

My experiences as a web developer student taking an exchange semester at Fonty's in Eindhoven, Netherlands



An image of Eindhoven city

My study abroad experience took me to the exciting city of Eindhoven, Netherlands, where I had the opportunity to study at the well-respected Fontys ICT institute. This wasn't just an ordinary academic term; it was a semester full of immersive learning, personal growth, and, of course, the added bonus of getting to know and love the lively Dutch culture.

During my time abroad, I was a part of KEA's PBA in Web Development program. This program is particularly known for its in-depth approach that equips students with a robust understanding of both the theoretical and practical aspects of web development. This combination prepared me not only for the academic challenges but also for my future professional growth in the field.

Throughout my semester at Fontys ICT, I attended a variety of unique and enlightening classes. These classes added to my primary web development program and significantly broadened my overall academic knowledge. For instance, the Media Design class, which primarily focused on 3D modelling, taught me how to create, modify, and animate 3D models—an experience that introduced me to the captivating world of 3D design.

I also took a Human-Centered Design class during my time abroad. This class emphasized the importance of considering the user's needs, preferences, and experiences during the design

process. This experience underscored the importance of user-centric thinking, a concept that I found to be as valuable as it is intriguing.

Another integral part of my semester was the Programming class, where I had the opportunity to further develop my coding skills. Here, I dove deeper into the practical applications of web development technologies, challenging my existing coding knowledge and encouraging me to think more critically about problem-solving.

However, the most rewarding part of my semester was undoubtedly the Semester Project class. This was a space where I could apply all the skills and knowledge I had accumulated over the semester to a single, comprehensive project. For me, that project was developing a web game for McDonald's—a task that proved to be both challenging and immensely rewarding.

If you're wondering what might be expected of the semester project you can find my groups project hosted [here](#) (I can't guarantee for how long this will stay up) and you can find the source code [here](#). Furthermore, you can see my main portfolio for the semester [here](#) to get an understanding of work task requirements.

Despite the interesting insights from my Media Design class, I found it to be less relevant to my future career aspirations. This class, although informative and comprehensive, focused primarily on 3D modelling—a skill that, while fascinating, I don't foresee myself using extensively in the web development field.

Regarding the application process for my study abroad program, it was pretty straightforward, largely due to the considerable support I received from KEA. They provided invaluable assistance with all the administrative elements that needed sorting out. This support made it much easier to acclimate to the new academic environment at Fontys ICT, which was significantly different from what I was accustomed to at KEA.



Image of the Fontys campus

Moving to a new city, let alone a new country, often comes with its challenges. However, my transition to life in Eindhoven was relatively smooth. I lived in a dorm managed by Vestide, conveniently located close to the school and the city centre. Thanks to the school's housing program, I found the process of finding a place to stay considerably less stressful. However, it's worth noting that finding suitable accommodation in the Netherlands can often be tricky and sometimes comes with a higher price tag.

In terms of living costs, I found that living in Eindhoven was quite similar to living in Denmark. However, the initial period of settling down came with a few extra costs, like buying a bike for getting around the city. These unexpected expenses meant that I ended up spending a bit more money than I initially planned. However, I had savings set aside which helped to cover these additional costs.

During my semester abroad, my income was comprised of the standard SU amount and the Erasmus+ grant. These funds were primarily used to cover my increased rent costs. I was fortunate to receive both SU and Erasmus+ funding, which significantly helped my financial situation, even though I didn't apply for any additional grants.



Image of the city center of Eindhoven

From a cultural perspective, I didn't encounter any major challenges during my stay in the Netherlands. The cultural similarities between the Netherlands and Denmark made it easy

for me to adjust to my new surroundings. The school community was also very supportive, helping me understand and fit into the local cultural norms.

One of the standout experiences during my study abroad was the realization that I could successfully live and work in a foreign country all on my own. This experience was more than just a milestone—it made me more excited about the idea of exploring the world and learning about different cultures.

For any KEA students contemplating a study term at Fontys ICT, my advice is to keep an open mind. It's important to remember that studying abroad is about much more than just academics—it's a unique opportunity for personal growth, cultural exchange, and broadening your understanding of different societies and cultures. So, take full advantage of this opportunity to make the most of your time abroad—it's a fantastic opportunity for rich experiences and profound learning.

Now for a bit about Eindhoven. Eindhoven is a vibrant city located in the province of North Brabant in the southern Netherlands. Known as the "City of Light," Eindhoven is renowned for its innovative design, technology, and engineering industries, largely due to being the birthplace of electronics giant Philips and automotive titan DAF Trucks. Today, it's home to a bustling creative scene, trendy restaurants, a thriving nightlife, and an ever-growing technology sector, making it a hub of innovation and culture.

Eindhoven's cityscape is a delightful blend of historic buildings and cutting-edge architecture, reflecting the city's evolution from an industrial hub to a modern technological city. The city centre is filled with a variety of shops, cafes, and restaurants, making it a lively place to spend free time. It's also a city of green, with beautiful parks and natural areas that provide a peaceful escape from the urban life.



Image of Strijp-S

One of Eindhoven's highlights is Strijp-S, a former Philips factory area, transformed into a vibrant cultural and residential area. Here, you can find a mix of shops, design studios, restaurants, and lofts. It's also a centre for various events, including the renowned Dutch Design Week and GLOW Eindhoven, a stunning annual light art festival.

For those with a taste for art and history, Eindhoven houses the Van Abbemuseum, one of the first public museums for contemporary art in Europe. The city's rich industrial heritage is brought to life at the Philips Museum.

Transportation in Eindhoven is efficient and convenient, with a robust network of trains, buses, and bike paths. The city also encourages cycling, with many bike-friendly roads and facilities making it an enjoyable city to get around.

Eindhoven offers a lively, enriching, and comfortable atmosphere, making it a fascinating city for students and professionals alike. Its balance of cultural heritage, innovation, nature, and urban convenience truly sets it apart as an inspiring place to live, study, and work.