

EDMAP2 GROUP PROJECT

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

INTRODUCTION

This handout sets out additional background detail to supplement the group presentation. Our group research yielded a huge array of interesting and valuable information which could be harnessed to improve the experience of international students coming to the university to study. This handout is a product of the group’s enthusiasm for making sure that this information was captured more rigorously. The handout provides more information about the **literature review, key points from the interviews, key actions and references.**

LITERATURE REVIEW

We reviewed the literature relating to international students’ experience in the UK and studying outside their home country. The key references are set out at the end of this handout, and we wanted to highlight two papers in particular, which will be followed by additional relevant literature we used as a theoretical background for this presentation:

Paper One: What Is Integration and Why Is It Important for Internationalization? A Multidisciplinary Review (Spencer-Oatey and Dauber, 2019)

This paper explores the conceptualisation of integration within education. The authors argue that the concept has not been sufficiently interrogated. Where integration has been explored it is linked to study progress. The authors reference Severiens et al who distinguish between academic and social integration, including formal and informal integration, giving a fourfold framework as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Severiens’s Distinctions Between Formal and Informal Aspects of Academic and Social Integration.

	Explanation
Academic integration	
Formal	Contact related to the institute itself: for example, engaging actively with the learning content, and being supported to do so by the teachers.
Informal	Contact between teachers and students outside the formal learning environment.
Social integration	
Formal	Contact between peers on matters of learning, particularly in relation to group work and project work.
Informal	Frequent social contact and participation in activities out of class.

Spencer-Oatey and Dauber (2019) turn to intercultural studies to explore integration further – they draw on Berry’s model (1974,2006) which differentiates between integration the similar concepts *assimilation*

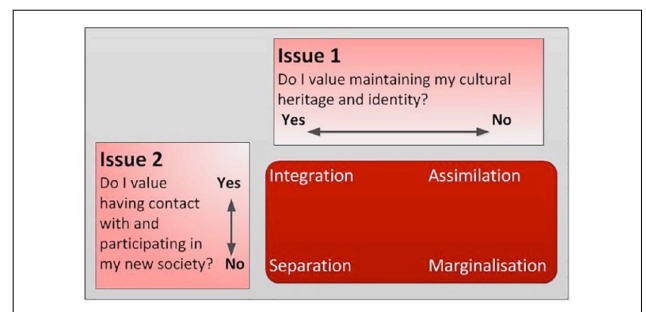


Figure 1. Berry’s acculturation strategies.
Source. Adapted from Fig. 3.3 in Berry and Sam (1997, p. 296).

Berry highlights the need for integration to be a two way process. He argues that nondominant groups can only integrate successfully if the dominant society is open

in its attitude toward cultural diversity; in other words, that mutual accommodation is required. A question arises around whether it is valuable to adjust one's behaviour and sense of belonging to reflect the new society – here integration and acculturation are equated. Acculturative (integrative) orientation is one which a person identifies with (and feels a sense of belonging to) both the original ethnic group and the host group.

Milton Bennett's interpretation of integration identifies a trajectory of development in terms of intercultural sensitivity, the endpoint of which he labels integration. Bennett argues that the key component that influences people's level of intercultural sensitivity is their attitude toward differences. He maintains that people move through different phases as they become more intercultural sensitive, and that there are two broad stages: ethnocentrism and ethnorelativism (see Figure 2).

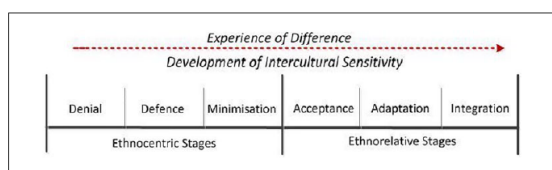


Figure 2. Bennett's developmental model of intercultural sensitivity (based on M. J. Bennett, 1986, p. 182).

By ethnocentrism, it is meant that people interpret differences from an egocentric perspective; by ethnorelativism, it is meant that people's judgments and interpretations are more relative and contextual.

Models have implications at three levels; individual, community and institutional levels.

Individual: The individual level focuses on the personal needs and aspirations of students, both in terms of health and welfare (such as the stress they are experiencing) and in terms of learning and growth (such as the development of competence in intercultural teamworking). M. J. Bennett's (1986, 1993) DMIS model clearly takes this approach by focusing on the personal development of

individuals, with the ultimate aim of fostering "multicultural personhood" (cf. Kim, 2001). It is unsettling encounters that frequently act as the stimuli for growth and it is through mixing with people from different backgrounds that these can occur. Students may need to be encouraged to engage with these differences.

Community: This then brings us naturally to the community level. This level is complementary to the individual level in two ways. On one hand, it is an extension, because people need that engagement with others to grow, as explained above. On the other hand, we all need a sense of belonging for identity reasons (e.g., Simon, 2004), and integration, in the sense of building social ties and relationships with staff and other group members such as classmates, is a key element that facilitates this. Here, the focus is on interaction with others, and as interaction is a dynamic, co-constructive process, this inevitably requires mutual attention and accommodation by all concerned, both students and staff. So, for example, when a diverse class of students divides into mixed groups to discuss an issue, they may find that their communication styles and patterns of turn-taking are different. In this context, integration requires all members to be sensitive to the styles and patterns of others, for all to make whatever adjustments are needed for them to be able to work together fruitfully, and for academics/teaching staff to help manage this process. Berry's (e.g., 1974, 2006) acculturation model would count as a community-level model of integration.

Institutional: At the institutional level, the way in which integration plays out is different again. If we take Berry's (2006) perspective, the host society (in this case, the HEI) needs to be as willing to adapt to students' needs as vice versa. It would be wise to consider its processes and regulations very carefully and make conscious decisions as to the extent to which they adjust and how. In making these decisions, they will need to balance the often-stated desire by international students

to have a “local education” experience (and hence make minimal adjustments) and the need to help students to integrate into the university and build a sense of belonging to it.

Why does integration matter:

Employability is increasingly linked with internationalization (De Wit et al., 2015), largely because of its potential to foster the skills that employers are looking for. However, the latest Confederation of British Industry/Pearson (2017) education and skills survey reports that 39% of graduate employers are dissatisfied with the “international cultural awareness” of applicants from U.K. universities, as intercultural awareness crucially contributes to improved team working, communication, and reduction in workplace conflicts. These intercultural skills are identified by employers.

Table 2. Intercultural Skills Identified by Employers (British Council, 2013, p. 11), Grouped According to the University of Warwick’s (n.d.) GlobalPeople Competency Framework.

Knowledge-related competencies	Communication-related competencies	Interpersonal/relational competencies	Personal qualities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Openness to new ideas • Understanding of different cultural contexts and viewpoints 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listens/observes to deepen understanding • Adjusts communication to suit different cultural contexts • Multilingual 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates respect for others • Works effectively in diverse teams • Builds trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accepts cultural differences • Adapts easily to different cultural settings • Awareness of own cultural influence • Tolerates ambiguity • Flexible • Continuous learner

Thus it is important that universities develop strategies for integration at the level relevant to them.

Paper Two International Students a vulnerable group : Sherry, Mark, Peter Thomas, and Wing Hong Chui. "International students: A vulnerable student population." *Higher education* 60.1 (2010): 33-46.

Students come to the UK for a variety of reasons – if they do not rise to meet their needs students can leave disappointed, unfulfilled, and even exploited. Challenges include language (English language proficiency is important for success – both social and academic) and cultural barriers, academic and financial difficulties,

interpersonal problems (loneliness), racial discrimination, loss of social support, alienation and homesickness (Yeh and Inose 2003). The number of friends a student has is a major factor in their (academic) success. English language proficiency is very important – One study suggests that a lack of English proficiency may be the single greatest barrier experienced by international students, since it affects both their ability to academically succeed (which itself influences their psychological state of mind) but also it impacts their ability to engage socially with other students (Yeh and Inose 2003). **Also, pedagogical strategies which emphasize conversational English and classroom participation may particularly disadvantage those international students whose experiences in the classroom have been more passive and whose training may have emphasized reading skills at the expense of conversational skills (Sawir 2005).**

Racism can be an issue for students from Asia, India, the Middle East and Latin America who emphasized racism as an important component of their experiences.

Findings from this paper indicated that students there could be more effective ways to respond to language needs of students – especially spoken language. 65% of students indicated that they had “no problems” adjusting to the norms (in the USA). A further 17% said they experienced “few” or “little” problems adapting. However, thirty-nine (38.6%) indicated that people at The University of Toledo (university in the study) only understood their culture “a little”, and twenty-three (22.8%) replied “no”, people did not understand their culture here. This means that over 60% of respondents felt that their culture was either not understood, or only understood a little—suggesting a need for increased cross-cultural knowledge and understanding on campus. Thirty-one students (30.7%) indicated that “yes”, they felt their culture was understood at The University of Toledo. The majority of students indicated that they had financial problems.

Respondents were nearly evenly divided about whether they felt included in the local community. Fifty-three respondents (48.6%) answered "yes" to this question, five (4.6%) answered "somewhat" and forty-eight (44.0%) responded "no", with three people (2.8%) stating that they "don't know".

One hundred people responded to a question about whether they had experienced difficulties at The University of Toledo. Fifty-six (56.0%) indicated that "yes", they had experienced difficulties, whereas forty-four (44.0%) indicated that they had not experienced such difficulties. The nature of such difficulties is particularly important, in terms of establishing whether international students have unique problems or needs (there was no ethnic food in the dorms).

In addition to these two papers, there are additional resources that helped to understand the international student perspective and the challenges in the higher education for both the international students and the faculty, which helped us to create our interview questions.

As increasing the engagement of international students is seems like a global challenge, there are various research from various countries to focus on this specific topic. Zhao, Kuh, and Carini (2005) conducted a quantitate research (with NSS type data N=175000), to understand if the background of students have an effect on their engagement, satisfaction, of the course, and to what extend international students engaged in effective educational practices compared with the local students.

Hellstén and Prescott (2004) conducted a qualitative research with Australian perspective to understand International students, especially Asian students. They highlight some of the student commentary on communication between teachers and students exemplifying the way it subsequently affects the quality of student

learning, for instance "One of the common assumptions made about international students from Asian cultures is that they find it difficult to contribute in class and to participate in classroom discussions. There are many substantial explanations for this, the most salient being that international students feel self-conscious if conversational flow does not come easily in the English language" as many of their respondents say although most of the students know the answers, they are very hesitant to speak up as they feel shy and feel uncomfortable as they are not confident with their English. Some of the students also stated that they feel they are "being spoken to in the diminutive voice. The perception that others speak to her 'as a child' must be damaging to her self-esteem as an academically successful individual. The perpetuation of this perception may in turn result in a reluctance to speak in public, thereby accentuating a difficulty in the learning process" (Hellstén and Prescott, 2004, pp. 346).

Wang and BrckaLorenz (2018) conduct a study on collaborative learning, as international students sometimes complain that they do not have enough opportunity to work with local students. With a USA perspective, Wang and BrckaLorenz (2018) state "Collaborative learning requires students to interact with peers, which has been shown to have a positive relationship with student gains and satisfaction with college (Astin, 1993). Many scholars have noted that international students do not actively collaborate with U.S. students in learning (e.g. Lee & Rice, 2007; Yuan, 2011). Based on a qualitative study with 24 international students from over 15 countries, Lee and Rice (2007) asserted that worrying about English proficiency, international students who studied in the U.S. often felt uncomfortable participating in group-work or interacting with peer classmates. That is why many international students prefer collaborating only with peers from the same country or those who share

similar cultural backgrounds (Sarkodie-Mensah, 1998)" (p.1008).

In terms of engagement, the relationship between the international students and the faculty is extremely important. There are various previous research which also focused on this point as "Kezar and Moriarty (2000) found that student-faculty interaction is positively associated with a wide range of student outcomes, such as students' self-assessed leadership abilities and social self-confidence. Faculty members play an essential role in influencing student learning both in and out of the classroom (Umbach & Wawrzynski, 2005). Through interviews with two international students enrolled in the U.S., Tseng and Newton (2002) found international students' relationship with their instructors and advisors was important to their learning. Additionally, a good relationship effectively helped international students achieve their goals and promote professional development (Tseng & Newton,

2002). Umbach and Wawrzynski (2005) advocated that if faculty employed collaborative teaching and learning methods, and if they tended to value the behaviour of respecting students and challenging them academically, students were more likely to have higher levels of engagement and learning outcomes (Wang and BrckaLorenz, 2018; p. 1008-1009).

After our review of the literature, we created our interview questions to reflect the challenges identified with the previous research to understand the current environment and the potential challenges University of Reading might have; what is working and what can be improved with the help of student's actual perspectives.

KEY POINTS FROM THE INTERVIEWS

Interviewee details:

Name:	Age:	Origin:	Level:	Agency used?	University:
Jade	23	Greece	Masters	Yes	UoR (Henley)
Violet	33	Turkey	Masters/PhD	Yes	UoM (AMBS)
Scarlet	28	China	PhD	Yes	Cass and ICMA
Olive	23	China	Masters/PhD	No	NTU and UCL
Rusty	24	England	UG/Masters	No	NTU/Beijing LCU/LSE

POSITIVE EXPERIENCES:

Social:

- Meeting people from a range of places/backgrounds
- developing social links with others/local students

Teaching and learning approach in UK compared with other countries:

- Active rather than passive learning (where there is only one correct answer)
- Open discussions with lecturers rather than simply receiving "wisdom"/memory tests
- Academically more interesting and forward looking
- More relaxed to study in the UK
- No "right/correct" answer
- Smaller class sizes in the UK
- Able to challenge lecturer rather than respect/unable to challenge
- Able to express opinion
- Freedom
- Real life/real time assignments and learning

Lecturers:

- Nice and approachable
- Get to know the students, are helpful and patient
- Improve students' critical thinking skills
- Not judgemental even if the answers are "wrong"

- Make an effort to communicate and encourage inclusiveness with students
- Some lecturers going the "extra mile", producing podcasts after each lecture, suggesting Netflix documentary
- Supportive lecturers and supervisors
- 121s with module convenors and academics – especially when scheduled/appointments rather than generic office hours

Support:

- Help writing essays
- Lots of support when requested

Other positives:

- Improved language skills
- Developing personal/soft skills many of which are valuable for future employment
- generally, the experience has been better than expected
- Convenient in terms of being able to travel to home country
- Experience of studying in the UK has exceeded expectations
- Very pleasant studying in the UK
- Perceptions of the UK before arriving – peaceful/safe/high quality HE
- Opportunity to speak to staff and learn about UoR in their home country

NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES

Group work

- Different abilities
- Difficult to manage group dynamics
- Expectations of international students still expecting to be told/guided rather than take a lead and develop their own learning
- Difficult to get inside some groups of international students (eg Chinese)
- Group member who didn't contribute to the group assignment

Language

- Shyness about speaking out loud in a class of native English speakers
- Being asked to speak in class puts real pressure on the student

Class sizes

- Too large (around 70+ students) – too difficult to manage
- Impossible for students to be excluded due to lack of time to allow individual contribution
- Not "excluded" from the class but a broader problem

Lectures

- Lecturers giving the impression that they are not interested in the subject
- Too much time spent on getting a good mark from the student – gets in the way of learning in the classroom
- Lack of respect/understanding from lecturer

Culture

- In some cultures, it is easier to integrate and adapt. Other students may have difficulties.
- Culture shock particularly in the first (half) year
- Reluctance to talk in public because of "culture perspective"
- The experience of a different culture actually led to being more open-minded
- A big challenge

- A one-year master's programme is a very short time to adjust to a new life/different culture
- Familiarity with UK culture
- No classmates at the beginning of the first year
- Being "scared to cough" or make a sound rather than draw attention
- First year was a real struggle
- A culture shock (from a Chinese student's perspective)
- Chinese students tend to embrace their own culture living differently and keeping to their own cultural group (NB this was mirrored in the experience of a UK student studying in China)

Evaluation

- Too much focus on student evaluation

Work and employment support

- support at UoR not useful for finding jobs in China – lack of international career support
- after graduation, international students found it difficult to get a job in their home country because they had missed the internships or job interview opportunities in China. Consequently, they had to take a one-year break to look for jobs. Very challenging.
- Difficult to find positions providing a working visa in the UK.

COMMENTARY/TRANSCRIPTS:

POSITIVE EXPERIENCES:

"In Greece classes would be huge. You could have so many students, so participation is very difficult. Uhm? But I think even the professors they wouldn't try so much to include students and make it interactive. They would get in the class. Maybe they have slides, sometimes they wouldn't even have slides, they would just give the lectures. They just start talking and it feels very boring... Sometimes you wouldn't have a conversation for a whole semester with your professors and it's all about exams. There wouldn't be any assignments. Uh, so it's very it's different. Sometimes the professors wouldn't know even one student from their class by the like, their name or something. Here, I would hear professors calling me by my name and it was weird for me. I would be like "Oh my God, you know my name". I could see that even in modules with 50 or 80 or 90 students. The professor would still try an engage and ask questions and try to communicate with the audience. I think that was really, really something that made a difference in a positive way. (Jade)

Jade begins by drawing a comparison between her experience in Greece and her UK experience. Jade is really impressed with how personable and approachable UK lecturers are. She likes that lecturers know her name, she describes this relationship as something really positive, Scarlet and Olive express a similar feeling, describing the relationship between student and lecturer, in China, as respectful, but distant,

Jade is impressed by how participative the **lectures** are, Olive enjoyed how students were given time to speak and Violet described how her favourite lecturer walked around ensuring that students were engaged.

Overall, the students reported a very positive classroom experience, they described interesting and challenging exercises, lecturers who offered compelling examples, made summary podcasts of the lectures and provided a supportive environment

*"I think [the experience of education in the UK] was **better than I expected**. I was kind of nervous about how difficult the course would be and how much support I was going to have in order to succeed. **But I think I we had us as much support as we needed, anytime we needed something, there was someone that could help us from the professors and academics and studying skills, people, or even the library, the course leader...** I was feeling nervous before I came because I think English, it's very different and the whole - the friends I've made and the people I've met here, I think it's it. It was overall a great experience, even with coronavirus at the end"(Jade).*

We used to walk from the accommodation to classes with people from all around the world (including locals) and made friends during these walks. Also due to culture we used to socialise and spend a lot of time together" (Violet)

Several students described their UK experience as "*better than expected*" – Students were initially concerned about getting the appropriate levels of support but reported feeling very supported. Both Jade and Violet draw a connection between the institutional support received from the university and the support garnered from friendships made during the experience.

AREAS TO IMPROVE:

"It was hard at first. And for my bachelor's degree the teaching language was English. And I was, how can I say, I wasn't that shy

*about it, a classroom full of Turkish students who are speaking English because, again, English is our second language. It wasn't that hard. **But when it comes to international experience. I myself am a bit shy about speaking.** But again, it's most it's one minute or so and then it was okay. It was easy to communicate with both British and International student "*

Both Violet and Olive experienced challenges due to linguistic barriers – Violet describes experiencing uncharacteristic shyness due to a lack of confidence in her ability to communicate effectively and Olive concurs, however, both she and Olive also describe recovering from this situation.

Language could be the barriers as Violet and Olive both experienced the difficulties in the first year. So we suggest being approachable and vulnerable will be the key for lecturing in class with diversified international students, which is the efficient solution suggested by (Kahn and Agnew, 2017). Olive mentioned the confusing moment of the British joke in class. So do not oversell the British jokes in class, which makes them feel excluded. Even when you are meeting international students during office hours, try to adjust your talking speed and use more general words, which will make them feel more comfortable when discussing with you. This is proved by Peifer, Chambers and Lee (2017) research that role position of lecturer is important in higher education institution with international students.

*"I considered myself as an individual learner. I want to work with the people that I know, actually, because I would know their abilities, capabilities. In that sense, I can manage the group. I can distribute the roles, etc. In the first group work in Claire's module, there were 5-6 students and two or three of them (also international students) are not studying at all. And since they were really new in this programme and lecture style new, in a different country. **It was really hard to manage the group work for the first time; it's***

***not the worst experience, but it was a challenging one for me...**But these guys were not taking the lead or not speaking of their opinions, they were expecting to actually to be taught. Told what should be done. But in general, **I had to say something to them, that was really hard because I am not this leader type. I am more of a follower type in these groups. But I had to take control. In that sense, it was challenging"**(Violet)*

Another aspect of the learning which the students found **challenging was groupwork** – Here Violet describes being forced to take on the role of leader, she felt compelled to challenge freeloading members of her group. Both she and Jade describe the experience in terms of being forced to behave uncharacteristically and this generated some anxiety.

We can use cultural dimensions based on world value survey as guidance to design group activities or pair-ups. The World Values Survey (WVS, www.worldvaluessurvey.org) was founded by two scholars at Tilburg University in 1981 with the goal of testing "the hypothesis that economic and technological changes are transforming the basic values and motivations of the publics of industrialized societies. There are 14 WVS items:

- Bias toward immigrants;
- Bias toward immigrants' economic activities; Bias toward different race;
- Degree of autonomy;
- Degree of freedom;
- Gender inequality;
- Importance of respect;
- Importance of unselfishness;
- Importance of income equality;
- Importance of competition;
- importance of religion;
- People can be trusted;
- Proud of one's country;
- Willingness to fight for one's country

In this respect, ***try to allocate two students from the same cultural dimension in group activities, which will put them in a position to share ideas outside the formal group***

meeting. More importantly, having at least one British student in each group will be helpful in making international students feel more included.

"[Some] class sizes are too big, too populated around 70 students. I think as a lecturer too is really hard to manage that that number of people. So, it's possible for each student not to be included that much because we don't have enough time (to allow each student to speak up). We have these lectures to be covered, etc. in my point of view I didn't feel like excluded, but this was a challenge" (Violet)

Here Violet discusses class size, she describes the classes as being too large, an issue which she thinks may impede student participation and learning.

Students also spoke to the number of lectures, both Olive and Jade thought that more lectures would be beneficial. Scarlet opined that too much time is spent obtaining student feedback – she would prefer to spend that time learning.

Violet on supporting material for lectures:

"One Lecturer, Brian "he was delivering a supply chain management course. And he was really young, he was like at the beginning of his career. He was lecturing us. That's why he put some extra effort, on, on the lectures, and all of such as, he was creating podcasts, after each lecture, with a duration about 10 or 15, minutes. People are using this Blackboard. And he was uploading a summary of the lecture for like 10 or 15 minutes or podcasts into that Blackboard. I used to listen these podcasts before going to sleep as I enjoy listening things before bed, and this helped me to remember the content of the module. Therefore, I were able to remember and felt prepared when I go to the lectures"

At the end, we would like to suggest **study support**. Both four interviewees expected more study support. *This can be in BB as*

Violet mentioned, lecturers can upload a summary of the lecture for perhaps 10 or 15 minutes or podcasts. Can also be more small group tutorials and also lecturers could include more UK or international practical examples in class, which will let international students feel more engaged into the real UK life (Green, 2019).

AN ACTION PLAN FOR THE UNIVERSITY AND DEPARTMENTS:

Module Design

Jade: "We were actually presented with an actual scenario which we didn't know. The professor gave it to us during the class, and, we were timed so we can answer questions, build a strategy and uhm, find our competitors. The target customers it was like in real time, we had to, uh, search, uh, read all the information and present the result at the class. It was fun. **It was fun.** Actually, there were **no marks for the result. I think that made it more fun because of this. So we didn't have the pressure that we will be actually marked for this. I think for me particularly, I was just more relaxed than nervous because we wouldn't be marked. So, I think that made me see more clearly** because I think when I get nervous, I panic and I don't take the right decisions."

Violet: "As a student, what are the most boring bits, because let's say just a lecture about only reading the material or asking students to do activities that doesn't make sense to you at all. I think he (the lecturer) gave us like a final take home assignment for finals. But apart from that, for example, there were no group projects. **There were no real-life case examples to discuss in class, so the content was quite theoretical.** I think if there were some cases that we could use the theories we learnt in class, and work as a group; that module would be much much better"

Olive: "As a media student, there were many courses which covered the theories of media and communications, but they didn't cover more practical aspects. **NTU is very different, having a strong reputation for high quality courses in media and journalism, and offered practical training in filming etc.**"

Module Evaluations

Scarlet says:

The lecturer spent too much time on course evaluation.

She felt the lecturer here always want to get good mark from students which she felt a bit waste of time of learning in classroom.

Scarlet mentioned that lecturers spent almost half of the class talking about student evaluation, which making her feel it is waste of time. Kind of forcing them into giving good marks. This is usually not happening in China; she accepted the way how lecturers deliver.

Welcome Arrangements

Violet: " **My very first memory on my student experience in the UK was, we were welcomed at the arrivals when we just left the plane in the airport.** There were a team of students who were wearing "Welcome" T-shirts with university logo on it, and they welcomed us and took us to the bus station and gave us maps and welcome pack (university welcome pack) and I also met 2 people who were in the same flight with me when they took us to the bus station that goes to my accommodation- these people were in my inner circle of friends later on (she came with a connecting flight from Istanbul- there were around 10 people who were freshers in the same flight)."

Scarlet says: She found **it will be useful if she can get the support at the very beginning.** For a one-year master program, she found it too stressful and hard to adjust herself into the new life here. She would like to have more guidance about daily life as well, for example, opening a bank account.

**Academic actions and engagement:
Promoting social connections and
providing support, reviewing and
improving**

Jade: "... (in Greece) But I think even the professors they wouldn't try so much to include students and make it interactive. They would get in the class. Maybe they have slides, sometimes they wouldn't even have slides, they would just give the lectures. just start talking and it feels very boring and It doesn't ask Parker any interest, or sometimes you wouldn't have even. A conversation for a whole semester with your professors and, uh, it's all about exams. There wouldn't be any assignments. Uh, so it's very it's different. Sometimes the professors wouldn't know even one student from their class by the like, their name or something. Which **here I would hear professors calling me by my name and it was.**

It was weird for me. I would be like Oh my God, you know my name... The professor would still try an engage an ask questions and try to communicate with the audience. I think that was really something that made a difference working. In a positive way."

Olive: "As an undergraduate, being asked by a professor during a seminar to talk about the distance between Shanghai and another city in China. **The professor questioned the facts and was disrespectful towards me and China, displaying a lack of understanding, acting unprofessionally.**"

Scarlet says : She found both group work and pair up exercises helpful for her. She did not have issues of working with students from different countries. Group mates respect cultural differences.

APPENDIX 1:
QUESTIONS FOR SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS:

- 1 What brought you to the UK and to UoR/NTU/UoM/UCL?
- 2 Could you describe the best classroom experience you have had:
- 3 Can you describe a bad experience in the classroom?
- 4 Did you feel included in the overall experience? Were you an "insider" or an "outsider"? Did you feel that your lecturers and/or tutors made you feel included?
- 5 Has your experience as an international student in the UK met your expectations? If not, could you explain why?
- 6 How does your classroom experience here in the UK, differ to your experience at your home university? How would you describe the biggest differences?
- 7 Engagement – do you feel engaged and has it been important to engage with other international and local students?
- 8 How do you feel about your experience of education in the UK overall and how could have been improved?
- 9 Any other thoughts?

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