

Final report about my exchange program at HAW in Hamburg.

**Where and when did you study abroad?**

I studied at HAW in Hamburg during the summer semester of 2023 (March 1st - July 15th)

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

PBA in design and business with brand design as my academic direction.

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

I wanted to take brand design and editorial design, but since editorial design was very popular, unfortunately, I didn't secure a spot. Therefore, I chose brand design and packaging design instead.

In brand design, the task was to either rebrand or create a new brand for bike rentals in Hamburg, delving into brand strategy as well as verbal and visual identity.

In packaging design, there was more freedom to choose what to work with. The only requirement was to create packaging design that also addressed a specific issue. I chose to delve into a German beverage, "apfelschorle," and make it more international in terms of both name and visual presentation.

I also had a workshop class in Adobe After Effects where I learned the program from scratch.

Overall, the teaching style was different from what I'm used to from KEA, as we had more feedback sessions during our process, rather than traditional lectures and group work, which I'm accustomed to at KEA.

*Academic Experience*

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

I found that HAW was a bit unclear regarding the courses, as they provided us with a "catalog" of courses we could choose from before we departed. However, when we arrived in Hamburg, we weren't guaranteed those courses, and instead, we had to apply once again along with the other HAW students. Nevertheless, I must say that we received good guidance and were assured of courses that would make sense in relation to our studies back home.

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

I think it must be the After Effects course. I hadn't worked with After Effects before, but we had a very skilled teacher, Sebastian, who patiently guided us through the program. There was ample time to ask for assistance, and I gained a lot from this course.

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

I think it must be the brand design course as it was a lot of repetition from what I already learned and worked with at KEA, but in a more “basic” way. We didn’t have any teaching, only feedback rounds and individual project work. So unfortunately, I didn’t learn anything new in this course.

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

Brand design is a good course if you want to build upon what you've already learned. However, personally, I found it to be a bit too much repetition of what I already knew. I would have preferred editorial design and heard from several people that it was a great course.

### *Practical Experience*

#### **How was the application process?**

- **What did KEA help you with?**
- **What help did you receive from your school abroad?**

I think it was a smooth and simple process. Hanne, the advisor at KEA, is very helpful. Overall, I don't recall the process being particularly troublesome as long as you remembered the right deadlines. HAW assisted with housing and other practical information, which was also a significant help.

#### **Where did you live?**

- **Was it difficult to find accommodation?**
- **Was it expensive?**

I lived at a female student dorm. I got the room through the school, so it was very easy for me to find a place to stay. I paid around 360 EUR, so it was also a good price. The only downside was that I was committed to the room for half a year and therefore paid 1.5 months' rent after I returned home. But in general, I was very happy with the accommodation. It was centrally located and clean.

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

- **Did you spend more or less money than you budgeted with?**

My fixed expenses included rent, phone, food, experiences, school materials, cleaning supplies etc. I spent approximately what I had estimated. Maybe slightly more, but I didn't exceed my budget very much.

#### **What kind of income did you have during your exchange?**

- Did you receive SU and/or Erasmus**
- Did you apply for any grants and did you receive any?**

I got SU, Erasmus and 2 grants.

## *Cultural/personal Experience*

### **What challenges did you experience culturally while being abroad?**

#### **- How helpful was the receiving school in this process?**

Meeting people from different cultural backgrounds can be both challenging and enlightening. However, I found it truly exciting to get to know so many diverse cultures. It's clear that I formed friendships more quickly with some than with others, but overall, I didn't find significant challenges. The school had organized a great introduction week where you got to know a lot of people, which was nice before actually starting classes.

In relation to the German students, it could be a challenge to interact with them since many were more comfortable speaking German. I had a class where I was the only international student, and the language often switched to German, even though it was supposed to be conducted in English. It was a bit disappointing.

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

It must be all the friendships I've formed across borders. Additionally, the entire experience of living in a new country, trying a different way of learning, and stepping out of my comfort zone on my own.

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

Enjoy the time and try to make the most of it. School doesn't take up as much time as in Denmark, so you also have plenty of time to delve into other things. The school has excellent facilities for experimentation. It's beneficial to know a bit of German, but not necessary.