



Realizing the potential of outbound
mobility experiences – making it our
business.

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Overseas mobility experiences (OME): From the margins to the centre



- 'The experience of studying internationally is at the heart of creating globally aware and well-connected people' (Draft National International Education Strategy).

Great expectations

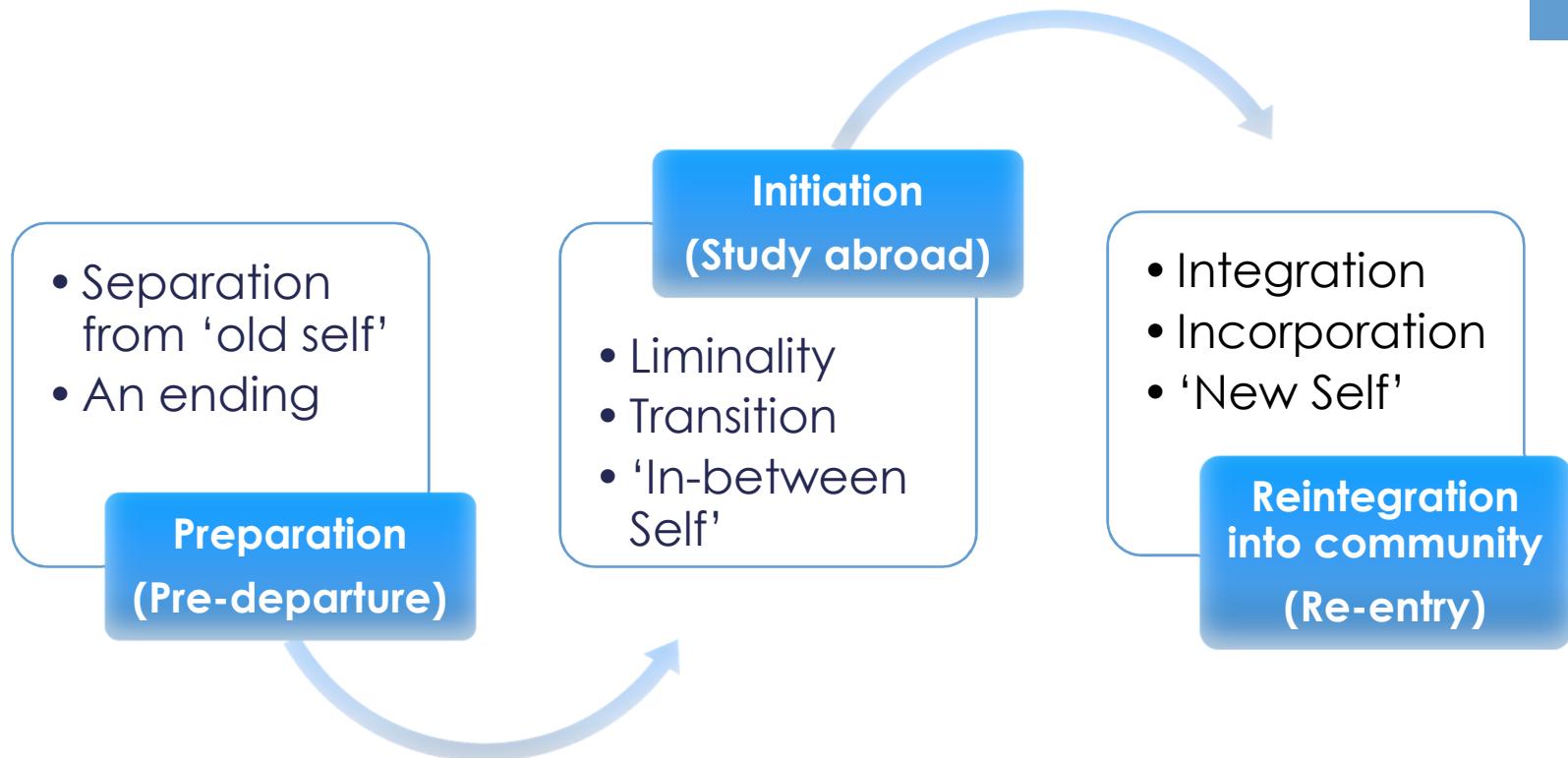
- Australia's New Colombo Plan: 'signature initiative'
- 'is intended to be transformational, deepening Australia's relationships in the region, both at the individual level and through expanding university, business and other stakeholder links (DFAT, Australian Govt, 2015); '**a rite of passage**' (Hon Julie Bishop).

Do OMEs live up to expectations?

- Personal development/transformation (McName & Faulker, 2001; Pence & Macgillivray, 2008; Van Hoof & Verbeeten 2005)
 - But – students' 'epiphanies' can be 'fake or temporary' (Mernard-Warwick & Palmer, 2012:132)
- Mixed results for the impact of OME on:
 - cultural understanding (Dolby, 2004; Olson & Kroeger, 2001; Schuerholz-Lehr, 2007; Williams, 2005),
 - linguistic development (Goldini, 2013)
 - academic benefits (Gore, 2005; Van Hoof & Verbeeten 2005),
 - 'global citizenship' (Clarke et al, 2009; Jessup-Anger, 2008; Mernard-Warwick & Palmer, 2012)
- **As students 'grapple with emotional responses to the unfamiliar' they need guidance to make deeper connections between intercultural experiences and course theory related to identity, diversity and equality' (Jackson 2011: 80)**

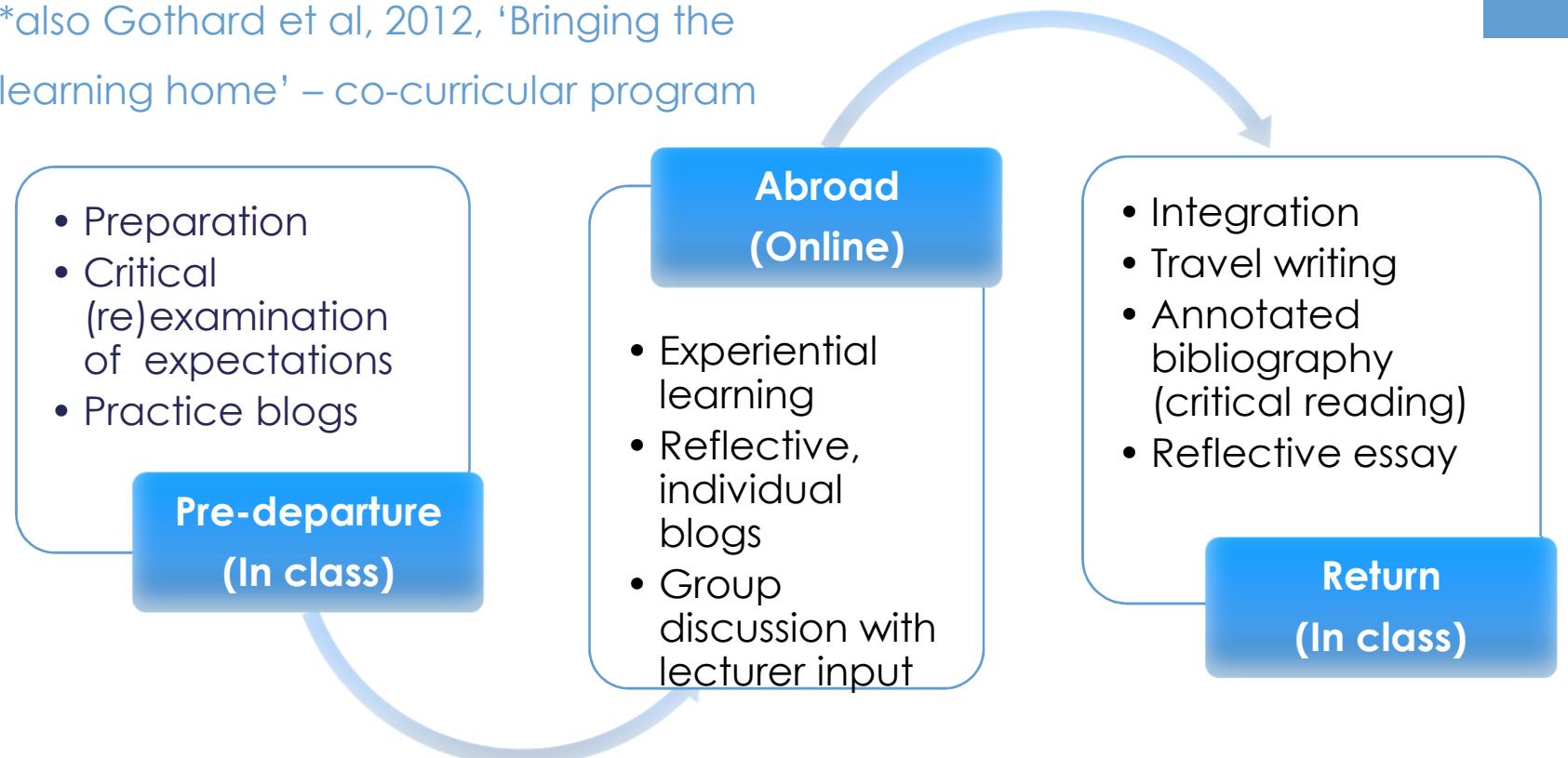
OME as a ‘rite of passage’

(Beames 2004; Gothard et al, 2012; Van Gennup, 1960)



one* way to ‘bring the learning home’: formal curriculum of experiential, reflective, critical & creative learning

*also Gothard et al, 2012, ‘Bringing the learning home’ – co-curricular program



Comparison between OME students who did, and did not undertake the course.

All students articulated personal development through OME, but..

- non-course students less prepared, greater, more long-lasting 'culture shock'

Pre-departure

Study Abroad

- course - more aware of global inequities & cultural contexts, identities, ways of being; international course students more reflective re 'third culture'

- course - connect experience/theory & incorporate learning into life on re-entry
- non-course - 'like a dream'
- both groups - disconnect OME & future

Re-entry

Implications - Students **gain more from OME** if it is framed as a 'rite of passage' in curricula that:

- Prepares students, helping them develop **realistic expectations** (Burgoon & Ebisu-Hubbard 2005)
- **Enables critically reflection** on their experiences to 'reconstrue them in transformative ways' (Bennett & Salonen 2007: 46)
- **Enables integration** of experience upon re-entry - creative & critical reflection in a supportive community
- **Challenges ethnocentrism** (esp. domestic students)
- Considers and integrates experience of '**third culture kids**' (esp. international students)
- Connects OME to students' **future** (careers/ citizenship)