommend. Everything is arranged in advance, it's safe and that way you easily make friends as you live in large apartments with private bathrooms, but shared kitchens.

I didn't received any help from the school in this process.

### Where did you live?

I lived in 2 Bagot Street it's accommodation for students. I found it online, "Campus Living Villages" link attached: <https://www.campuslivingvillages.com>. The place were very nice, clean and the reception was always open. I didn't find it hard to find accommodation. I applied late November and received the offer mail early December.

The accommodation cost is £3,712.50 for six month and then there is a deposit of £250.

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

I spent less money than intended. However, it's a good idea to take part in the tours the university provides, they allow you to experience large parts of England as well as make a lot of new friends. The tours are quite expensive, it's around £50 per week, but you don't have to go every week.

The food in England is cheaper than in Denmark, I used around £60 per week including cafe visits and restaurants.

## Birmingham

Birmingham is a major city, and has a lot of nicknames such as “Brum, Birms and Venice of North”.

### Restaurants and shopping:

The food in Birmingham is really nice. There are some popular places to eat like the Temple Row which is a street with a lot of different places to go. I can definitely recommend “The IVY Birmingham” it’s a cool place with amazing food and the waiters are really nice.

Bennetts Hill is also a cool place to visit, there are only nice restaurants with all kind of different food. I can especially recommend “Rudy’s” and “The Indian Streatery”.

For the everyday shopping I can recommend Marks & Spencer also called M&S it’s a supermarked with delicious food such as healthy ready meals, great vegetables and nice prices.

If you are up to shopping I can recommend the place called “Bull ring” it’s a large shopping mall.

### Safety and transportation:

Birmingham by day is safe, but you have to be carefull at night. Never walk alone or take public transportation alone. There are a lot of gangs and thieves especially in the City Centre.

I would recommend to use the UBER system it’s very safe and cheap as well. If u choose to take the bus or tram you can buy tickets in the vehicle. If you go by train the easiest way to buy tickets is through the app “Trainline”.

### Places to see:

I would highly recommend the Library of Birmingham, it’s amazing architecture. On the top of the building you can see Birmingham and get a feeling of how big it is.



Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery is definitely a must see. The building is huge and breathtaking, and the rooms inside the building is beautiful.

