



Exchange report

At Saxion University of Applied Sciences

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Home university: *KEA, Denmark*

Study: *BA in Design & Business, Sustainable Fashion*

Resaving University: *Saxion University of Applied Sciences, Holland*

Study: *Fashion and Textile Technologies*

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Introduction

I have completed my AP degree in E-design at KEA, and am currently studying Design and Business, Sustainable Fashion in the BA Top-Up at KEA.

Before my 6. semester I applied for exchange to Saxion University of Applied Sciences, because I felt adventurous and I wanted to gain a deep technical knowledge in the subject of fibers and textiles. KEA is great in innovation, creativity and concepts and Saxion on the other hand is more on the technical side. On some of my former visits to Holland I found that I really like the country, and I wanted to try to live there and see how it is from an insider perspective. This made Saxion an optimal choice in order to acquire a broader textile knowledge and to try a different culture.

Unfortunately, my stay abroad only lasted 5 weeks and some days, due to the COVID 19 outbreak, this made me pack whatever I could of my belongings, and head back to Denmark early Saturday morning, on the 14. of March.

As for the cultural experience I had planned to travel inside of Holland on a later point during my stay, but for the first holiday week in February I made a trip to India. Because of the sudden pandemic outbreak, I did not have the opportunity to travel inside of Holland as planned, but never the less I did get some cultural experiences in Enschede that I will briefly tell about later in this report. I will also talk about my experience with the online studying, that started halfway through the first quarter and through all of the second quarter. Saxion runs in quarters instead of semesters, so there are 4. quarter in a school year and exams are held at the end of every quarter.

My choice of courses

During my Exchange at Saxion University of Applied Sciences, I attended the following courses, and I will give a brief overview of their content.

Project Buying I

Project Buying, 1 is a 6. ECTS course, where you learn how to become an international buyer. You learn about the basic rules of buying, intercultural communication, ethics, law and regulations, costs and pricing as well as social responsibility.

You also learn about the supply chain and how to set up a product specification with software like Excel and Illustrator, and to check the specifications with the help of quality research. It is a project cores, where you work in a team, where you will be making a supply chain report., by choosing too products from two different stores. One sustainable product and one not labelled as sustainable. Then you and you're teem backtrack the supply chain, which can be difficult do to lack of transparency. The aim is to learn as much as possible, and the internet is your best tool. You will also do quality tests and other tests in order to identify the quality and the material fibers in the product, this is in order to see if the fibers and the quality really is what is sees on the label. Knowing the type and quality of the fibers can also give you an indication of where they come from. For the final assessment you hand in a Supply Chain report including a technical packs and testing templates, followed by an oral examination. You present your findings, then you debate the results. It is important that you say as much as possible during the debate section in the oral exam, because every student is graded individually, despite it being a group exam. You just raise your hand because the examiner will not necessarily direct the same amount of questions to each student in the group, it is more of an interactive process, where you make an effort to be herd.



(A infographic that I made, this illustrates the supply chain journey for the non sustainable product. The other product was a set of Sustainable curtains from H&M, that another teammate created)

Basic Textiles VII

Basic Textiles VII is a 5 ECTS course. The subjects are Mechanical and chemical finishing, and Fashion Fabrics. Where you learn about different finishing types and what their purpose is, how they are applied as well as what environmental and physical impact, especially the chemical finishing can have. In Fashion Fabrics you learn about the style periods, and fabric history, as well as material knowledge. At the end you have 2 multiple choice exams one in chemical finishing and one in Mechanical finishing as well as a Fabric book hand in, in Fashion Fabrics, with 46 swatches that you find your self.

I. STRUCTURE FABRICS

Ad in samples of the following category of fabrics

1. Oxford	16. Tulle
2. Broadcloth	17. Netting
3. Poplin	18. Point of Espirit
4. Herringbone	19. Taffeta
5. Tulle	20. Organza
6. Pied de Poule	21. Shamung
7. Donegal Tweed	22. Alacon
8. Wool suiting	23. Chamilly
9. PES suiting	24. Raschel lace
10. Fusible interlining	25. Chambray
11. Non-fusible interlining	26. Black denim
12. Buckram	27. Denim with a finish
13. Body lining	28. Voile
14. Sleeve lining	29. Crepe Georgette
15. Canvas	30. Brocade

IV. TEXTURE FABRICS

Compare groups of two fabrics that have contrasting surface properties such as:

- Soft versus Rough texture
- Hairy versus Smooth texture
- Open versus Dense structure

FASHION FABRIC BOOK / FABRIC SAMPLE SHEET

PES suiting



Swatch Number: _____ Yarns Stitches per inch: _____
 Fabric Name: _____ Method of Coloration: _____
 Fiber Content: _____ Finish: _____
 End Use: _____
 Yarn Type: _____
 Women's Suit Type: _____
 Source: MSCSI Copenhagen
 Character: Heavy fabric, glossy and delicate

FASHION FABRIC BOOK / FABRIC SAMPLE SHEET

Fusible interlining



Swatch Number: _____ Yarns Stitches per inch: _____
 Fabric Name: _____ Method of Coloration: _____
 Fiber Content: _____ Finish: _____
 End Use: _____
 Yarn Type: _____
 Women's Suit Type: _____
 Source: MSCSI Copenhagen
 Character: Smooth front, hand gloss on back

FASHION FABRIC BOOK / FABRIC SAMPLE SHEET

Open structure



Swatch Number: _____ Yarns Stitches per inch: _____
 Fabric Name: _____ Method of Coloration: _____
 Fiber Content: _____ Finish: _____
 End Use: _____
 Yarn Type: _____
 Women's Suit Type: _____
 Source: MSCSI Copenhagen
 Character: Soft and a bit hairy, and light woven

FASHION FABRIC BOOK / FABRIC SAMPLE SHEET

Dense structure



Swatch Number: _____ Yarns Stitches per inch: _____
 Fabric Name: _____ Method of Coloration: _____
 Fiber Content: _____ Finish: _____
 End Use: _____
 Yarn Type: _____
 Women's Suit Type: _____
 Source: Fall Reven
 Character: Soft and densely woven

(Here are some of the pages from The Fabric Book that I createt)

Research Outline

Research Outline is a 3 ECTS course. You learn how to write a research proposal, and you learn all about different research methods. You work in a team where you first decide on something that you want to research, then you choose the most suitable research methods to use for the research proposal, you hand in the research proposal at the end of the cores. As well as the research proposal hand in, you will also have a multiple choice exam covering everything you learned in the cores. The work you have done in this course, you will use in the course Project Materials 1, hat begins after this one is finished.

Project Materials I

Project Materials I is a 6. ECTS course. This is an innovation project course, and you will do research on a product that you and your group haw choose, then you choose fabrics that are best suitable for the product. The first part of the project is all about questions and finding answers. What is it made of? How is it made? Why it is made this way? What are the functional requirements of this product? The second part is about innovation. What can you do to make this product better?

With the guidance of your instructors and by doing a lot of user testing, you can implement the needs and wants of the user. Then you develop an innovative alternative of the product. At the end you pitch your idea in an oral assessment. Again it is important that you speak up because you are great individuals in the group presentation. You will also be graded on your process book that you keep during the project; everyone is assigned a manager role, and it is important that everyone managers to implement some elements of their role in the final product, otherwise that will affect your individual grade at the end.

In my team we created a reusable face mask for the growing demand for face masks due to the COVID 19 outbreak. In order not to negatively affect the supply of facemask materials, in the healthcare sector, we looked in to other suitable face mask material that have a good protection levels. The aim was to get a large number of face masks out to the general public, with an as good as possible protection level, in order to reduce the spread of the virus. Also implementing sustainable materials, for environmental reasons.



(A poster of the final prototype, a facemask where you can change between 3 different front pieces)

Basis Textiles VIII

Basis Textiles VIII is a 5 ECTS course. The subject is Textile Technology, Sport Fabrics and High-performance Textiles. Where you learn about Smart Textiles that are used in sports were, the healthcare sector and for other applications. At the end there are too multiple choice exams. But due to the COVID situation resulting in the online study program, we did too case study exams instead, each exam consisted of two subjects, High Performance Fabrics & Sport Fabric and Smart Textiles & Surface Modification, you get 1 hour for the assignment. High Performance Fabrics is technical and mathematical, and Surface Modification is technical as well, this is good to be aware of, especially if you are more of a creative student. It is good to do extra studying especially in High Performance Fabrics, if you do not have technical background knowledge in material technology.

Academic Experience

Assistants in the process of choosing classes and getting settled in

First you get a list of the Saxion courses from Kea, you choose the courses in the second application process, application to Host School. You are assigned a Study coach whom you will be in contact with before arrival. The Study coach will make sure that you are informed about everything, from exam dates to information as well as helping with choosing classes. The Study coach will make sure that you are informed about all the welcome programs and information classes, for the exchange students. The Study coach is your go to person throughout the exchange program.

The most and least rewarding classes that I took

Basic Textiles VII was the most rewarding class that I took, in regards to the fact that I wanted to get a better knowledge in textile technology and I learned a lot. It was good that the beginning of the course was not online, this way it was more structured and we could also feel the different textile samples.

I would say that Basic Textiles VIII also could have been a very rewarding class, but because of the corona outbreak, forcing the classes to be online, I will say that it became a lot less rewarding, you can not feel the textile samples, and the online classes were so disorganised, not following the schedule, getting confused in what classes to take, where no one is able to help you. Many of the classes were only getting recorded and had no labelling with date or subject, this made it very hard to navigate the classes, and you don't get the same quality from a recorded class, because you can not ask questions.

Project Buying, was also a very rewarding course you learn so much about the process of buying, all the technical aspects, communication and the cultural aspects as well as getting a deeper understanding about the supply chain. It was an intense course and if you like group work then this course is just for you.

Research Outline was fine but I expected more from the course, so for future students maybe taking another Basic Textiles course would be more beneficial if you are interested in textile technology, on the other hand I can recommend to read the book *Research. This is it!* By Ben Baarda, it provides you with what you needed to know about how to conduct research and how to write a research outline.

Project Materials I is probably a very rewarding class, this is one of the classes where I felt most at home because it is about innovation, which I am very interested in. But corona again came in and made this course a lot less enjoyable than it would have been if you were able to meet your team in a physical location, and work on the prototype together. Dividing the tasks becomes very difficult when no one in the team is in the same country,

in regards to making and testing the prototype, because there is a lot of work in it, so I would not advise this class if it is online.

The classes I would advice, other KEA students going to Saxion, to choose and not to choose

In regards to my study's in Design & Business, Sustainable fashion I believe that all of these courses were valuable and relevant in regards to my study's. Research Outline might stand as the only course with the least of value amongst the others, and you can do by just reading the book Research. This is it! By Ben Baarda.

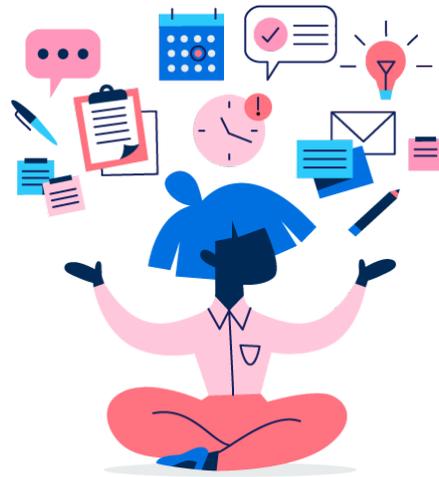
If you are studying Design & Business, Sustainable fashion or Design & Business Fashion Management then I will recommend all of this courses, but bear in mind the Basic Textiles VIII is very technical and I lack some prior knowledge in order to understand and to perform the mathematical calculation.

I do not know if, in the future, Saxion will provide the course Talent Development, but this one is a very interesting one that I looked in to, but decided not to take, do to the fact that I have done independent projects in the past at KEA. For me I think it was the right choice to stick with the other courses, because they are different from what KEA provides, but if you really want to better yourself in some skills then Talent Development is for you. You can study anything that you desire, if it is to get better at the Adobe Programs, knitting, learning about the work culture in a country that you want to study and work in. The choice is yours and you get a mentor who guides you, he also has to approve of your project. You yourself make the rules of when you pass or fail this course, so you act both as the teacher and as the student, so just keep in mind that you have to do your own learning goal in the beginning of the course.

One last advice that I have for you if you are taking a semester at Saxion. You can choose to take first year or second year courses, if you choose a first year course, the other full time students who are not on exchange have to do this assignments that are cold skills papers, but you as an exchange student are not required to do the skills papers, so when you are doing group work it can be a bit of a puzzle to divide the tasks, because some of the project tasks are closely linked to the skills paper tasks. Because of this you have to be aware of who dos what, or if you do a task that is linked to a skills paper task, you might want to attend these classes as well, because this is where you will get a more in depth knowledge of the requirements for the task. So in some cases it might be less confusing to take a second year course, but either way you will figure it out, it just requires a bite of planning and navigation especially in the beginning of the course.

If you are going to attend course that involves group work, then you will rarely meet up with your teammates, you might not even be in the same class. The way teamwork works is that you meet up maybe once or twice a week to discuss and plane, then you work individually on google document, as well as communicating with your teammates on

WhatsApp. So if you are more into work where you all sit together working on a project, then maybe a course with out teamwork might be more for you, or if you on the other hand prefer to work separately with online communication then this is fore you.



Cultural/Personal Experience

Cultural challenges that I experience while being abroad

Culturally Holland is very similar to Denmark, you bike wherever you have to go, you get your food in Lidl and Aldi, as well as other local stores, if you forgot to pack something there is also a Jysk and an Ikea store, so it seems very familiar. Food is very Danish but there are some additional food items in the store, that you might not find in Denmark. Remember to carry cash, because not all stores take MasterCard, and some only take cards from local banks.

In school you have the same relationship with the teachers as in Denmark, there is not really any hierarchical distance, but some of the teachers like to be called by miss or mister followed with their last name, this is something that I find challenging, because it does not come natural to me, but you just ask them how they prefer to be addressed, when speaking and when writing emails. I would not say that there are any notable cultural challenges if you come from Denmark or other Nordic country's.

Support at Saxion in regards to cultural challenges

You will be introduced to cultural appropriate behaviour when arriving, this is done by your Study coach who will have some group meetings, where you can discuss your doubts in regards to getting settled in, you get information on what courses to choose and the Study coach will also inform you about the culture and the work culture in the Netherlands.

Your Study coach will also hold a lecture about different cultures around the world, this lecture is very good, not only in understanding different cultures around the world, but it will also give you an insight in your own culture.

The school is aware of the fact that it sometimes can be challenging for people from different cultures to work together, so they will listen if a student feels the need to vent and they will give you advice on how to best work together.

I have not found any challenges in working in an international environment but the school is supportive and understanding if a student finds it challenging.

My cultural/personal experience, and advice to other KEA students going to study abroad at Saxion

I only stayed in Enschede from the 4. of February to the 14. of March which turned out to be 4 weeks and 3 days, because I went to India for a week during the first holiday week in February. Therefore, I did not travel around in Holland as planned, but I can say that Denmark and the Netherlands are very similar culturally. But I did find some new foods in the Netherlands that are both funny and delicious, especially the sprinkles Hagelslag, the spice-cookie-spread and I really love all the different breads which are available.



(Here is a little illustration of a food combination that I found interesting)

Enschede is a small and charming city maybe more similar to Aarhus than Copenhagen, I mostly spent time with other international students, exchange students but also other students from the international study's. If you go to Saxion you can expect to spend more time with other international students, because they live close to the school and many of the local students live in other city's, so they will spend less time at school, and in Enschede. It is easy to make friends and there are some places in the city to go to, in the weekends. Enschede is filled with students as it is a student city, with various university's.

Practical Experience

The application process, what did KEA help with and what Saxion helps with

Kea helps with the first application process, the application process to the home school; Kea, and then KEA and Saxion help with the second application process to the host school; Saxion.

During the exchange program you can contact KEA's international coordinator as well as your Study coach at Saxion, I found this to be helpful.

After arriving you might want to sign yourself in the commune, choose a doctor and dentist, as well as getting some insurances. These subjects will all be presented to you, but you will have to go out and sign up for everything yourself, except the appointment booking for signing in to the commune, this will be arranged by the school.

Practical difficulties settling down at my destination and how helpful Saxion was in this process

Settling down in regards to housing, you have the Housing Office for advice such as if you are lacking a key, for the rest you have your Study coach as a contact person.

One of the practical difficulties was figuring out with class you are in, in the different courses, it takes time to get a hang of it and there will be a lot of back and forth because no one really knows where you are supposed to be, but give it a month, then everything gets in order, it can take a bit of the focus and you will miss some classes, but usually they will manage to provide the class again if many students miss it.

If you go to Saxion you should be aware of that your time abroad will overlap with your internship period at Kea, that starts after the exchange is over.

Saxion's program lasts 3 weeks longer than the 6. semester at Kea, therefore you will lose 2 weeks' summer holiday after the exchange, and one week that is designated to finishing the Internship report after the Internship has ended. This gives you 2 days in the weekend to finish the report after the Internship has ended. So I would advise you to find out about the start and finishing dates, but this can be difficult and or not possible to find out before the exchange starts, so be aware that the exchange does not always fit to your program at Kea. You do not get time compensated, so just start writing the internship report early during the internship, so that it is all finished on your last working day.

If you apply for student housing at Saxion, you will not get the contract until you arrive in Holland this is after you have paid the first 2 months rent and the deposit, in the contract you can not terminate the lease, it gets terminated when the exchange finishes.

You will not be informed about that you have to fill out an application form in order to get your deposit back, so you should ask for the form before leaving. If the Housing Office does

not reply back to your mails, then ask some of your roommates, this is how I resaved the application form.

If you have a Labara rooming phone subscription, you can not call any Saxion number, and some other international numbers that are otherwise located within the countries of service. I have contacted Labara and they said that they block some international numbers. I would advise you to get a phone subscription that allows you to call Saxion numbers, or you can use WhatsApp for making a call to a Saxion numbers.

Finding accommodation, the pricing and where I lived.

Before arriving at Saxion I was in contact with the Student Housing office because you get offered Student Housing as an exchange student, I took this offer, because it seems to be a bit hard to get housing in Enschede, it is probably the same difficulty level as in Copenhagen.

I lived at Ariënsplein 1, which is a part of Saxion Student Housing, it is on campus and the rent was 3.235 kr. a month.

The first payment is on 10.000 kr. it covers the for 2. Months of rent plus deposit.

I got the first payment bill with one week notes in November, so if you apply for student housing I would advise you to have the first payment ready 3. months in advance before arrival. the rent is not paid on a monthly basis, but you can either pay everything upfront or you pay in two parts, first payment is for the first 2. months and the deposit, the second payment is for the remaining month, this is paid in the beginning of the 3. Month.

All the Saxion student housing are in biking distance from the school, and the one I was living in was on campus, so you can go home for lunch or to study in-between classes, if you want to, that was very nice.

Where I lived you share one mailbox with 14 people, you also have to share one key mailbox with everyone, so the key had a tendency to get lost. Despite this I did not experience any problems with the mail, everyone is very helpful in handing out the letters to everyone if they go to the mailbox, but when the key gets lost, you have to wait a bit for a new key.

General expenses, and did I manage to stick to the budgeted

I found my stay by saving up for the flight tickets, to and from Holland, as well as 10.000 kr. for the first 2 months rent and the deposit. I got a grant on 12.000 kr. from the Erasmus+ grant, this covered the remaining 3 months rent. The rest was funded by my SU, where I was able to carry on paying my rent in Denmark, and the remaining amount I used for my living expenses in Holland.

Coming from Denmark, Holland is not expensive when it comes to grocery shopping, you can probably double down on your food expenses, I had a vegan diet and there were so many vegan options in the store that was super nice.

For transportation I did by a bike, but for the everyday commute. One does not need a bike to get around, especially where I was living because you live in the city center, but if you live in another dormitory, it may be more relevant. I got the bike in a second hand store for 350 kr. I would have sold the bike afterwards, but because of corona it is now stranded in the bike parking place. I also lost half of my belongings that I had to leave behind in my room at the student housing due to the sudden departure, which they unfortunately threw away. I tried contacting them by mail and phone, to arrange for the items to get sent back to Denmark, but the Housing Office didn't help and the caretakers first assured me that everything would be ok but then they didn't respond back to me until 4. months later, confirming that they had thrown my belongings in the trash.

At the end I did not get the opportunity to use 2 of the flight tickets that I had purchased, nor did I get a refund from the airlines, and I had to buy an additional train ticket for 1.200 kr. to get back to Denmark due to the corona situation.

So all in all I did lose some money in tickets that I both as well as belongings such as art supply, and other valuables that had both in Holland and brought from Denmark.

So I would say that I did not manage to stick to the budget considering all the losses, if it hadn't been for that, I would have kept to the budget to some extent.

So for future advice, do not rely on bringing a bigger suitcase later on, in case that you find yourself in a situation where you have 3 days to plan your return home, pack up and leave.

If I would stay in Holland for the full exchange period, I would have done some traveling in weekends and during Holidays, I did not include this in the budget that I made beforehand, but that would definitely have blown my budget a bit, a train ticket for example between Amsterdam and Enschede is 373 kr. so it can become a bit costly if you travel a lot.

So my final advice is to bring luggage that is larger than what you bring in the first go and include a travel budget before you leave in case you want to do some traveling during your stay.