

Exchange

1. Where and when did you study abroad?

I attended the Amsterdam Fashion Institute, in the Spring of 2022.

2. What KEA program did you attend at the time?

I study Brand Design at KEA.

3. What classes did you take during your semester abroad?

I was a part of a “reality school” programme called iNDiViDUALS, we did not have classes. We were running a fashion consultancy studio - iNDiViDUALS Studio. In this programme, three dimensions (Design, Branding and Management) work together. We all had a job role (or more) that we applied for. I had two: PR & Copywriting. I focused on these two things, yet we were a team so helping others with their tasks also was common.

Because we ran a consultancy studio we did not have classes per se, however we did have coaching sessions with our coaches (≠ teachers) who provided us with guidance and constructive criticism.

We worked a 9-5, 5/7 (Monday to Friday), which ended up being more of a 9-9, 6/7. The workload was significant, however I wouldn't qualify the tasks as difficult. The main issue was “so much to do, so little time”. This can also be explained by the fact that this programme is usually composed of +30 students, and we were only 16. Even if this seems like a lot of work, I still enjoyed it - 99% thanks to my teammates. Spending, basically, 24/7 with the same group of people can go two ways...and in my case it went as amazingly as it could've! Frankly, if I hadn't been a part of such a great team of people, I would not have enjoyed the experience at all.

Overall it is (can be) a fun programme because of the creative freedom (you still have to get the whole team on the same page though), however I am not sure I learnt a lot academically. I did learn a lot on a human level, though - working in a multidimensional team - Designers, Managers and Branders together. It was very enriching on that level.

Academic Experience

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

I did not really have a choice actually, I was put in that programme - the AMFI international coordinator thought I would be a good fit there. The programme isn't usually open to exchange students.

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

In the programme you produce two fashion collections: a community collection & a statement collection. You launch them too, you host events (you have a nice budget). The feedback from guests of the event is the most rewarding part.

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

We sometimes had a "creative coaching" which was pretty chronophage (time consuming). We had a lot to do, all the time - this coaching was just making us lose time that we didn't have.

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

As mentioned, I didn't have classes and I don't choose the programme I was in. If you also are put in iNDiViDUALS, I recommend you think well about it. If you hope to have a lot of free time, I don't recommend it :)

Cultural/Personal Experience

1. What challenges did you experience culturally while being abroad?

Culturally and personally, I'd say none. Academically though, it was a bit challenging. The students at AMFI had a very different way of working, it didn't have any structure and I very often questioned what my fellow branding teammates were being taught at AMFI (I still do). In that respect, I strongly believe that KEA has a better educational system, for branding. On the other hand, I think AMFI is an excellent school for fashion design.

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

I didn't get to experience that much due to the workload we had, however, I made friends for life! Spending everyday together made us like a little family.

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

Depending on which programme you are put in, you will have a *lot* of work to do (or, really not much). So if you feel like it doesn't fit your expectations, ask if it is possible to switch programmes - and don't wait too long.

Practical Experience

1. How was the application process?

Smooth.

a. What did KEA help you with?

KEA helped me if I had any questions, it was easy and fast to get in touch!

b. What help did you receive from your school abroad?

It was harder to get in touch with AMFI, I had to wait quite a while to get an answer. However I don't need much help as everything went smoothly.

2. Did you have any practical difficulties settling down at your destination?

No, everything went well.

a. How helpful was the receiving school in this process?

I didn't really receive help from the receiving school in regards to settling down. They did ask if everybody had a place to live when we arrived, though.

3. Where did you live?

I lived 5 minutes away from AMFI, which was absolutely ideal. I was basically in the centre of town, I was able to walk pretty much everywhere. The location couldn't have been better. I lived with 5 roommates though (also students, but from another university) - I am used to living by myself, so I'll admit that it wasn't my favourite thing. But the perfect location made up for that!

a. Was it difficult to find accommodation?

I found accommodation through HvA, the university which AMFI is a part of. I strongly recommend you do the same, it is extremely hard to find a place in Amsterdam.

b. Was it expensive?

I didn't find it expensive at all compared to what I pay for my studio in Copenhagen. I think it was a fair price for the location and the size of the room, but of course it depends on what you're used to.

4. What kind of expenses did you have in general?

I didn't have any extraordinary expenses so I would say food, rent, public transports,...

a. Did you spend more or less money than you budgeted with?

I'm not the best at budgeting, but I think I didn't do too bad...