

# Erasmus Broadening Horizons

**Robert Bye**  
**Brunel University/  
Netherlands**

“This year’s  
Erasmus has easily  
been the best year  
of my degree so  
far!”



**Rob Bye, who studied industrial design for 10 months at Delft University of Technology, Netherlands, was selected as the 3 Millionth student representative for the UK.**

“I decided to participate in Erasmus after I met a student who came on an Erasmus placement from TU Delft to my university and encouraged me to do the same. After speaking to others who had taken part in the programme the previous year I couldn't wait to get on board and within a matter of weeks I was fully signed up to spend a year at TU Delft.

## **An International House**

I arranged to live with another student from my university and a group of Dutch students close to the university. On arrival, we were amazed to find out it was a house of over 20 people! As we had never lived anywhere like this before we were excited about the prospects for the year. Even better was how welcoming all our new Dutch housemates were and even on the very first night we went out for a few drinks in Delft and met so many people.

## **Settling In**

TU Delft is a huge university and the design faculty is so much bigger than what I was used to at Brunel; I was almost overwhelmed by this. However, after a few introduction lectures and making contact with the exchange coordinator, everything settled into place and only a few weeks in it began to feel like a University I belonged to and was a part of.

## **A New Perspective**

Studying at another university let me see how similar subjects can be taught differently and helped me broaden my scope in my field of study more than ever before. Focusing on subjects that were not taught at my home university again gave me an experience which very few people have. I found the professors to be extremely helpful and understanding, giving me any additional advice I needed, and on occasion even adapting the course to suit my skill set!”

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“The best part of the experience was in fact gaining international business contacts and meeting a lot of people who I am sure to work with in the future. There are so many opportunities to meet new people and, through friends and lecturers, you quickly build up a collection of people in the industry who you can easily reach out to.

For example, I worked with an entrepreneur I met from Amsterdam, who is now based in Shanghai. I helped him design a product which was to be launched in China and became the lead designer on developing the brand identity for the start-up company. This has moved onto other business opportunities and we are now currently in the process of working together to launch a student-based design consultancy that will work on a global level.

These in themselves were great experiences, but now he is helping me launch a product of mine in Europe through the contacts he has in China

“I know I'm likely to look back on this year as one of the most important and memorable years of my life. If you want to gain a new professional insight, or take part in new courses I cannot recommend doing an exchange enough”



Another great experience was interviewing the Founder of Momkai, a Digital Creative Agency based in Amsterdam, for a student network I run, Design Students UK. This interview gave me the chance to see how a design consultancy runs and also pass on his advice to all our readers. This relationship has now progressed and not only are we launching a design competition with Momkai, but I will also be working with them for my Major Project next year at Brunel University, which will be a huge help.

Meeting people such as this would never have happened at my home university and working abroad instantly gives you a chance to work on an international level with great people. Best of all through building long term relationships with these individuals and companies means this experience will last so much further than the end of my exchange. If you want to gain a new professional insight, or take part in new courses I cannot recommend doing an exchange enough”