

# Exchange Report Matilde Øland

## Questionnaire Study Abroad/Exchange

1. Where and when did you study abroad?

I studied abroad in The Netherlands, Enschede, in the fall semester 2023-2024.

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

Multimedia Design.

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

I took the whole first semester of Creative Media & Game Technology.

Project Costumer - (this was from year 2 because of a mix-up) You make a 'serious game' with a team, using Unity, do presentations and write a report.

Project First Contact – You make a point and click game using Processing, do presentatinos, and write a report.

Imagery – You learn the basics of graphic design, you have to make a poster and write a report about how you used what you learned.

Programming Basics (Engineer) – You learn JavaScript and the engine Processing, the level is dependent of the role you chose. At the exam you have 2,5 hours to solve an assignment.

Communication – You learn the basics about how people communicate with each other. Exam is multiple choice.

Design Thinking – You learn the basics of the design thinking model. You have to create a prototype of an interactive product (I did a graphic novel with choices using Figma).

Game Design – You learn the principles of game design. You have to create a game on your own using these principles, and write a game design document about it, and make a presentation.

Research – You learn how to research and write an academic report. You have to write a white paper (1500 words), and make a presentation.

Game Programming (Engineer) – You learn C# and how to use the GXP engine (CMGT engine). You have to create a game on your own, using the engine.

Input Output – You make a game controller with an Arduino, and learn about hardware stuff, the exam is multiple choice.

## Academic Experience

1. How helpful was the *receiving school* in the process of choosing classes and settling you in? There was a bit of a mix up in the beginning where I was assigned a class that I hadn't chosen. But it was all fixed, and they were very helpful. Other than that, I didn't take much contact to the school, but whenever I did write an email asking questions, the international coordinator was very fast at replying and very helpful.

2. What classes/study experiences did you find the most rewarding? I liked Input/Output because it taught me something completely new, and I got to fiddle with soldering, which I had never done before. The teachers were very chill and had chill radio music playing in the background, whenever we attended labs.

3. What classes/study experiences did you find least relevant or least valuable to you? We had some very basic classes at the beginning of the semester which of course makes sense for the new students, but as an exchange student (from multimedia design) I would definitely recommend not to take the classes: Imagery & Design Thinking. I didn't learn anything that I did not already know.

4. What classes would you advice other KEA students going to the receiving school to choose or not to choose? I'd recommend you only do the engineering role if you already have experience and love coding, because even though I do have some experience and like coding in my free time, this was another level of dedication, and it was the classes that made me the most stressed and miserable. I think Game Design was very relevant, however, all the classes were online, and only the labs were physical, which made it very difficult (for me at least), to pay attention and learn as much as I wanted to. If you'd like to try soldering, and want to know more about hardware, I recommend Input Output.

## Practical Experience

1. How was the application process? It was pretty straightforward. There were a lot of different things you had to take account of, but I wouldn't say it was difficult, just time consuming.

2. What did KEA help you with? The International coordinator at KEA helped me pick the right school and also answered, whatever questions might develop through the application process. I had very little contact with KEA when I was aboard, and would have liked to know more about, what was going to happen on the next semester I would be attending, when I got home.

3. What help did you receive from your school abroad? The school offered to sign me up for accommodation, through the school which I accepted. This was very helpful, and lifted the burden of looking for housing, off my shoulders. The school also

had very useful information on their website, and their social media platforms, including an app used to meet your fellow students online before the semester begins.

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

No, I wouldn't say so. I was lucky enough to have my dad drive with me to the Netherlands, which made it very easy for me to get settled with all my stuff. The only difficulty I had was that my garbage disposal key wasn't working. Turned out to be a problem most students here had, and we ended up having to place the trash besides the garbage disposal. This of course wasn't much of an inconvenience for me, but more for the housing company.

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

I didn't need the help of the school for this, but I'm sure they would have been glad to help in any way possible.

6. Where did you live?

At the student housing De Veste on Witbreuksweg 369. It is a bunch of red containers stacked upon each other.

7. Was it difficult to find accommodation?

No luckily because of the help of the school, it was very easy.

8. Was it expensive?

It was pretty much what you'd expect. 650 euros a month, for a container size one room apartment with private bathroom and kitchen.

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

I didn't spend a lot of money in general. I'd say I spend maybe a tad more than I do at home, going out to eat with friends once in a while, and taking a trip to Amsterdam and such.

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

I spend more money than my budget. My budget was a bit unrealistic.

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

Erasmus+, SU, and a remote part time job with only a few hours a week.

12. Did you receive SU and/or Erasmus?

Yes both.

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

No, I didn't know this was a thing, but I definitely think it would be a good idea to do.

## Cultural/Personal Experience

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

I had a hard time finding very basic foods at the beginning, which I found odd. It turns out that Albert Heijn is the best place to get your groceries. Lidl and Aldi often didn't have basic things such as chickpeas or vegetable broth.

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

I didn't reach out to the school.

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

Culturally it was experiencing the Dutch as a people, they are very kind and helpful in general. And then also visiting Amsterdam. Personally, it was experiencing that I was able to make it on my own, even though I had my doubts about living alone in a country where I didn't know anybody (also considering that I am very much an introvert).

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

Remember that your experience is yours alone. Just because you see other people on social media having the time of their lives with their newfound friends, doesn't mean you need to do or feel the same as them. Listen to yourself and make sure you do what feels right for you.

There's no wrong way to be studying abroad.