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Exchange in Portugal IADE Creative
University - Global Design Fall 2024

Multimediasdesign, Copenhagen- School
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QUESTIONNAIRE STUDY ABROAD/EXCHANGE

1. Where and when did you study abroad?

I studied Global Design at IADE Creative University in Lisbon, Portugal, from September 2024 to January 2025.

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

I attended the Multimedia Design program at KEA before going abroad.

3. What classes did you take during your semester abroad? Please briefly explain what each class was about.

Pack 3 – 3rd Year

ECTS	COURSE	LANGUAGE
2,5	Design and Contemporary Culture	ENG
2,5	Information Visualization Laboratory	ENG
2,5	Digital Animation Laboratory	ENG
5	Space and Environments	ENG
5	Digital Studio IV	ENG
7,5	Integrated Project IV	ENG
5	Professional Project III	ENG

For my semester at IADE, our primary focus was to redesign the wayfinding experience at Gare do Oriente, one of the most iconic (and challenging to

navigate) stations in Portugal. Throughout the semester, we applied knowledge from multiple courses to overhaul the station's design. In the Integrated Project IV course, we developed a comprehensive brand book, while in Space and Environments, we used 3D modelling techniques to create detailed models of parts of the station in Sketchup. Additionally, in the Digital Animation Laboratory, we produced an animated video pitch to present our redesign. This project allowed us to integrate graphic design theory, spatial design, and animation to rebrand Gare do Oriente in a cohesive and innovative way.

Design and Contemporary Culture

This course focused on Portugal's cultural landscape and history. With Gare do Oriente as the overarching theme of the semester, we explored the evolution of public transportation in Portugal, delving into the history of trams and other modes of transit. We also studied architectural styles, learning to distinguish between Art Nouveau and Neo-Gothic designs, which helped inform our understanding of the country's rich cultural and architectural heritage.

Information Visualization Laboratory

In this course, we learned how to create compelling information visualisation graphics using Flourish and explored the key principles behind effective infographics. For the final project, we applied these skills by

designing a large-scale wall infographic to be displayed at Gare do Oriente station in our final 3D renders.

Digital Animation Laboratory

In this course, we learned the basics of 2D animation using After Effects, which came in handy for our final video submission. The course gave us the basic tools to bring our ideas to life through digital animation, adding an impactful visual element to our final project.

Space and Environments

Space and Environments was arguably one of the most intensive courses of the semester, particularly due to the challenge of modeling Gare do Oriente in SketchUp. In this course, we had to create 3D models of select parts of the station using only images, as no floor plans were available. This made the task both demanding and time-consuming, but it was incredibly rewarding when our models began to take shape and look recognizable. The course pushed us to develop our spatial design skills and taught us how to work with limited resources to create accurate, detailed models.

Digital Studio IV

Digital Studio IV was divided into two modules. In the first module, we worked with Prof. Nathan to develop a portfolio website using VSCode,

gaining hands-on experience in web development and design. In the second module, we learned the fundamentals of video editing with Prof. Dilay using Premiere Pro. These skills were invaluable when it came time to create and refine our final video submission, allowing us to present our redesign of Gare do Oriente in a polished and engaging format.

Integrated Project IV

Integrated Project IV solely focused on developing the brand book for Gare do Oriente, encompassing all aspects of its visual and communicative identity, such as the logo, colour scheme, tone of voice, etc. In the second and final module, we took our project further by creating an interactive app prototype in Figma, designed to enhance the user experience at Gare do Oriente. This module allowed us to apply branding concepts to a digital interface, providing a practical solution that integrated with the overall redesign of the station.

Professional Project III

Professional Project III was a mini-course consisting of two project weeks, one at the end of the first module and the other at the end of the second module. During the first project week, we were tasked with designing posters to be displayed at Gare do Oriente, which allowed us to apply our design skills to a real-world context. In the second project week, we focused on developing our own personal visual identity for our portfolio on

Behance, honing our branding and presentation skills to create a cohesive and professional online presence.

Academic Experience

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

I decided to switch from the 2nd to the 3rd year courses during my first week at IADE, and the international office was very helpful in adjusting my learning agreement accordingly. As for settling in, IADE organized a tour of the university for all Erasmus students on the first day, which was a great way to get familiar with the campus. Additionally, IADE offers a buddy program that students can sign up for before their arrival. I didn't make use of the buddy program myself, but from what I've heard, people had mixed experiences—some of my Erasmus peers had a great relationship with their buddies, while other buddies never even showed up to the activities.

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

The most rewarding class for me was Integrated Project. It was an opportunity to work on a real-world design challenge, where we had to develop a comprehensive brand book for Gare do Oriente, including elements like the logo, color scheme, and tone of voice. The course provided a chance to integrate different design skills and apply them in a

meaningful way, which made the project feel both challenging and fulfilling. Creating a cohesive identity for such an iconic place pushed me to think creatively and strategically, making it one of the highlights of my semester.

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

I found Digital Studio IV to be the least relevant, as I already have experience with coding and web development from my courses at KEA. The course was very much an introduction to coding, starting with the basics of HTML and CSS, which I had already mastered. We were tasked with creating a portfolio site, but this felt redundant since I had already completed a similar project at KEA the previous year.

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

I would advise against choosing Digital Studio IV if you already have experience with coding, as it is very much a beginner's course in coding. This wasn't made clear in the course

description, which might disappoint anyone hoping to learn more about programming.

I would also caution against Contemporary Culture, as it was very repetitive. The teacher relied heavily on student presentations based on the course materials, rather than teaching the class herself. This approach led to many students being unengaged during the presentations, which negatively affected my learning experience.

On the other hand, I highly recommend Digital Animation Laboratory. The teacher was very passionate about the subject, which made the course engaging and inspiring.

Practical Experience

1. How was the application process?

a. What did KEA help you with?

My KEA Erasmus coordinator, Anne, was incredibly helpful throughout the application process. She took care of the necessary paperwork and answered all my questions about going abroad, which greatly eased my concerns. Even after I arrived in Portugal, she was quick to assist when I

decided to change my courses from the 2nd to the 3rd-year pack, making the transition smooth and stress-free.

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

The international office at IADE was also very supportive. They assisted me with changing my courses and helped with documentation related to my stay, exam queries, and other administrative needs. They were approachable and responsive, so I would encourage anyone to reach out to them if they need assistance.

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

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

Apart from changing my course pack during the first week and having a few questions about the Portuguese grading system later on for the exams, I didn't encounter many difficulties. The international office was very helpful and responsive, making settling down in Portugal much easier.

3. Where did you live?

I lived in Alcântara, a really nice area just a short tram ride away from IADE University. I highly recommend Alcântara for those unsure about where to look for housing. It has excellent tram and bus connections, a nearby regional train station, and is close to attractions like LX Factory, charming shops, the MAAT museum, and the pier.

a. Was it difficult to find accommodation?

Finding a room in Lisbon can be challenging as the accommodation costs are increasing. I was lucky to find a room through the Erasmus Lisbon Facebook group, but most of my friends found their accommodations through Livensa Living.

b. Was it expensive?

I was fortunate to find a room for only 450 euros, but most rooms in Lisbon typically range between 500-800 euros, depending on the location and amenities.

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

Here's a breakdown of my budget:

- Rent: 450€
- Food: 200€-300€
- Entertainment/Fun: Approximately 200€

Note: If you are under 23 years old and obtain a Portuguese NIF number, you can get a Navigante travel card for free, which can significantly reduce public transportation costs across Lisbon.

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

I generally stayed within my budget, though there were occasional extra expenses for outings or trips. Overall, my spending was fairly close to what I had planned.

5. What kind of income did you have during your exchange?

a. Did you receive SU and/or Erasmus?

I received both SU and an Erasmus grant, which helped cover my living expenses during the exchange.

b. Did you apply for any grants and did you receive any?

I did not apply for any additional grants, but in hindsight, it would have been a good idea to do so.

Cultural/Personal Experience

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

The most prominent challenges I faced were the cultural differences between Denmark and Portugal. In Portugal, everything operates at a much slower and more drawn-out pace compared to the strict punctuality and efficiency of Danish culture. For example, receiving grades for assignments throughout the semester often took months rather than weeks. Overall, the receiving school was quite disorganized and slow in assisting students.

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

While the student advisors were very kind and helpful when you finally got to meet them in person, the process to reach that point was lengthy and frustrating.

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

One of the best cultural experiences was exploring Lisbon's rich history and vibrant atmosphere. Connecting with other Erasmus students and locals allowed me to experience Portuguese culture in a more personal and meaningful way than I ever could as a regular tourist. Every interaction added something unique to my time abroad, whether it was trying traditional dishes like pastéis de nata, exploring Porto and Sintra, or surfing at Costa de Caparica. These experiences made my exchange unforgettable.

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

The best advice I can give future exchange students at IADE is to be patient and adaptable. The pace in Portugal is much slower than what you might be used to, and things like grades, schedules, and administrative processes can take longer than expected. Plan ahead and keep a flexible mindset, or you'll end up frustrated.

Also, take advantage of the opportunity to explore Lisbon and beyond—there's so much to see and do! Finally, don't hesitate to reach out to the international office if you need help; while the process can be slow, they're kind and willing to assist.