

EXCHANGE REPORT

Manchester, UK 2019

Tiberiu Justinian Mitran

2nd Semester Software Development

1. Where and when did you study abroad?

I studied abroad during the fall semester 2019 in Manchester, UK at Manchester Metropolitan University.

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

It was the 2nd semester of my Software Development Top-Up.

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

Please briefly explain what each class was about.

The courses I chose during my semester abroad were: Introduction to Data Science, Databases, Web Based Business Systems and Enterprise Programming.

Introduction to Data Science – the name of the course is pretty straightforward. We learned how to use Jupyter notebook, pandas, fundamentals of data science and python. Data understanding, subsets, data exploration were concepts we were using doing some exercises every class.

Databases – Introduction to SQL using Oracle. We were taught select clauses, filtering and ordering, joins, groupings and subqueries.

Web Based Business Systems – this course is based on e-commerce. They teach you about Wordpress, running xamp, phpmyadmin in the beginning, then Search Engine Optimization and Enterprise Resource Planner. It is a combination between IT and marketing.

Enterprise Programming – you learn about web services. Java servlets, REST API, Ajax and web service interaction and deploying everything to the cloud.

Academic Experience

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

The receiving school was very helpful with everything in the beginning. I was assigned a tutor, we had a meeting in which he walked me through the courses, the life at university and answered all my questions.

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

I found Web Based Business Systems the most rewarding because even though in the beginning seemed boring having to deal with Wordpress websites, after a few classes we started learning about ERPs and

that was a completely new experience. I have got some nice business insights from the e-commerce world and the teacher was very friendly and knowledgeable.

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

I think the Enterprise Programming course was not very helpful at all. The teacher did not seem to be very competent and I expected much more from a 3rd year course. We have spent maybe half of the course working with Javascript, the lectures were quite boring and in the end I had to use another programming language for my assignment because I felt more comfortable with that. Also, the assignment questions were ambiguous and not always clear.

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

Go for Web Based Business Systems and Introduction to Data Science. As I said, Enterprise Programming was a disappointment. Also, avoid Information Systems which I had to change in the beginning because it was trivial.

Cultural/Personal Experience

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

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

I haven't experienced any cultural challenge. Manchester is a very multicultural city and you can fit in easily. The school organizes plenty of events for socializing, doing sports and workshops.

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

I have never had so many friends from so many places at once. I have met people from UK, Malaysia, Spain, Switzerland, Netherlands, Norway, Austria, USA, UAE, France, Finland and Japan. All from different backgrounds! We were a great mix 😊

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

Take advantage of the sports facilities they have. They have plenty of sports you can play 1-2-3 times a week with other students and it's FREE. This way I tried badminton and squash for the first time and I loved the experience. It's a great way to meet people and socialize.

Practical Experience

1. How was the application process?

a. What did KEA help you with?

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

The application process was easy, KEA showed me the exact steps I had to follow and what kind of documents I needed. Once I got accepted, I was put in touch with people from the receiving school ready to offer guidance.

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

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

I haven't had any. The receiving school has even offered me a free taxi ride from the airport to my accommodation when I arrived.

3. Where did you live?

a. Was it difficult to find accommodation?

b. Was it expensive?

It seemed almost impossible to find accommodation for such a short period. Most landlords ask for at least 9-12 months contract. I lived with another exchange student from KEA and we decided to take a studio we found and negotiated on airbnb for the first 2 months in Whalley Range (30-40 mins walk to uni) but it was quite pricey for what it had to offer. We were paying 1150 pounds per month with everything included for both. We switched to another airbnb for the remaining time in West Gorton.

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

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

Most of the money would go on food and nights out. The transportation is a bit expensive and it's not well organized. I had to increase the budget because the rent was much more than expected.