



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

Birmingham City University, fall semester 2024/2025

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

Multimedia Design (3rd semester)



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

I attended the Graphic Design Course on Level 5 (year 2). I took the following two classes:

**VIS5042 Context of Graphic Design:** For this class I had to work in a group with two other students. We had to create a design collective identity (name, branding, logo etc.) and make a publication consisting of at least 60 pages (20 each).

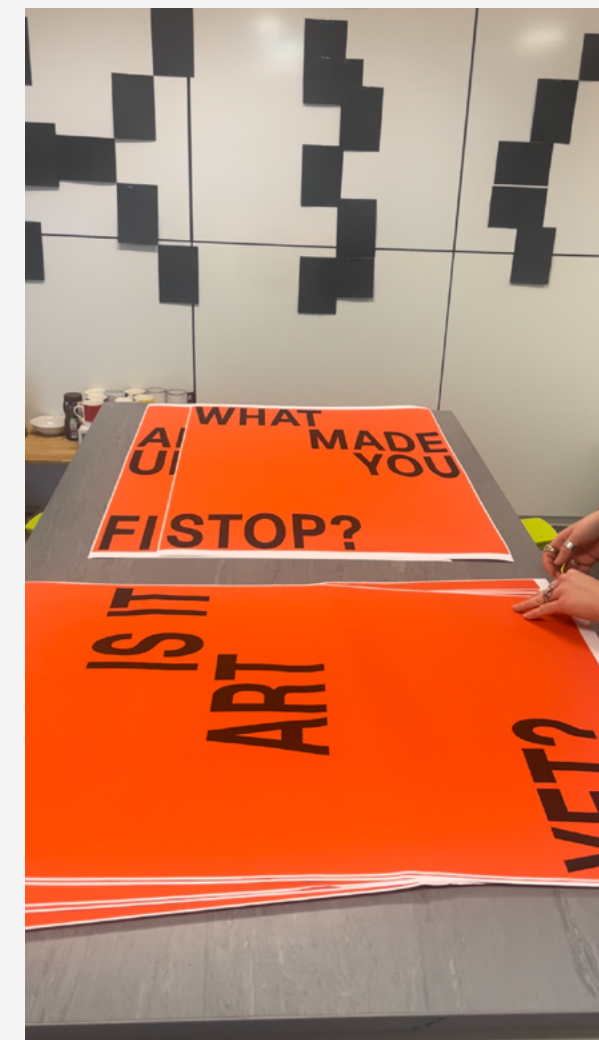
We had to pick our own topic and had full creative freedom when it came to format, design direction and content. In addition to the publication, we also had to make a promotional video, process video, merchandise and write an individual design report.

**ADM5001 ADM Live Project:** For this class we had to apply graphic design knowledge and skills to an external, professional brief. There was four briefs set by local design agencies to choose from.

I actually ended up getting the opportunity to work on a different project/brief for this class with another exchange student. We got the opportunity to create our own solo exhibition at Bene Culture - a local street wear store.

We had to create an exhibition concept, title and visual identity. We also had to create promotional assets such as SoMe content, posters and flyers. In addition, we had to plan a pop-up event with Bene Culture which i.e. included creating all the exhibits for the exhibition, DJ-set up, space planning and sending out invitations.

We had to hand in a document where we showed the process step-by-step and also give a presentation to our lecturers.



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

The communication with the school was quite slow before arriving in Birmingham. It was very frustrating to have such little information in the month leading up to arriving. However, it did all work out in the end, and you just have to be patient and maybe send an extra email or call the exchange office if you have questions.

I could not choose my own classes as there was only two for Graphic Design.

When we arrived there was an introduction week where you got a lot of essential information.



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

The **ADM Live Project** class was definitely my highlight. I really enjoyed getting such a challenging and unique opportunity to create an exhibition.

We got a lot of creative freedom to experiment and learn while still having support from our lecturers. I learned so much and created a large network by working with people from creative industries in Birmingham and having people show up to the event.

This opportunity was only possible due to personal initiative. So I would advice to reach for opportunities, talk to your lecturers about your aspirations, use the workspaces at the university and be curious.







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

I did enjoy both classes I took and learned a lot in general. However, I found it very difficult to work with my group in my first class **Context of Graphic Design**. The people I worked with were nice but were very unreliable and unmotivated to do our assignment, which meant I ended up not enjoying the experience and learning as much as I could have.

In general most exchange students I talked with had similar experiences with group work - maybe because in the UK they are less used to working in groups. So I would advice to try to find a group that fits your own expectations and talk to your lecturer if you are unhappy with your group.



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

In would recommond the classes I took for sure. But in general most classes / courses in the Arts, Design and Media department seemed quite interesting and very hands-on. So if you are interested in doing more practical work I would recommond these.

I would also recommond to attend classes you are not enrolled on if you want to learn more about certain topics. I know someone from Graphic Design who attended Music History classes just out of interest. If you do want to do this, you can just ask the lecturer or contact the exchange office.



**How was the application process? What did KEA help you with? What help did you receive from your school abroad?**

The process was quite long and frustrating at times. There is a lot of documents to fill out and sometimes I was in doubt about certain application processes. It was mostly applying at BCU after already being accepted to go on exchange by KEA that was difficult as they were very slow with responding. They also were very late with acceptance letters so do not get too worried if you have to wait long for this.

KEA helped me with the process of applying for exchange and then once the application had been accepted it was BCU who helped me with applying for my specific course, housing etc.



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

Once I arrived I did not have many practical difficulties settling in. The introduction days were very useful for this. I also met a lot of exchange students in the first days so we helped each other a lot during the process as well.

The only issue I had was not receiving my time schedule before I had to start classes. But I knew which class I was supposed to go to so I just showed up and talked with the lecturers and they told me to join the class and helped fix my scheduling issue.





## Where did you live?

I lived at The Heights which is a Canvas student accommodation. It was easy to find as I booked it through the universities accommodation portal. It was around £600 a month.

The pros to living here is that it is close to the university and city center (10 minute walk). They also put exchange students in flats together which meant I met a lot of friends very easily. It was one of the most popular accommodations for exchange students.

The cons are that the area and building is not very charming and in general the flats are not very well kept when it comes to cleaning and maintenance. There can also be a lot of noise from the street especially on bonfire night/week where a lot of people were doing fireworks.



**What kind of expenses did you have in general? Did you spend more or less money than you budgeted with?**

My expenses were roughly £1200 pr month. Half went to rent and the other half was spent primarily on groceries, experiences and transport/travel. I travelled twice a month to other UK cities which was a big part of my expenses.

I spent around £200 in total on university projects as for my course we had to pay for printing materials - this however is mostly common for arts and design courses where you have to produce physical products.

I spent more money than I had planned but I could definitely had budgeted more if I wanted to save money by i.e. travelling less or spending less on going to pubs/bars.



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

I recieved an Erasmus Grant which covered a large amount of my rent which had to be paid in one payment about a month after my arrival. I covered the last part with my own savings.

Besides this I recieved SU every month which was my monthly budget to spend on other expenses besides rent.

I did not apply for additional grants and was not allowed to work due to Brexit rules.

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

As my partner is from the UK and I therefore have visited the UK for extended periods prior to my exchange I did not have a lot of cultural challenges as others may have experienced.

However, the biggest challenge was probably adapting to a different university. The assignments / exams were quite different than what I was used to from Denmark but my lecturers were very helpful in answering all my questions and concerns.

Besides this the grocery stores were very small in Birmingham and there was a very small selection of many things. It was a bit hard to adapt to this especially as I primarily eat vegetarian.



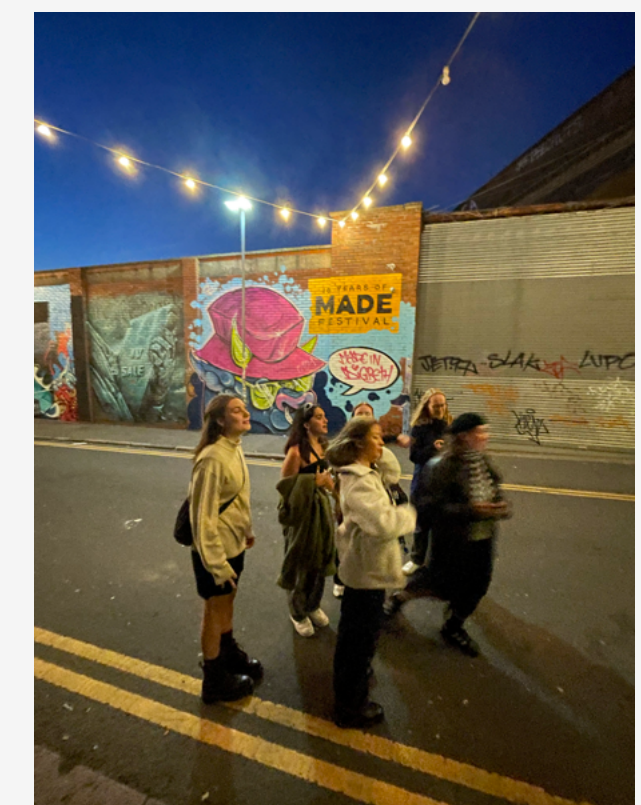


## What was the best cultural/personal experience during your studies?

My favorite thing about the UK versus Denmark is the arts and culture scene. I really enjoyed going to events, concerts, exhibitions and other creative / cultural experiences.

Compared to other cities in the UK, Birmingham can be a bit boring as it has less going on and it is less busy. However, I'd recommend going to Digbeth if you are interested in more artsy or alternative options for a day trip or night out.

Of other cities to visit for culture, arts and nightlife I'd recommend Manchester, London, Brighton and Bristol.







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

First of all I'd say that Birmingham is not the most interesting or pretty city. However, for me I am really happy I went here as I really enjoyed the course and university, as well as being able to visit many cities in the UK. But I would recommend to consider whether the choice is right for you before deciding on where to go.

The thing that definitely made my experience was the friends I made here. So my biggest advice is to be open-minded and go to social events, join societies and take other social initiatives.

I would also recommend to check out the different neighborhoods in Birmingham as there is much more to the city than just the city center.

