Intercultural competence training for students abroad and on campus: an interactive, cross-institutional approach

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Context

• Monash Warwick Alliance – global partnership in education and research
• Aim to increase the global engagement of students
• High level of collaboration and partnership
• Different organisational and student mobility contexts
Partners

• Participants:
  • Centre for Applied Linguistics (CAL), Warwick
  • School of Languages, Literature, Culture and Linguistics, Monash
  • Monash Abroad
What we aimed to achieve

• Create an Alliance approach to supporting students in making sense of their time spent overseas or their international experiences on campus

• Provide professional development opportunities for staff

• Deliver a program to support students to
  a. reflect on their experiences and articulate the intercultural skills they have acquired;
  b. demonstrate growth in key intercultural competencies, such as reflective self-awareness, intercultural sensitivity, and intercultural communication skills;

• Institutional benefits: the project will provide the foundation for roll-out across the Alliance.
Study abroad experience cycle

Stage 1: Pre-departure
Online module in 3 parts (Warwick)
Workshop (co-developed)
Train-the trainer resources (co-developed)

Stage 2: During abroad experience
Warwick: pilot using Mahara
Monash: Micro-blogging (Tumblr)

Stage 3: Post-return
Workshop (Monash)
Online module (Monash - in development)
Deliverables

• Stage 1: Train-the-trainer resources
  • Pilot of Stage 1 Warwick online module with Monash students
  • Development of workshop
  • Train-the trainer resources
  • Development of a Monash Stage 1 online module.

• Stage 2
  • Delivery of in-experience support through microblogging (Tumblr) Stage 2 (Tumblr) documented

• Stage 3
  • Creation and delivery of a workshop for returning Monash students
  • Creation of an online module.
Approach

• Focus on student voice in the resources
• Research-based
  ➔ Experiential learning
Workshops
Online modules (Moodle)

Module 1
Intercultural sensitivity

Expand your understanding of culture
Explore expectations about Study Abroad
Develop your observation skills and analytical skills

Forum

Before we show you some video clips of students who went on Study Abroad previously, we’d like you to reflect on your experience of the workshop.

During our Workshop, you were unaware what the rules of the other group were ... although you could see some of their products and you experienced some evidence of their practices.

Please go to the Forum and make a comment in response to the question, or if you prefer, in response to someone else’s comment. We’d like you to post between 50 and 100 words.

We’ll state the question for you when you get there.

Go to the Forum

After you have posted your response, continue to ‘Study Abroad Experiences’
Micro-blogging

This picture shows a majority of what I took on my journey as well as how I felt at the start of it: Arms wide open and ready for adventure!
On another level it represents me taking all the personal tools I have and heading off into the unknown. To meet and welcome new friendships and overcome the obstacles yet to be revealed.
Train the trainer package
Study abroad experience cycle

Stage 1: Pre-departure
82 students (workshops)
57 students (online modules)

Stage 2: During abroad experience
21 contributors (Tumblr)

Stage 3: Post-return
37 students (workshop)
Student feedback

A well needed and worthwhile program

I have gained a deeper awareness of my own and others’ cultural values orientation
71% strongly agree/ 27% agree

Fun and enlightening experience

I will be able to use what I have learned in the training with in my interactions with other students, co-workers and others
65% strongly agree/ 31% agree
Student outcomes

- Students who had participated in the workshop gave more rounded responses at pre-departure stage (Moodle forum).

- Students who had participated in both workshop and online training provided more detailed reflections in Tumblr posts.
Achievements

• Successful collaboration to develop the 3-stage training, including the train-the-trainer resources.

• Innovation in the use of Tumblr for student input while abroad.

• Incorporated outcomes into Monash Intercultural Competence Strategy.
Learning - Students

• Students respond better to shorter, sharper training modules and evaluation instruments.

• Student understanding of what ICC is and its value is uneven – this has implications for communication.
Forum posts referring to The 3 Ps

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Tumblr posts referring to The 3 Ps

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Learning - institutional

- Need to agree IP approach up-front when using pre-existing material
- Different student mobility cycles and experiences posed some challenges.
Latest developments

• ‘Connecting across Cultures’ module completed by 500+ students
• Re-entry online module (Moodle+Alexandria) available shortly.
The majority of module completions have come from undergrad students. The staff number may be high due to PHD students using ‘staff’ email accounts when enrolling in the module.

Women outnumber men in all faculties with the exception of Engineering, which had a 30/70 split, and IT, where the split was 50/50.

Law has the highest number of completions due to the module being embedded in the Foundations of Law unit (206 completions). There were also 88 second year Law students who completed the module.

If we remove the Law faculty from the data, the most common completer is a first year female from Clayton, studying a BA of Global Studies from the Arts faculty.
THANK YOU!