Professional and Practice-based Learning

Georgina Barton
Kay Hartwig *Editors*

Professional Learning in the Work Place for International Students

Exploring Theory and Practice

Professional and Practice-based Learning

Volume 19

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Professional Learning in the Work Place for International Students

Exploring Theory and Practice

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Series Editors' Foreword

This volume focuses on the increasingly common experience of international higher education students engaging in work placements in their host countries. The growing levels of student mobility and rising number of university programmes that include workplace experiences as elements of educational provisions mean that international students are now frequently engaging in work placements. As a consequence, these students are now participating in learning experiences that are far less easy to prescribe, order and manage than when their higher education experiences are constrained to those occurring on university campuses. Yet, it seems that, typically, international students want and value the opportunity to engage in these kinds of experiences to promote their learning and prospects of post-graduation outcomes. Nevertheless, extending the educational provision to work settings necessarily engages educators in challenges to provide the most positive and productive experiences for these students. Ultimately, these experiences are occurring in circumstances that are often beyond the control of those teaching in higher education. They also place emphasis on the qualities of what is afforded in the workplace and how students come to engage with what they experience.

In addressing this topic, this volume commences by offering a range of perspectives on how international students' experiences of work placement might be understood and considered. These include deliberations about the different forms of social and cultural capital being deployed and encountered through work placements. There are also issues about the kinds of capacities that not only the students will learn but what they require to effectively engage in and learn through these experiences. Proposed here is rather than seeing international students as in some way deficit, they might bring particular contributions to the workplaces in which they engage. That is, the social and cultural capital they possess has its own attributes. These premises are extended through considerations of the kind of relations between students and workplace supervisors and how they might assist in providing optimum experiences during work placements. These relationships are often seen as being central to the prospects for successful placements. Other contributors suggest that the openness to which workplaces might demonstrate towards the students should be rehearsed within the host educational institutions. In particular, being

inclusive of international students' needs and contributions is likely to be the productive basis for enriching their educational experiences. Considerations here extend to those between the persons and the social and cultural environments in which they interact that play out in particular ways for these students. Beyond a consideration of situational factors and contributions is also the importance of how these students come to engage and learn through these experiences. As a consequence, contributors also refer to the importance of students' personal epistemologies and their engagement and practices, such as considered appraisals of and reflections upon their experiences and in ways which are directed towards productive learning outcomes.

Of course, these sets of concerns are not restricted to international students and their engagement in work placements. They are common to all higher education students. Yet, this range of considerations about factors shaping these students' experiences has particular meanings and salience for international students whose capacities and prior experiences may be less aligned with the requirements for effective work placement experiences than their domestic counterparts. In all, on the one hand, there is a range of situational factors, albeit in the workplace or the educational institution, and, on the other hand, the capacities, readiness and engagement of the students that need to be accounted for in providing positive learning experiences.

Consequently, through these perspectives, considerations and conceptual foundations found in the array of case studies within this volume specific sets of contributions to how the experiences of these international higher education students might be best organised, enacted and experienced are offered. In these ways, the contributions of this edited volume are well aligned with the broader considerations found in this book series associated with understanding the relations between practice and learning.

Nathan, QLD, Australia — Stephen Billett
Paderborn, Germany — Christian Harteis
Regensburg, Germany — Hans Gruber
April 2017

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Part I
Theorising Internationalisation, Professional Socialisation and Reflective Practice for International Students

Chapter 1
The Importance of Positive Intercultural Exchanges for International Students on Work Placements in Higher Education

Georgina Barton and Kay Hartwig

1.1 Introduction

The prevalence of international students studying in foreign countries has expanded substantially over the past few decades. In fact, it has been reported that over four million students studied abroad in 2013 alone (UNESCO 2014). Many of the university-based programmes that international students undertake incorporate a work placement which is often referred to as work integrated learning, work experience, practicum or internship etc. International students are also interested in receiving an experience in various workplaces in order to improve their employability status as well as gain relevant career advice from their overseas partners (Garrett 2014).

It is therefore important that these experiences are positive and productive for all parties, particularly given the importance of such partnerships in higher education contexts. Indeed, there is a lot at stake if these experiences are not successful for international students as well as their mentors. Issues such as those related to visas and relevant government policy as well as impact on the workplace environment can be negative if the workplace interaction is not effective.

Alternatively, if all stakeholders take the time to understand each other including issues such as cultural and linguistic background, previous experience in the workforce, and ways of representing knowledge and skills, then success is more likely to occur. Such an intercultural approach means that both international students and their mentors/supervisors can learn from each other if the learning/teaching connection is reciprocated.

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This introductory chapter explores key concepts related to work placements and the international experience that all higher education contexts should be considering. We do this by referring to a major research project funded by the Office for Learning and Teaching's Innovation and Development grants system in Australia. The project known as the *Work placement for International Student Programs* or WISP, lays the base for this book along with other relevant projects related to international students and work placements internationally. The chapter then outlines the structure of this book along with brief descriptions of each part and consequential chapters.

1.2 The International Student Experience

The Australian Government (2000) has established regulations for all providers of education to international students. The ESOS (Educational Services for Overseas Students) Act and National Code establishes legislative requirements and standards for the quality assurance of education and training institutions offering courses to international students who are in Australia on a student visa. ESOS provides tuition fee protection for international students. There are 15 standards which relate to the following:

- Pre-enrolment engagement of students (Standards 1–4)
- Care for and services to students (Standards 5–6)
- Students as consumers (Standards 7–8)
- The student visa programme (Standards 9–13)
- Staff, educational resources and premises (Standards 14–15)

Australia's National Strategy for International Education 2025 (Australian Government 2016) aims to strengthen the country's reputation for high-quality educating and training and aims to ensure Australian providers are globally engaged. The ESOS Act and the National Strategy provide standards and codes to ensure quality programmes and experiences are available for international students.

The onus is therefore placed on the provider to ensure "the development of an enhanced international student experience, recognising that experience extends from pre-arrival to post-graduation" (Griffith University 2014).

Employability is being identified as an emerging and critical issue at many universities around the globe. In Australia, Griffith University (2016) has identified that increasingly, employability is acknowledged as the primary motivation for many internationally mobile students. Griffith University has developed a model of employability. This model of employability reinforces the connections between scholarly learning, work integrated learning and professional preparation. These linkages enhance student engagement and graduate success as students can see the relevance of their academic work and build career awareness, confidence and professional identity. Therefore, employability needs to be a strong partnership and collaboration between the university, the student and the employer. These partnerships often commence during work placements which also require such collaborations. The challenge for universities is to prepare the international student for their

future employment either in Australia or internationally. Enhanced and successful work placements connecting international students with employers and a broad range of connections will assist in this challenge.

Further, Kinash et al. (2015) developed an employability framework. They believe graduate employability has ten elements which include a degree, high grades, knowledge, goals, identity, matching employment and degrees, skills and attributes. As well they list the internship/work experience as an element. The final element is identified as co-curricular where they identify that students have opportunities to actively engage in a broad-based variety of experiences (relative to the needs and resources of diverse students) such as sport, volunteer work and student leadership positions. Higher education needs to support, embed and acknowledge these relevant activities in the programme of studies. This also gives students contact with a wide range of contacts, such as career development professionals and professional bodies.

1.3 Background to the Development of This Book: *The Work Placement for International Student Programs* (WISP) Project

With an increase in international students enrolling in universities across the globe, as well as a reported interest in workplace experience, career advice and employability for international students (Garrett, 2014), the *Work placement for International Student Programs* (WISP) project was timely. The research literature shows strong evidence of issues and concerns that international students face during the work placements within their study programmes. However, limited discourse exists on successes and the strengths and richness that international students can offer in workplace contexts. With many universities developing internationalisation and employability policies and frameworks, investigating the work placement component of study programmes in a range of disciplinary areas was necessary to improve the international student experience.

1.3.1 Aims of the Project

The WISP project's main aim was to improve work placement components of study programmes for international students. More specifically the project aimed to:

- Identify current procedures and practices in relation to work placement and associated assessment for international students in the discipline areas of business, education, engineering and health in participating institutions.
- Identify and understand challenges, concerns and successes for international students, their mentors (i.e. those people who are responsible for assessing and

Table 1.1 Universities and researchers in the project

	Business	Education	Engineering and Occupational Therapy	Nursing	Psychology and Speech Pathology
Curtin University			Bennett Ferns		
Deakin University		Joseph			
Griffith University (lead)		Barton Hartwig Cain			Jones Westerveld
Monash University		Podorova			
Queensland University of Technology	Larkin	Campbell Tangen		Harvey	O'Connor
University of Southern Queensland	Kavanagh				

working with students during their placement) and coordinators (i.e. those people responsible for the coordination of placements, at both universities and workplaces) prior to, during and after the students leave.
- Develop and apply a working model of effective practice around internationalisation, workplace socialisation and reflection. This model will be used in support materials for current and prospective international students, their mentors, coordinators and relevant university staff.

These aims were met via an appropriate model and research design including the project approach and methodology.

1.3.2 Research Design and Methods

A number of strategies were employed to investigate work placements for international students across six university sites including the lead institution, Griffith University (see Table 1.1).

Initially, an annotated bibliography including a large database of relevant literature was compiled. This review identified a gap in the literature—that the intersection between the key conceptualisations of internationalisation, socialisation and reflection had not yet been explored.

Next a scan, collation and analysis of documents such as course or unit profiles, resources and materials, for example, workplace handbooks, and past international student reports were carried out (over 250 artefacts in total). A large number of interviews were also conducted with international students, their supervisors and university staff including academics, placement and support staff across each university site.

In addition, a large-scale survey was developed and distributed Australia wide. With 340 students completing this survey, important data was collected about international students' workplace experiences and self-perceived employability. Findings from each of these data sets informed the development of a model of effective practice for international students, their supervisors and other stakeholders related to work placements. This is outlined in Chap. 2 of this book.

1.3.3 Impact of the Project

The most significant impact from the project was the collaboration across a number of institutions as well as disciplinary areas in working together to improve work placement for international students. The collaborations resulted in a number of dissemination activities including workshops, seminars and national and international conference presentations. Feedback from these events has been positive with participants commenting favourably on both the relevance of the model of effective practice and the resources developed as a result of the data collection and analysis.

Resulting from the extensive data collection for the *WISP* project are important insights into international students' experiences before, during and after work placements within Australian University programmes. Viewing international students' workplace experiences from a positive and strength-based lens has also impacted greatly on the research literature, particularly as previous research has largely focused on challenges and negative aspects of international students in workplace contexts.

Of course, not all the chapters in this book result from the WISP project. Also included are a number of studies carried out internationally including in Canada, Finland and the Netherlands. Other insights resulting from particular authors' experiences have also played an important part in the book's final outcome.

Further work that impacts on systemic procedures and policies will be ongoing at each of the university sites. This includes but is not limited to continued improvement of the delivery of learning and teaching practices that prepares international students in each of the discipline areas and sites, increasing the number of workshops and conference presentations delivered at other university sites across Australia as well as internationally, continued collaborations with the International Education Association of Australia through events such as symposiums and the annual Australian International Education Association conference and input into relevant and key policies and practices within higher education contexts. Key findings or recommendations from the project are outlined in Chap. 2.

1.4 Structure of This Book

This book is presented in three parts. The first part includes Chaps. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 and investigates theorisations around the key concepts of internationalisation and interculturalisation, multi-socialisation and reflection and reflective practice with a focus on real-world examples.

Chapter 2 has the entire team sharing the WISP model of effective practice. The model was developed by exploring the above three theoretical areas. We argue that considering work placements for international students via these lenses, including where they intersect, is critical for enhancement and success. We share two case studies where international students in education and psychology, respectively, undertook two placements each. In these examples, we apply the model of effective practice highlighting how each of the theories played out during these workplace experiences. Both students identified instances where they experienced both challenges and successes and related these to how they were treated by their mentors, how they responded to this treatment and also how they were able to ultimately reflect on these experiences in order to reconstruct their professional practice.

Chapter 3 authored by Gribble and McCrae investigates a global perspective of work integrated learning. They utilise a frame based on Bourdieu's notion of different forms of capital by unpacking barriers and challenges related to international students' experiences in Australia and Canada. The authors also explore what types of graduate attributes and outcomes international students attain as a result of their work integrated learning experiences. It is important for graduates to display certain aptitudes and capabilities, but equally so, employers need to be mindful of the strengths international students may bring to the workplace context, even if more support is required around English language proficiency. Varying forms of capital can be drawn upon in a way to acknowledge rich cultural diversity. Also social networks can be enhanced to enable positive outcomes for international students during their study abroad.

Harrison and Felton in Chap. 4 take a distinct approach by theorising professional field placements and inclusion in the social and behavioural sciences. The authors define inclusion firstly and consequently relate how this notion can be applied in field placement contexts. They argue that institutions need to make a conscious and explicit commitment to sustain an inclusive approach to learning for international students in particular. As such, they offer eight principles that promote such inclusion that will ultimately benefit all parties.

In the field of education, Tangen and Campbell in Chap. 5 explore factors leading to unsuccessful field placements for international students by asking who fails whom? They present four case studies in education, framed by Lave and Wenger's idea of situated learning. The case studies show that both individual and systemic considerations need to be taken into account in order for success to be possible. Better relationships between the international student, their mentor and the university site are recommended as well as an effective model that people can refer to in their work in this area.

In Chap. 6, Barton and Ryan present a model to highlight the importance of reflection, and indeed effective reflective practice, in order for personal growth to occur in a professional context. They note that reflection can in fact be carried out differently depending on people's cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The model unpacks a number of questions that should be asked by referring to people's personal and professional histories. Such an approach requires both student and mentor to reflect together and independently with the view of improving and reconstructing practice.

Chapter 7 by Barton and Billett shows how an individual's personal epistemology, or approach to learning a particular discipline's nuances, knowledge and skills can impact on learning outcomes. They argue that not only do international students have to become familiar with particular work sites and procedures but also the cultural aspects surrounding their time in the new country. This engagement is often complex and requires explicit mediation acknowledging these complexities. Barton and Billett explore these issues by surveying the theories of disciplinarity, epistemology and interculturalisation. They suggest a number of recommendations for improved practice.

The second part of the book shares a range of empirical data resulting from the WISP project in the areas of education and health—clinical settings, speech pathology, psychology and occupational therapy.

Firstly, Barton, Hartwig, Joseph and Podorova—all teacher educators in the higher education sector—in Chap. 8 present case studies from three university sites that offer international students initial teacher education programmes. Using the frameworks of reflection and interculturalisation, the authors present the case studies via an interpretative phenomenological lens and explore the main themes encountered through the data analysis at each site. A number of similarities across the sites are evident including issues related to the relationships involved in a practicum experience, English proficiency and impact of this on classroom practice and time constraints that are a feature of schooling and professional practice. It was also evident that contextual factors, that is, the differences in the programmes and universities, impacted on the outcomes for international students.

Chapter 9, authored by Mikkonen, Pitkäjärvi and Kääriäinen from Finland, discusses issues related to internationalism in healthcare settings. In this chapter, it is reasoned that both international students and mentors participate in professional learning regarding cultural and linguistic differences. This, the authors contend, would improve the supportive environment required in clinical placements. Such experiences provide the opportunity for students to view different ways of thinking and solving problems. They can also improve the chances of international students gaining employment either in their own country or others.

Howells, Westerveld and Garvis, in Chap. 10, share their experiences in the disciplinary area of speech pathology. A number of international students undertake a master's level programme and often face both challenges and enablers during their clinical placements. Issues such as understanding the cultural context as well as aspects related specifically to speech pathology practice impacted on the students' learning. Many of the students saw that being an international student was a benefit as they could identify any cultural nuances of their clients that perhaps other staff

members could not. The students also commented on the importance and impact of the university academics in supporting them during their placements. The authors argue that learning from individual vignettes is highly recommended for practitioners as they allow people to reflect and observe various practices in a clinical setting.

In Chap. 11, Jones, O'Connor and Boag-Hodgson undertake a study in psychology. Similar to the previous chapter, the strengths and vulnerabilities of students are offered. First, an exploration of the importance of ongoing reflection and placement experience in the profession of psychology is shared. A thematic analysis of interview data reveals the importance of international students' life histories and identities on the work placement. Unless these are taken into account by the mentor, the placement is at risk of being unsuccessful. The authors also note the importance of intercultural understanding and share ways in which to understand and practice this trait. A number of recommendations are included.

The final chapter in Part II—Chap. 12—written by Bennett and Ferns delves into the concept of employability by looking at functional and cognitive aspects. The cognitive domain consists of knowledge processes of factual, conceptual, procedural and metacognitive (also see Anderson and Krathwohl's revision of Bloom's taxonomy). The functional dimension involves remembering, understanding, applying, analysing, evaluating and creating. Bennett and Ferns use these to analyse data from three occupational therapy international students across a number of work placements. Outcomes include acknowledging the need for individual autonomy and reflective behaviour as critical indicators of learner development—particularly for international students.

The final part explores a number of strategies for systemic change within higher education institutions related to work placements and international students.

Chapter 13 by Hartwig explores study abroad programmes offered to domestic students studying in a Bachelor of Education degree. It was interesting to reveal that of the 53 Australian students involved in the three programmes, only six students had previously travelled overseas, and in fact five students had never been on a plane before. Students completed pre- and post-surveys on their experiences and written reflections during the programme. Presentations detailing their experiences and what they believed the participation in the study abroad experience had done for them were made upon their return to Australia. All students were hoping that the experience would improve their chances of employability, and for many the international experience had opened their eyes to new ways of teaching and was a valued and rewarding experience.

Stokhof and Fransen from the Netherlands, in Chap. 14, discuss the notion of globalisation with a focus on teachers. They firstly unpack the ideas of global teachers and global citizens and show how this is necessary for growth in professional practice in the current climate. Stokhof and Fransen continue by showing how they develop assessment items that expect international students to consider the intricacies of global citizenry and the importance of such a philosophy for beginning teachers. Through the use of creative mind mapping and reflections, the students transform their practice while working with students in Dutch schools. Having a

global perspective indeed had a profound effect on the ways in which the students considered their own professional identities.

Chapter 15 has Sonnenschein, Barker, Hibbins and Cain look at Chinese international students' experience in the tourism and hospitality industry. The chapter shares findings of a number of interviews including the fact that Chinese international students have clear expectations about the outcomes of the WIL component in their chosen degree. They also comment on their experiences in bridging theory and practice, as well as developing the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed for employability back in their home country. A number of recommendations for university policy are also presented.

In Chap. 16, Bahr, Pendergast and Klopper set the scene by reporting on international education globally and then in the Australian context. A cross institutional comparison is presented with attention given to specific policies surrounding the procedures for international students and admission. Using a frame of three pillars from a 10-year plan, the authors show a range of strategic directions for improvement of participation as well as the direct experience on international students in education.

Kelly, in Chap. 17, explores how to assist international students in becoming more employable by transforming challenges into opportunities. She notes that there a number of challenges that international students face, as espoused in the literature. However, these challenges can also be viewed as opportunities and strengths with further intercultural understanding. Such a strength-based approach would ensure that all involved have more positive experiences.

In the final Chap. 18, we share personal reflections of our involvement in the WISP project in the hope that further and continued commitment to ensuring positive and productive experiences for international students are guaranteed across the world.

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Chapter 2
Work Placement for International Student Programmes (WISP): A Model of Effective Practice

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2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a theoretical model, explored throughout this book, which was developed during a 2-year, empirical Australian study that aimed to improve practices related to international students' experience during work placements as part of their overseas study. The *Work placement for International Student Programs* or WISP model of effective practice takes into account the relationship between the concepts of internationalisation and interculturalisation, socialisation and reflection. The purpose of the model was to provide a framework for all stakeholders, including international students, university staff and workplace staff, to refer to when interacting together for the purpose of professional learning.

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Knight's (1999, 2004) work on internationalisation shares four key dimensions. These are activity, process, competency and ethos. Her work also incorporates intercultural perspectives on personal and professional interactions. In seeking to ground the new model, we also refer to research on both personal and professional socialisation or what we term multi-socialisation. We pay particular attention to students' personal agencies and dispositions and the affordances and opportunities provided by workplace mentors and supervisors (Barton et al. 2015; Billett 2004, 2009). Finally, we investigate the concept of reflection, including effective reflective practice and position this as an important process for all stakeholders involved in work placements for international students (Ryan and Ryan 2013).

We begin this chapter by establishing the context, with a description of the study and an overview of the key themes. We then present the approach before describing the model. Two student case studies enable us to illustrate the model in action, and we draw on the case studies to consider the implications for future practice.

2.2 The Contextual Background

The *Work placement for International Student Programs* or WISP project explored ways in which the workplace experience for international students could be enhanced to ensure a positive and successful outcome for all stakeholders. The WISP team members were all academic staff across six universities who had direct contact with international students in their programmes and who undertook work placements as part of their study.

The WISP project gathered large amounts of data including interviews with international students, academic and university support staff as well as workplace staff, large-scale survey data from international students about their working lives and workplace experiences and a large range of artefacts including course profiles, students reports and other documents related to international students and work placements.

Each team member was responsible for collecting their own data sets and, as such, was then able to explore this information via multiple methods. As a whole team, however, a number of key themes arose including the concepts of internationalisation and interculturalisation; the process of socialisation into a new country, new university and new workplace context—what we call multi-socialisation—and quality and effective reflection and reflective practice. We explore the intersection of these key concepts as shown in Fig. 2.1, noting this as a gap in the research literature.

The study's focus was international students, whose numbers within higher education are increasing every year across the globe. As this domain is a competitive market, it is important that international students undertaking study in Australia have positive, personal and professional experiences. Of interest is the workplace component of international students' study programmes as these encounters provide opportunities for students to gain workplace experience in another country.

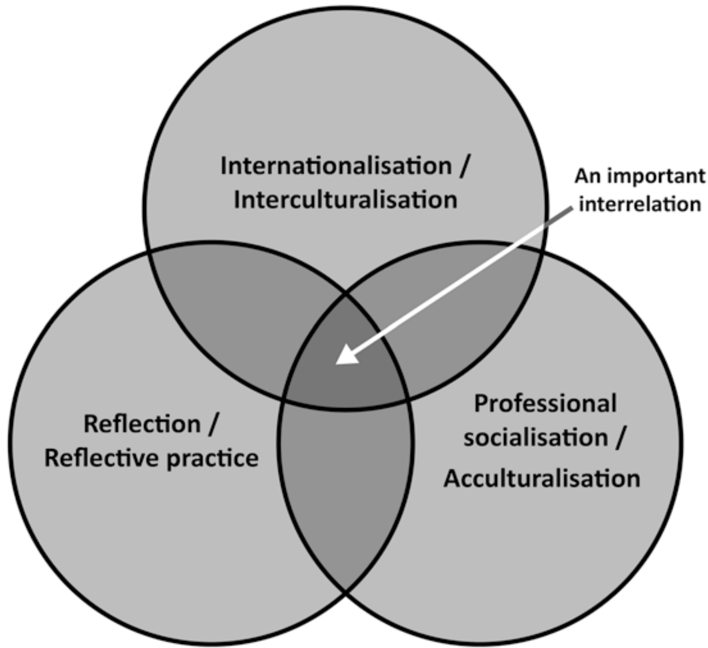

Fig. 2.1 Theoretical frameworks informing model of effective practice

This chapter therefore explores current issues (both concerns and successes) related to international students undertaking work placements in a range of programmes.

Many international students indicate their desire to participate in the workforce in their new country (Garrett 2014) as this provides unique and transferable experiences and skills. Further, the distinct perspectives of international students often contribute positively to the workforce. The results from the International Student Barometer (Garrett 2014) indicate the need for more focus on the issues of work experience, employability and career advice for international students. It is therefore imperative that more work is done within higher education to enhance international students' workplace experiences.

Resulting from the data collection and analysis, we argue that an enhanced *ethos* approach, particularly adopted by workplace supervisors, in combination with strong personal and professional agencies of students supports and contributes to assist success during the work placement. Moreover, as international students experience a *multi-socialisation* process, it is critical that they are able to reflect on this experience, take on board feedback and reconstruct their practice when necessary. Further, as international students engage in their workplace experience, the development of cultural awareness and cultural competencies is heightened for both the student and their workplace colleagues. We argue if all of these elements are taken into account and the interrelationship between them is understood, then it is more likely that an intercultural approach to the workplace experience is possible, and therefore positive and successful outcomes will result for all stakeholders.

The following sections explore each of the conceptual frameworks that have informed the development of our model of effective practice for international students undertaking work placements throughout their international study. It will then explore how these concepts intersect allowing for international students to experience success before, during and after their work placement.

2.3 Internationalisation and Interculturalisation

Internationalisation and interculturalisation are concepts that have received much attention in the higher education sector over the last few decades. Drawing initially on Jane Knight's (1999, 2004) work, we acknowledge that internationalisation encompasses a number of dimensions including the institutional, national and global levels. Generally, internationalisation acknowledges an inclusion of international and intercultural approaches in curriculum, learning and teaching and through other related activities in various sectors. Knight's (1999) original model outlines four approaches at the institutional level. These include the activity, process, competency and ethos levels. An activity approach includes endeavours such as study abroad programmes, curriculum, academic programmes, international students, institutional linkages and networks, development projects and branch campuses. Processes refer to when an international dimension is integrated in a sustainable way into the three primary functions of an institution: teaching/learning, research and service to society. Competencies are the desired results such as student competencies, increased profile and more international agreements, partners or projects. Finally, ethos concerns the creation of a culture or climate on campus that promotes and supports international/intercultural understanding and focuses on campus-based or at-home activities. Knight's later work in 2004 remodelled this initial work and added outcomes and rationales, on campus and cross-border/abroad approaches in higher education.

Another theory related to internationalisation is interculturalisation. A Griffith University policy identified this concept as "a process that aims for staff and graduates to gain appropriate competencies and proficiencies to fulfil and take their role as global citizens". Other universities have similar policies. Similarly, Hunter et al. (2015) research sees interculturalisation as an approach that "understands others first, yourself second, and in a truly reflective nature, the introspective analysis of teaching and learning" (p. i). The authors further extrapolate that interculturalisation is an approach that exercises tolerance and openness which can be understood through a process of *transcending* one cultural system for another. This means that individuals are able to consider a critical event from a different perspective to what they would normally be used to. Hunter et al. (2015) acknowledges that people would therefore act as cultural agents as they learn about others' "shared knowledge, values, and behaviours that connect us" (p. 1); ultimately, positive engagement between all parties is needed for intercultural exchanges to be successful amongst international students, their mentors and others participating in the provision of workplace experiences.

An intercultural approach needs both international students and work placement staff to be aware of the diverse range of how people consider their experiences as well as what they know, can do and value (see also Chap. 7). An acknowledgement of differences in how people analyse, understand and enact is important to accept others' beliefs and cultural backgrounds. Wells' (2000) cultural development model has also started us thinking about the concepts of cultural awareness, cultural proficiency and cultural competence, whereby an embedded approach takes us beyond these particular competencies. The six stages of the Wells' (2000, p. 191) model are as follows:

1. Cultural incompetence: a lack of knowledge of the cultural implications of health behaviour
2. Cultural knowledge: learning the elements of culture and their role in shaping and defining health behaviour
3. Cultural awareness: recognising and understanding the cultural implications of health behaviour
4. Cultural sensitivity: the integration of cultural knowledge and awareness into individual and institutional behaviour
5. Cultural competence: the routine application of culturally appropriate healthcare interventions and practices
6. Cultural proficiency: the integration of cultural competence into the culture of the organisation and into professional practice, teaching and research mastery of the cognitive and affective phases of cultural development

Progression through the last three stages of this model requires practical experience working with culturally and linguistically diverse populations (Wells 2000).

The process of interculturalisation ensures that all stakeholders approach learning and teaching and personal interaction via an intercultural approach. This means that an understanding and acceptance of the fact that people may consider certain phenomena or situations differently are possible and can therefore work together positively and productively across these differences. While we appreciated Wells' (2000) model, it seems that perhaps interaction with others has moved forward from being culturally incompetent, but rather, if one can continue to consider others first and themselves second (Hunter et al. 2015), then a continuum such as this can be null and void.

2.4 Multi-socialisation

Socialisation is a process throughout life where people adopt and adapt to certain traditions, attitudes and values of a social group. The process of socialisation can occur across multiple contexts and amongst a range of populaces. When considering work placements for international students, there is potential for socialisation practices to occur not only in the workplace environment but also within the cultural boundaries of that environment. In addition, international students are likely to continue their socialisation amongst their peers, families and communities at the same time. Combined, this creates a complex and multidimensionalised process of

socialisation for international students—or what we term *multi-socialisation*. It can therefore be difficult for some to negotiate within these spaces; for others it is exciting and rewarding.

Methods such as work integrated learning see the immersion of higher education students into the professional workplace and disciplinary field in order to learn. According to Gardner and Barnes (2007), workplace experience or professional socialisation requires students "to adopt the values, skills, attitudes, norms and knowledge needed for membership in a given society, group or organisation" (Gardner and Barnes 2007, p. 3).

Such immersion requires students to *socialise* or *acculturate* into the professional environment. Lai and Lim (2012) therefore see professional socialisation as both a process and an outcome. For any under- or postgraduate student, negotiating and understanding the workplace, its expectations and organisational structure (including relationships) can be extremely complex, difficult and time-consuming. For international students, these aspects can be magnified given their prior life experiences. There is evidence that international students often find it difficult to understand a new cultural context as well as certain work practices, particularly if they have not experienced them before. Not only do international students need to socialise into the higher education institution and the disciplinary area in which they embark upon their studies, but they also need to negotiate within the work placement component of their course. Our research suggests that for some students, this can occur within a few weeks of arriving in Australia.

Ways in which students can successfully negotiate these spaces concern their personal agencies and dispositions or how an individual, with strong capacities, can direct the ways in which they socialise into the workforce or professional practice rather than having the workplace impose upon them. Another consideration in this process is how people interact emphasising the mutuality between understanding of social and cultural circumstances. Billett (2009) refers to how an individual refers to earlier experiences to shape engagement within a disciplinary work context as the development of a personal epistemology. We therefore contend that a multi-socialisation process occurs as this allows students to reflect on the experience, take on board feedback about what is going well and what needs improvement and then reconstruct their practice accordingly.

2.5 Reflection

The final theory we have included in the model is the process of reflection and reflective practice. Reflection, according to Rodgers (2002), is a meaning-making process resulting from rigorous and conscious thinking that involves community and a certain set of attitudes. In professional contexts, reflection is important for learning and growth, particularly for those socialising into the profession. For international students, undertaking work placement reflection is critical, but it may be carried out in different ways, so it is important that those involved can understand the reflective cycle.

Utilising Ryan and Ryan's (2013) adaptation of Bain et al. (2002) model of the 5Rs to 4Rs, we have explored how international students, their mentors and university staff discuss experiences related to work placements. Working through and around four levels of reflection—reporting, relating, reasoning and reconstructing—transformative practice is possible. When we begin to reflect on an experience, we often tend to report on *what* has happened, although this may not be the case for everyone. Some cultures, for example, may begin with reasoning as to *why* something happened the way it did or relate *how* it reminded them of a previous experience. All this critical thinking leads to change or reconstruction of practice via an iterative and ongoing process throughout working life.

According to Ryan and Ryan (2013), reporting is when one recounts an issue or incident by making observations, expressing an opinion or asking questions. Relating requires people to make a connection between the incident and their own skills and experience. Questions such as have I seen this before? and how is it the same or different? allow a deeper understanding of the phenomenon. When people reason about why the incident occurred by highlighting the significant factors in detail and seeing how these are relevant to the issue, they can refer to the research literature in determining these reasons. This level involves an exploration of ethical considerations. Finally, reconstructing practice is critical for change and therefore requires international students and also their mentors to reframe or reconstruct their practice in light of greater understanding through reflection. While these variations in reflection impact on positive outcomes, this type of thinking needs to be explicitly taught; otherwise, students may find themselves only recounting or reporting on relevant phenomena.

Making reflection overt means international students are able to consider how their experience during work placement relates to previous experiences, think of reasons why occurrences play out the way they do by referring to the literature and research and contemplate ways in which they can improve their practice through reconstruction. We accept Sengers et al. (2005) definition of reflection as referring to:

> critical reflection, or bringing unconscious aspects of experience to conscious awareness, thereby making them available for conscious choice. This critical reflection is crucial to both individual freedom and our quality of life in society as a whole, since without it, we unthinkingly adopt attitudes, practices, values, and identities we might not consciously espouse. Additionally, reflection is not a purely cognitive activity, but is folded into all our ways of seeing and experiencing the world. Similarly, critical reflection does not just provide new facts; it opens opportunities to experience the world and oneself in a fundamentally different way. (p. 50)

2.6 A Model of Effective Practice

We note that there is limited research that investigates where these three theoretical frameworks intersect (refer to Fig. 2.2). We acknowledge this interconnectedness as iterative and nonlinear, meaning that both international students and the workplace staff move in and around each level in response to the process of multi-socialisation.

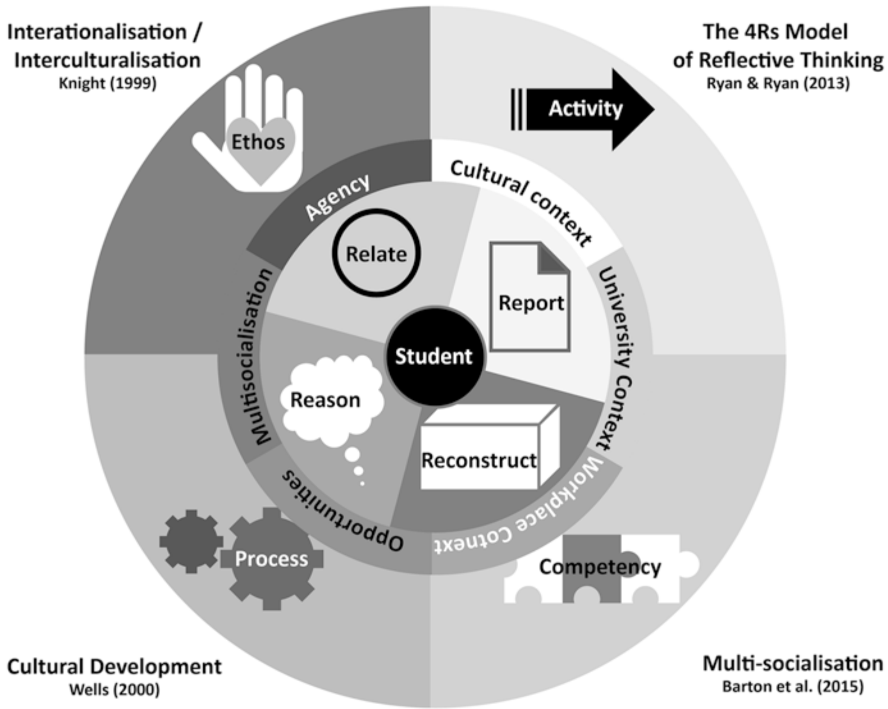

Fig. 2.2 The WISP model of effective practice: an interactive representation

We have found throughout the interview data that when both the international student and their mentor/s work at a high ethos level—understanding and accepting students' strengths, make appropriate decisions based on personal agencies and continue to be aware of reconstructive approaches to improve practice—then success is more likely.

While we note that the process is cyclic and interactive, we can also represent this as a more simplistic and linear view as in Fig. 2.3.

When students are only able to report on what happened during their work placement, they find it difficult to deeply understand why and subsequently how they can begin to reconstruct and improve their practice. Our data shows that when students are stressed or anxious, they tend to only be able to report on the incident but also sometimes reason as to why it happened by blaming others or their circumstances (Coffey et al. 2012). If they are able to, however, step back and reflect and relate the issue to theory or their learnings from university, they have more capacity to unpack the situation and figure out appropriate ways to improve next time. This, of course, also requires the mentor or supervisor to provide critical and helpful feedback and for them to also carry out an effective reflective cycle to ensure improvement for the international student.

Relating allows both the international student and mentor to try to understand an incident by thinking back on previous experiences of themselves or others. The model of effective practice aims for an intercultural perspective, in that, when peo-

Internationalisation

	Report	Relate	Reason	Reconstruct	Multi-socialisation
Ethos				Work Ready	Personal epistemologies, agencies and dispositions
Process					
Competency					Opportunities and affordances
Activity	At-risk				

Fig. 2.3 A simplistic, linear view of the model of effective practice

ple relate they also try to think about others' experiences and prior knowledge and understand how these might impact on the ways in which they perceive the situation. This is also important when reasoning. An ethos approach will encompass an awareness and attempted understanding of how the other person may feel in this situation and how they might first attempt to reconstruct their practice. Questions such as *how do you think you could begin to improve for next time?*—rather than *I want you to do this*—ensure an acknowledgement of different ways to consider change also giving agency to the student.

Below is further information regarding each part of the model in relation to work placements and international students, including prompting questions or statements that can assist all stakeholders involved.

2.7 Applying the Model to Context: Case Studies

2.7.1 Education: International Student William

There were a number of university sites involved in the WISP project that explored the experience of international students in education programmes. One such programme was a Graduate Diploma in Education for students aiming to be teachers in secondary schools. Students come into this programme having already completed an undergraduate degree which has focused on the two teaching areas selected in the postgraduate programme. The Graduate Diploma is currently a 1-year programme entailing two semesters of study, each semester having a 6-week professional experience in schools. At the end of two 15-week semesters, students are expected to be work ready. William, an international student from Hong Kong and whose primary language was Cantonese with second languages of Mandarin and English, completed the Graduate Diploma across three semesters, having had some difficulty during his first professional experience in semester one of his programme. The WISP team interviewed William at the completion of his first professional

experience as well as after his third, and subsequently more successful, experience in a different school.

William's first professional experience was in a large secondary school in a low socio-economic area. The school had a diverse range of students attending with approximately 72% of students having a language background other than English, around 65% of the school's population in the bottom quartile and an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) at approximately 900 (ACARA n.d.). In his first interview, William commented on the fact that this professional experience did not go well, and, as a result, he was labelled *at risk* on his interim report (half way through the experience). Up until this point, around week 3 of the professional experience, William explained that he was unaware of being at risk. He also felt that his mentor teacher did not display quality teaching skills as often the students were unsure of what was expected of them: "My teacher never explains what he was meant to teach clearly…So he didn't know how to, step by step, to teach the kids". William was clearly distressed throughout his interview, given he had failed overall and described the context of the school, including the role of his mentor. He reported that the students would swear in class and the teacher would:

> just let them get away with it. Students would say to each other and the teacher, "Shut up c***" and then the teacher would say, "Okay, I don't care".

For William this was distressing, and he related and reasoned that:

> Maybe that is [the school's] culture, but you can't expect us [pre-service teachers] to control and respect guys like that…I grew up in a culture where this would not be allowed or tolerated.

When mapping William's transcript onto the WISP model of effective practice, there is evidence to show that the majority of his discourse lay in the reporting on *activities* phase; none of the conversation focused on the *reconstruct* level except when the interviewer asked what he would do differently next time to which William replied, "Have a different mentor teacher". The second area most dominant in William's first interview was within the *reasoning* level of the 4Rs; however, this usually focused on how the situation could have been better for him and lay blame on his mentor teacher rather than consider ways in which he could have improved his practice. He spoke about how the mentor teacher needed to improve his competencies and the process that was taken in relation to supporting pre-service teachers in the school.

For William's mentor teacher, the issue they felt needed improvement was the competencies required for teaching, particularly in relation to classroom behaviour management (Fig. 2.4).

William consequently had to redo his first professional experience in another school which he passed and then completed his final professional experience in a religious boy's school where he was reinterviewed about his experience. This school, according to the My School website, has 2% of students in the bottom quartile and 4% of students from language backgrounds other than English (LBOTE) and an ICSEA value of 1127. The school's philosophy was from the Catholic tradition that purports the approach of being *united harmoniously in brotherhood and spiritual friendship*. For William, this school provided the ideal platform for him to gain more confidence in his abilities and therefore become a beginning teacher. He

Internationalisation

	Report	Relate	Reason	Reconstruct	Multi-socialisation
Ethos					Personal epistemologies, agencies and dispositions
Process			William		
Competency	Mentor teacher		William	Mentor teacher	Opportunities and affordances
Activity	William Mentor teacher				

Fig. 2.4 William's first placement mapped
Note: *MT* mentor teacher, *W* William

was able to learn appropriate teaching and learning strategies that enabled his students to meet the set learning outcomes and goals in the classroom. As a team, William, his mentor teacher, the site coordinator (the person responsible for supporting pre-service teachers' development at the school) and the university liaison worked to support William's further progress throughout the experience (Fig. 2.5).

At the commencement of this next professional experience, William's mentor teacher felt there were a number of areas that he needed to improve. Therefore, at the interim report period (at the half way point), William was labelled *at risk*, and an action plan was put in place. This plan outlined areas needing improvement but also what both the mentor teacher and international student needed to do to address these issues. Below is an excerpt from the action plan:

The mapping of each of the interviews with William, his mentor teacher and site coordinator at this school showed them sitting more in the ethos area of internationalisation than his first mentor teacher. Both William's mentor teacher and site coordinator could recognise the fact that William had an excellent knowledge of his teaching area and were willing to support him in the areas that needed further improvement, including planning and executing this planning (Fig. 2.6).

William was able to report on why he required deeper understanding and reflection about the learning and teaching process, due to the need for these students to be challenged. He was also able to relate this professional experience to his first one, reflecting that the support provided suited his learning style. He also stated that:

> My mentor teacher really understands me and helps me a lot… she doesn't judge me in terms of my English language but helps me to get my grammar and spelling right" and "For me it is difficult to think of the terms, say for Renaissance music, in English—sometimes these words don't exist in Chinese… I have to work hard at this and my teacher and my university lecturer really helps me.

With the right amount of support, William was also able to consider effectively how to reconstruct his practice, so it was more beneficial for the students' learning.

William's mentor teacher recognised his high-level musical skills and mentioned he had no issues with teaching instrumental music to smaller groups of students as

Criteria	Planning and Preparation of lessons	Teaching Skills
Ideas for improvement	Try to maintain at least the standard of detail you have achieved in your most recent plans. Concentrate more on structure and strategies in your planning and less on content. Include where you can, ways to cater for different learning needs in the class. Use spell checks and grammar checks regularly. When *researching*, perhaps look for lesson plan ideas relating to a topic rather than copious amounts of content. You might find some really useful resources. Try to make handouts and other resources as clear and appealing as possible relating of course to the age of the students. Understand that the effort and detail you put into these planning documents is not just a course requirement but an imperative tool for helping you to deliver effective lessons.	With more substantial plans, (see above) you will become even more confident with your teaching skills. Think of creative and engaging activities for your students. Work on *timing* your classes more as you often run out of time.
Role of supervising teacher	I will continue to be available via email if you have any questions or would like me to check your plans, however, at this stage my input should be minimal. I can provide resources to assist with planning also and continue to model these for the student.	I will model strategies and skills for the student to observe and evaluate. I will film myself and you teaching and we can evaluate our lessons together. I will continue to give written feedback for the classes you teach.
How will I achieve my objectives?	I will continue to communicate with my mentor prior to each lesson by emailing lesson plans in advance. I will ensure all lesson plans are up to date and detailed enough to show my planning for the students including both teacher and student activity. I will also get any handouts checked prior to distributing to students.	I will take on board any feedback that my mentor provides me. If I don't understand the feedback I will be sure to let my mentor teacher know this. I will also practise regularly in front of a mirror and even to my peers and lecturers where possible.

Fig. 2.5 Excerpt from action plan

Internationalisation

	Report	Relate	Reason	Reconstruct	Multi-socialisation
Ethos	Mentor teacher Site coordinator	William		Mentor teacher	Personal epistemologies, agencies and dispositions
Process	William		Mentor teacher		
Competency			Site coordinator	William	Opportunities and affordances
Activity					

Fig. 2.6 William's final placement mapped

"he was able to use his [instrument] as his voice". She did, however, believe that William needed to improve his competencies with classroom lessons as a whole process, that is, including the transitions needed for a pre-service teacher to move towards being a beginning teacher. The mentor teacher therefore would demonstrate and model best practice for William—even during playground duty. This supported William through an ethos approach to reconstructed practice. The site coordinator also provided William feedback and workshops on how to prepare and teach. At the end of the professional experience, all recognised the reciprocal learning that occurred with the mentor teacher saying it was a "Happy ending—no, a happy beginning" and William acknowledging that "I learn a lot of things from this prac, but I also learnt something from the last prac".

2.7.2 Psychology: International Student Danielle

Case study 2 involves a Masters of Organisational Psychology international student from Indonesia, Danielle, who is bilingual. This programme is a 2-year full-time postgraduate degree that aims to "develop skills and knowledge in workplace counselling, psychological assessment, facilitation and consultancy, human resource management, program evaluation and training" (from programme description). Throughout the 2-year programme, there are four practicums, totalling 250 h. Danielle was interviewed after completing two of her placements.

In Danielle's first placement, she noted that her supervisor was not very supportive and would often get angry about having to support her with skills he did not think were part of his role. The supervisor mainly discussed the need for Danielle to improve her competencies in terms of writing reports. According to Danielle, he noted that:

> [M]y written skill is according to him is not up to the standard of what he expected, so when he actually read my report he was furious to find like grammar typos… he was just like "[Danielle], this is not my job to actually correct your grammar you have to deal with that". He made a huge deal about it, and then it's not even like it's not even the content of the report itself it's just the fact that he kind of found typo here and there.

It seemed that the supervisor was only able to report on this competency rather than see the other skills that Danielle possessed. The supervisor also only related this particular activity to what was deemed important, whereas Danielle was able to reason that her skills in working with clients was at a high standard and that despite her supervisor having this concern, she was a competent practitioner. She also noted that the supervisor only provided this feedback later in her placement (Fig. 2.7):

> [H]e just brought it up at the last at the end of the placement because that's the evaluation right you know yeah, so he didn't tell me beforehand throughout the whole semester, he only brought it up at the end of placement.

In her second placement, Danielle could both relate and reason about her competencies as she was able to compare this experience to her first placement. She noted

Internationalisation

	Report	Relate	Reason	Reconstruct	Multi-socialisation
Ethos			Danielle		Personal epistemologies, agencies and dispositions
Process			Danielle		
Competency	Supervisor				Opportunities and affordances
Activity		Supervisor			

Fig. 2.7 Danielle's first placement mapped

that this time, both her supervisor and other colleagues at the workplace site were able to see her skills in other areas:

> [T]he one thing that actually find really helpful is to give me autonomy but also offer some support as well when I need, so I think I feel I think I learn more when I feel challenge but supported at the same time.

Danielle was able to reflect on her experience as an international student undertaking work placement, both the challenges and the benefits:

> Just being away from your family and friends that you actually yeah you miss a lot and I think generally like friends and family, 'cause sometimes when you live in your own country with your family and friends you accumulate friends from childhood that from school and everything you have that lifelong friends, but now you're in your new country like in a new country you don't have that thing anymore and Australia really friendly but sometimes I find others can be cliquey as well… Because you come across a lot of different challenges by yourself in a new country you don't have family that you can go to whenever you want, so you build resilience around it and then it kind of push you to be more social as well you know yeah and then you just have to be brave I guess to talk with people even though you're not confident about like just not confident in general or not confident about your language skill or something like that, and to actually yeah learn different stuff different culture and everything 'cause Australia is quite different… I think as international student here I think you just in the sense as a person I think you learn a lot of life skill that otherwise you won't learn in your country, like you're more independent I guess.

For Danielle, her second placement was a much more positive experience as the team she worked with in the workplace treated her more like a colleague rather than an international student who had language difficulties, as displayed in her first work placement. The second context essentially utilised an intercultural approach that valued her strengths such as her ability to work with culturally diverse clients more effectively than other staff. They also acknowledged the need for her to improve her report writing but suggested she just find colleagues to proofread her work. This approach showed high levels of ethos and embraced a collaborative partnership in making the work placement a successful experience, which in turn created a positive workplace context for all involved (Fig. 2.8).

Internationalisation

	Report	Relate	Reason	Reconstruct	Multi-socialisation
Ethos		Other work colleagues	Danielle	Supervisor	Personal epistemologies, agencies and dispositions
Process					
Competency		Danielle	Danielle Supervisor		Opportunities and affordances
Activity					

Fig. 2.8 Danielle's second placement mapped

2.8 Implications for Future Practice

It is apparent that a positive intercultural exchange between all stakeholders involved in work placements for international students is necessary for success. Understanding and accepting differences, and particularly drawing upon these through a strength-based approach, ensure both parties learn from workplace exchanges. Resulting from the WISP project are a number of recommendations for the international student, for university staff involved in work placement components of study programmes and for workplace staff.

2.8.1 Recommendations for International Students

We recommend that international students know and use the range of support services available at the university. At the start of their university study, we suggest that international students are proactive in becoming familiar with the range of support materials and services available at their institution, for example, academic writing, language and placement services. If students made good use of these services, it would in turn support their own learning and placement experiences and encourage other international students to do the same.

International students should also regularly seek supervisor's feedback on performance and ensure understanding and implementing this advice. In a timely manner, university and workplace staff share relevant feedback with the student. This includes complimenting effort and successes and specific advice for improvement. University and workplace staff should also implement the modelling of such advice and specific strategies, as well as providing a bank of exemplars in order to make clear what written recommendations look like in practice. This may include role playing critical incidences, providing examples of document writing or supplementing theoretical knowledge.

2.8.2 Recommendations for University Staff

University staff, including academic staff, teaching staff and support staff (such as English language support), play a critical role in supporting international students prior to, during and after work placement. An initial meeting held between the international student and their mentor or supervisor is highly recommended. This may include a tour of the working environment and designation of a workspace for the student. In this meeting, the team could review expectations and workplace norms and introduce the international student to staff that they are most likely to engage with. At this time, any unique requirements, learning styles or concerns are discussed and solutions put in place. Meetings are focused on mediating the transition from academic to workplace learning.

University staff are also invited to encourage international students to gain experience in new cultural and professional contexts through volunteering. To better understand and negotiate cultural norms and colloquialisms specific to working in Australia, university staff encourage and facilitate international students to identify and undertake volunteer placements. This can include providing a database of industry partners who provide short-term learning experiences, advice on initiating contact with these employers, examples of professional dress and guidance for students to incorporate volunteer experiences on their resumes. Academic staff can also facilitate a range of ways for students to debrief after these volunteer placements. This may include a social media discussion site or collaborative learning circles at the university, with the intent of linking learning gained in volunteer contexts to the students' upcoming placements.

University staff could include a range of teaching and learning activities such as role plays, videos and critical reflection to assist international students' understanding of Australian workplace contexts. International students should be encouraged to be involved in any university learning activities that will assist in understanding Australian workplace contexts. University staff could be proactive in preparing a range of multimodal materials and participatory activities which highlight the cultural nuances of Australian workplace settings. This can include a series of role play activities, where common circumstances are experienced by the students as both worker and audience member, or a series of short video clips which demonstrate a variety of likely workplace scenarios using colloquial and/or discipline-specific language, for example, nurse-patient or student-teacher relationships. Students utilise a reflection tool—such as the 4Rs framework (Ryan and Ryan 2013)—to provide a structured reflection on critical incidences in order to model meaningful responses for future assessment reflection tasks.

Another recommendation is for university staff to create a community of learners through multimedia tools. This would encourage continued communication during work placement rather than a disconnection between the university and the workplace context. International students could participate in a community of learners by sharing expertise, cultural knowledge and skill sets with the university, workplace and peers. Prior to placement, academic staff and international students develop a variety of means to support international students on their placements. This may

include the development of a Professional Learning Network (PLN) through a social media site. Such support allows students and academics to communicate, collaborate and provide advice during placements. This may also include more experienced international students or graduates providing advice and resources. More experienced students may develop a series of guiding points as general advice or facilitate the pairing of novice and mentor relationships for support.

2.8.3 Recommendations for Workplace Staff

In relation to workplace staff, it is recommended that they create a welcoming workplace environment for the international student including a workspace, clear expectations and open lines of communication. Prior to placement, workplace staff introduce the student to the workplace community and explain the student's role and specific needs. They provide a designated workstation (desk and computer if possible) and other resources such as stationery and access to the kitchen or lunch room. They include the international student in meetings, in casual conversation as appropriate, and take the initiative to get to know the student on professional and personal levels.

Workplace staff are encouraged to embrace and utilise international students' unique cultural knowledge and experience in the workplace context. Workplace staff should also be proactive in becoming familiar with and valuing the wide range of skills and knowledge international students bring to the workplace. This may include important cultural knowledge, a specific skill set related to the workplace or industry connections in their home country. Workplace staff provide ways for students to share and utilise this knowledge including presenting to colleagues and implementing this knowledge in their interactions with stakeholders. Workplace staff actively present these skills and knowledge as assets to the workplace and in a positive manner.

It is also recommended that workplace staff include a diverse range of communication techniques to explain key concepts about the workplace context for international students. Workplace staff acknowledge the variety of learning styles, preferences and cultural nuances present in the workplace. They can devise applicable communication techniques that support the international student to fully understand the workplace environment. This may include the use of graphic representations, multimedia and alternative technologies, as well as connecting students with staff from similar cultural backgrounds. This also includes focusing on critical incidences and unpacking these through modelling communication strategies.

Workplace staff can also encourage international students to become involved in the wider workplace community. This means that workplace staff actively involve international students by including them in meetings with stakeholders outside the workplace, introducing them to staff from other institutions or businesses, including them in correspondence where appropriate and providing responsibilities where students are required to initiate connections for themselves. This may also involve support in making industry connections locally, nationally and internationally after placement.

2.9 Conclusion

The WISP model of effective practice is a functional way to improve the work placement for international students and their supervisors or mentors in the workplace context. Not only can the model provide an appropriate framework for the international student and mentor, but it can also inform decision-making within the higher education context. University staff should also be aware of the ways in which the work placement can be made more positive for international students.

Making a concerted effort to ensure success for international students is critical in the higher education context. Without clear awareness of not only the issues or concerns international students and their mentors face during work placement has a potentially huge impact on an international student's experience in the new country in which they are undertaking their study. With many policies in place that aim to improve international students' experience during their study, it is crucial that the work placement component is also considered.

The WISP model of effective practice is a practical framework by which all stakeholders can understand and implement effective strategies making sure all involved have a positive experience.

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Chapter 3
Creating a Climate for Global WIL: Barriers to Participation and Strategies for Enhancing International Students' Involvement in WIL in Canada and Australia

Cate Gribble and Norah McRae

3.1 Introduction

This cross national study examined barriers to participation and strategies for enhancing international students' involvement in WIL in Canada and Australia. The link between relevant work experience and graduate employment outcomes has led to growing interest in work integrated learning (WIL) and its role in enhancing the employment outcomes of international students. For international students seeking to differentiate themselves in a highly competitive global labour market, foreign work experience is now an integral part of the overseas study package. WIL is seen to provide essential employability knowledge and skills (Gribble 2014).

Despite placing high value on acquiring discipline-related work experience while studying, international students have low participation rates and are often dissatisfied with current opportunities to participate in WIL (Gribble 2014). The high value placed on WIL among international students poses challenges as well as opportunities for Australian and Canadian universities. Both Canada and Australia are leading providers of international education; however, there is increasing competition from traditional competitors such as the UK, the USA, the NZ and Asian nations such as Singapore, China and Malaysia. Importantly, both Australia and Canada consider international students as potential migrants and a solution to current and projected skill shortages, given their local qualifications and relatively established acculturation and language skills (International Organization for Migration [IOM] 2012). The Canadian Experience Class, which has pledged to double the number of international students by 2020, includes work experience for

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international students as one strategy for meeting the criteria for permanent residence status (Bradshaw 2014). However, despite the optimistic projections for this programme, in 2010 the number of successful student applications was under 4000, far lower than expected, indicating that international students were facing challenges accessing this programme (Canadian Bureau for International Education [CBIE] 2014). Understanding the issues surrounding international students and employment is closely linked to both nations' continued success in the international education sector, which in turn has broad, long-term, social and economic implications. This chapter consequently seeks to ascertain how participation in WIL is experienced by international students in these nations and how it contributes to their graduate outcomes.

3.2 Literature Review

For the current generation of international students and their families, global career and mobility opportunities are driving factors in their choice of study destination (Gribble and Blackmore 2012; Xiang and Shen 2009). Whether they are planning to remain in the host country or return home, acquiring overseas work experience to complement their foreign credential has become a key goal for many international students (Gribble and Blackmore 2012; Li and Yang 2013). For host countries, the economic value of international students is often considerable, with many domestic universities relying heavily on revenue from their fees. International education is Australia's biggest service export, contributing $AU19 billion in export income to the economy in 2015 (Australian Government 2016). In 2014, Canada hosted over 336,000 international students at all levels of study, representing a growth rate of 83% since 2008 (CBIE 2014). It is estimated that these students contributed approximately $CAN8 billion to local economies across the country through fees for tuition, accommodation, transportation and other expenditures. Approximately 81,000 Canadian jobs were sustained in every region of the country thanks to the activities of international students (CBIE 2014). Considerable social and cultural benefits are also associated with international education, including opportunities for deep global engagement (McRae and Ramji 2011).

The generation of higher cultural capital, in the form of a Western credential, that will afford benefits in both the home country and global labour markets is a key motivation to study abroad (IIE 2009). Overseas study and work offer a means of cultivating valuable forms of capital (certificates, English language, work experience) that will advantage students in a competitive home country graduate job market or secure relevant employment in the host country (Waters 2006; Zweig et al. 2004).

The link between relevant work experience and graduate employment outcomes has led to growing interest in WIL and how it may be used to enhance the employment outcomes of international students. Though WIL has long been a key element of many university programmes, there is growing interest in it as a valid pedagogy and a means to respond to demands by employers for work-ready graduates.

Importantly, students are seeking a return on investment, and WIL is seen to provide critical employability knowledge and skills (Patrick et al. 2008).

While research on WIL is extensive, there is relatively little published research on the specific issues relating to international students. Previous international education research has focused largely on the recruitment and teaching of international students, their adaptation to the host university and lived experiences, identity and security needs (Brooks and Waters 2011; Marginson et al. 2010) and the need to both localise and contextualise learning through the internationalisation of the curriculum (Jones 2010). Although there is little research specifically on international students and WIL, the topic has been flagged as a priority by a number of experts in the field and one that requires further examination (CBIE 2014; Gribble 2014).

3.3 Research Design

Theoretically, the study utilised Bourdieu's notion of different forms of capital (cultural, economic, social) to understand how WIL is valued relative to other ways of considering employability and the production of a global work habitus (Bourdieu 1986). Bourdieu offers significant tools to conceptualise the role of universities in the production of a habitus of graduate employability within specific disciplinary subfields of the field of higher education. Universities can enhance students' cultural and individual dispositions in terms of particular ways of valuing, thinking and doing. WIL can be considered a vehicle for building social and cultural capital. Indeed, WIL is where the fields of education, employment and policy intersect for students.

This study was built on the research team's prior studies of international students and employment (Blackmore et al. 2014; Gribble 2014; Gribble and Blackmore 2012; McRae 2013, 2015; McRae and Ramji 2011; Murray et al. 2012), which identified barriers to participation in WIL and dissatisfaction with WIL programming as key issues for international students, and noted the potential gains organisations that hire international WIL students may have.

The study investigated:

1. The barriers to participation in WIL faced by international students studying in Australian and Canadian universities
2. The perceptions that international students have of their WIL experiences in Australia and Canada
3. How participation in WIL contributes to international students' attainment of graduate outcomes and what challenges are faced in doing so

A significant feature of this study is the comparative dimension. Canada and Australia are ideally suited to a comparative study of this nature. Both nations are key players in the international education sector with Australia attracting 7% of the world's globally mobile students followed by Canada which attracts 6% (Institute of International Education [IIE] 2016). Importantly, both nations have developed policy designed to facilitate the migration of international graduates as a way of

addressing skill shortages and changing demographic patterns (Gribble and Blackmore 2012; Hawthorne 2010; IOM 2012). Both nations have strong connections to Asia, the source region for the majority of international students. Trade and investment ties with Asia have underpinned Australia's prosperity with Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation [APEC] economies accounting for nearly 70% of Australia's total trade in goods and services (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade [DFAT] 2014). British Columbia has strong social and economic connections to the Asia-Pacific through its Asia-Pacific Initiative launched in 2007, with the expressed strategy of "developing and attracting a labour force that has Pacific Century Skills" (BC Ministry of Jobs 2014). This study provides key insights into institutional approaches to facilitate WIL engagement among international students in the two countries. In addition, it has provided a baseline study for further comparative investigations of key providers of international education, such as the UK and USA.

The case study method was selected for this qualitative study as it provides the necessary framework for in-depth study of a particular situation rather than broad statistical analysis, given that the challenge international students face when engaging in WIL has been identified in prior research. Since there is only a limited amount of published research about international students and WIL, this study aimed to deepen understandings of the barriers for international students with regard to WIL, their perceptions of the WIL experience and the attainment of graduate outcomes resulting from WIL. In-depth qualitative analysis provides rich understandings as to attitudes and perceptions, what is valued and why with regard to WIL and employability. These are key issues surrounding international students and WIL.

3.3.1 Sampling

International students from a range of programme areas that have WIL programmes at two universities, one in Canada and one in Australia, were invited to participate in the study. A total of ten students were interviewed, four in Canada and six in Australia. Students came from the following disciplines: engineering, information technology, business and economics and health sciences. Each student was interviewed prior to beginning a WIL experience and again after having completed a WIL experience. Fourteen WIL academic programme coordinators from different discipline areas at each university were also interviewed (see Table 3.1).

3.3.2 Instrumentation

Focus group discussions were held with the international students and WIL programme coordinators. Open-ended questions were asked pertaining to the research questions. Discussion was encouraged and facilitated to enable a comprehensive exploration of the topic.

Table 3.1 Study participants

		Student (n = 10)	Education provider (n = 14)	Notes
Gender	Female	4	8	
	Male	6	6	
University	Australia	6	10	WIL academic 5
				WIL coordinator 5
	Canada	4	4	WIL marketing 1
				WIL coordinator 3
Graduate level	Undergraduate	6	Not applicable	
	Postgraduate	4		
Discipline	Health sciences	2	Not applicable	
	Business	2		
	Engineering	3		
	Information technology	3		
Country of origin	China	4	Not applicable	
	India	4		
	Kenya	1		
	Pakistan	1		

3.3.3 Data Collection and Analysis

The focus group sessions and interviews were recorded and transcribed. Narrative analysis of the transcriptions was used to identify responses, compare and contrast the findings from the WIL group and develop themes. To ensure inter-rater reliability, each researcher coded their interviews, and then the two exchanged uncoded transcriptions for a second independent coding.

3.4 Findings

The findings examine both the benefits of participating in WIL and the significant challenges associated with providing WIL opportunities to international students in the Canadian and Australian contexts. The researchers were interested in learning what motivated international students to participate in WIL, what they hoped to gain from the experience and how their WIL experience fitted within their overall international student trajectory. The study also explored the perspectives of WIL coordinators in order to further understand the key factors motivating international students to participate in WIL. The researchers were interested in learning what factors contributed to a successful WIL experience or detracted from this from the perspectives of both students and coordinators. Finally, the study was interested in identifying any significant differences between how international students experienced WIL in the two contexts.

3.5 Benefits of WIL for International Students

Gaining host country work experience is now considered an integral part of the international education experience, providing important labour market advantages in either in the host or home country (McRae 2013). The following section examines the specific skills, knowledge and attributes that international students hope to acquire via participation in WIL.

3.5.1 Exposure to Local Work Culture

For international students in both Canada and Australia in this study, WIL offered an opportunity to gain access to the host country society on which their international student experience had failed to deliver. The integration of international students is a widely recognised challenge in many host nations (Arkoudis et al. 2013; Marginson et al. 2010; Tran and Pham 2015). International students often struggle to connect with domestic students, and many international students choose to live and socialise with other international students. Some programmes, such as business and management in Australia, are heavily dominated by international students, further limiting opportunities for host country engagement (Blackmore et al. 2015). Despite having lived in Australia or Canada for an extended period, students often fail to build the cultural capital required to succeed in the local labour market. Employers are looking for students who understand the local work culture and will transition easily into the workplace (Blackmore et al. 2014; Desai-Trilokekar et al. 2016). As this international health science student in Canada commented, WIL provides a critical opportunity for significant interaction with professionals in their field and to build knowledge of the local labour market:

> I think I get the chance to learn what sort of health system in Canada looks like. In my own expertise how I can gain some knowledge from my work experience. And also help me to adapt to the culture more and faster than I thought. Back in school we have a little circle of the similar culture people get together, but for the co-op it's about really adapting to the work culture. And how to get along with your colleagues and peers. So I think it's really helpful for developing, creating a picture and it helps you to gain some concept of what it really looks like. (International student focus group, Canada)

The student describes how the WIL experience provided the opportunity to move beyond theory to practice and deepen understanding of both the Canadian healthcare system and workplace culture. Without the WIL experience, the students' social networks were largely confined to other international students of similar backgrounds. The WIL experience was a catalyst for the student to move beyond their cultural group:

> Before this co-op I only have a part time work experience in Canada and I don't have an office setting experience, so this is very important for me to get to know the office world and I feel like people either in Canada or where else they value work ethic very much. I think it's not encouraged to work overtime, but what I learn from my employer is working smart, working efficiently. (International student focus group, Canada)

Certain behaviours were identified as positive in terms of facilitating students' integration into their work placement. While WIL benefitted students by providing them with important exposure to Australian and Canadian workplace etiquette and behaviours, the interviews also revealed opportunities for universities to provide important pre-placement training that may enhance the overall WIL experience. International students often come from backgrounds where the workplace cultures differ significantly from the Canadian and Australian contexts. For example, the workplace culture in China is often more hierarchical and formal than that of Australia or Canada. This Australian WIL coordinator provided an example of how a lack of understanding of workplace etiquette could prevent international students from capitalising on valuable opportunities to develop rapport with colleagues and build professional networks:

> Look, just sometimes they're just I think maybe a little bit around culture and things like that. So, for example I know we went out and she said of one of the interns, "Oh we've always asked him to come out to lunch, but he doesn't want to, he just sits at his desk working." We're like, "No, no you can have a break." And then again it's probably he did think, "well, no, it's not appropriate for me to go out to lunch with my manager", because back in his home country you don't do that. So, when we said, "You know what, it probably wouldn't be a bad idea maybe once in a while you just go with them and you know, chat to them." And he was like, "I just wasn't sure whether that was out of line, you know". (WIL Coordinator/academic focus group, Australia)

Other students talked about country variations in communication styles and how important it was to understand the subtleties when interacting with colleagues in workplaces in different cultural contexts. While this knowledge can be acquired during the WIL experience, there were suggestions that earlier exposure to the norms and expectations would deepen the benefits of WIL:

> Specifically, I think being polite or kind is a big factor here, which is not the case where I grew up or in my culture. Just saying things in a particular way is encouraged here. Whereas in my culture it is what you say and not how you say it, so it is a small point, but it makes a huge difference in the way you interact with employers. So I have come to learn that because I've been here for a while, but I can imagine if a student is new they wouldn't know that the emphasis is on the importance of communication and how you do it. (International student focus group, Canada)

The importance of gaining exposure to the host country workplace culture was highlighted by an international engineering student who carried out his placement for the Australian subsidiary of a Swiss textile manufacturing company which comprised of just one person. While the student was satisfied with the type of work he carried on placement and was grateful for the opportunity to learn about advanced manufacturing in the textile field, the placement failed to provide him with any exposure to Australian work culture as he worked from home with only weekly meetings with his supervisor:

> There was a good side of it and there was a bad side of it. The good side was I was directly under supervision of the CEO of the company, so I was getting the most out of it from the CEO perspective. But the bad part was it's basically a one employee company as of now, so he's only one who is trying to establish his subsidiary over here. So I was not able to have a team work properly over there because there was no team…I was a bit disappointed on that thing because I didn't find any company culture. (International student focus group, Australia)

The international students in Australia also believed that relevant Australian work experience would boost their employability both in Australia and globally, suggesting that international students are seeking credentials and experiences for the global labour market:

> It's a huge advantage if you're going to work in another country I feel, especially the one where you grew up. For me India, if I show them that I have been in an international setting and have added value to such a company, that would be a huge advantage. (International student focus group, Australia)

Universities currently face pressure to scale up provision of WIL placements. In response, there have been suggestions of broadening the definition of placements to include freelance work, simulated practices, etc. While growing demand for WIL requires creative approaches, universities cannot neglect the importance of providing students with opportunities to build social and cultural capital via genuine exposure to the host country workplace.

3.5.2 Applying Theory to Practice

The opportunity to translate theory into practice is a well-understood benefit of WIL (Eames and Cates 2011). However, for international students, this may be considered even more valuable due to significant differences between industry standards, policy and practices. Previous studies have found that adjusting to different workplace standards, regulations and expectations is a key challenge among international students and skilled migrants who have worked in a similar field prior to coming to Australia and Canada (Gribble et al. 2016; Banerjee and Phan 2014). This engineering student from Australia refers to the importance in his industry of being familiar with Australian policy, regulations and procedures. This is particularly salient for students who may come from countries with significantly different industry environments:

> It's actually a good opportunity for me. Australia's new for me and I need to learn a lot of Australian standards, a lot of Australian policies, legal obligations, rules, regulations, so it's a good platform for me to learn through this WIL program, you know, I'll be having the insides of the industry how the process works in Australia. So it's actually a very good start. (International student focus group, Australia)

Other international students spoke of acquiring practical knowledge and experience that will equip them for the workplace. This international IT student studying in Australia referred to the importance of being exposed to *real-world scenarios* and *doing* rather than simply receiving instruction. For her the benefits included learning fundamental workplace skills that are central to success in the workplace such as how to communicate with clients in an English-speaking environment:

> What I feel is that what we study in uni is basically following the books. It is not a real world scenario. So, when you are out there and you actually deal with your actual client, so instead the client will have their expectations how to—Simple things like if you are going to email the client, what are their requirements and how should you present it. So, there are different things that you come to know when you are actually doing it rather than just learning about them. So, yes this is a very good opportunity. (International student focus group, Australia)

Having practical local experience is considered critical in the job application process as it provides a real-life point of reference when applying for jobs. Students spoke of employers looking for evidence of key workplace competences and the importance of being able to refer to the practical skills and experience acquired during a WIL placement:

Q So it's about having some practical experience on your CV that you could refer to in a job interview or a job application.

A That would be a huge advantage, yes. It will affect a lot, because since I've been doing a lot of study in Melbourne I have been talking to a lot of industry representatives like those representing their companies…they have advised me that applying for a job is very handy if you can explain what you can actually do, and by doing a project in a company you can actually explain to your future employer what you are capable of and what you can provide. Yes, I certainly think it's beneficial. (International student focus group, Australia)

International and domestic graduates constitute two competing groups of individual social agents who are vying for recruitment in their professional fields. "At stake in the field is the accumulation of capitals: they are both the process within, and product of, a field" (Thomson 2008, p. 67). Each player involved in this competitive game draws on multiple capitals (cultural, social and symbolic) and attempts to learn and follow the rules of the game, adopting strategies in order to secure their position and accumulate benefits (Bourdieu 2005). While domestic students are able to leverage considerable social and cultural capital accrued over many years, WIL provides international students with the opportunity to *catch up* to their domestic peers, therefore creating a more even playing field when it comes to seeking graduate employment and contributing to their employer (McRae 2013).

3.5.3 Pathway to Migration

For many students, participation in WIL is part of their overall migration strategy. Post-study migration opportunities are a major factor behind the choice of study destination (Gribble and Blackmore 2012), and professional experiences are increasingly regarded by students as key aspects of the study abroad package. In order to stay in Australia or Canada, participation in WIL was regarded as an important step towards achieving their migration goal.

In the Canadian case study, students often have the opportunity to participate in multiple WIL placements during their degree. According to the students, this experience demonstrates to prospective employers that they are competent and can be trusted to commit to the workplace. Other research has shown that employers are often reluctant to hire international graduates for fear that they will not stay long term and that they are less likely to assimilate into the workplace (Blackmore et al. 2014; Desai-Trilokekar et al. 2016). According to this Canadian international student, participation in a WIL placement of a significant duration may help dispel any concerns employers may have about international students' commitment, productivity and capacity to integrate into the workplace:

> I would say it's you have Canadian experience, you came here, you didn't just do school and then came out and said well give me a job. You have Canadian experience, you have the sense of I can work here, I can be able to be productive, I can be able to be effective in a work environment in Canada. I don't have to go back home to feel comfortable. So if you've done at least eight months or even a four-month term, you have that confidence. The confidence is there and you also can show it on the piece of paper that you give to employers. I've worked here so you can trust me to continue to work here. (International student focus group, Canada)

Permanent residency visa status is recognised as a vital form of symbolic capital for international graduates intending to find employment in their field in Australia. Australia has a points-based migration system with points awarded for English language ability, education qualifications and skilled employment (Blackmore et al. 2014). For many international students, WIL represents an important step on their journey towards permanent residency in the host country.

3.5.4 Professional Networks

"Social capital" refers to the networks and relationships between people, which, in sum, constitute a group (Bourdieu 1986). Possession of social capital allows a group member to draw on the resources available from relationships within the group, particularly from group members who are richly endowed with other kinds of capital (economic and cultural). However, international students are often removed from the advantages that their home country environment provides, requiring them to mobilise strategies that will allow them to build the networks required when seeking placements and graduate employment. Much has been written on the importance of networks in the job-seeking process (e.g. Wanberg 2012; Bramoullé and Saint-Paul 2010), and WIL provides international students with the opportunity to create country-specific and professional networks that may have long-term career advantages. This was a benefit identified by the WIL coordinators in both Canada and Australia:

> So it's usually I think the network that they develop of people that know that they can do the job, they have confidence that they can do the job, that's going to benefit them. Engineering networks are usually pretty tight. Developer networks are usually—like everybody knows someone who works with somebody else. (WIL Coordinator/Academic focus group, Canada)

According to this international student from Pakistan studying health promotion in Australia, creating professional networks in the field was a significant advantage when seeking work upon graduation:

> And the other thing is I made a lot of contacts there so like visiting other organisations, I published the service directory and in the expo the supervisor went and he took my name and he said I was the one who did it. So every day after that they were like "Oh you have done this work, it's a great job." So it sort of was like developing contacts …it's all about connections. (International student focus group, Australia)

The student's WIL experience provided a critical opportunity to develop key knowledge and skills but also to promote his professional expertise and potential to a small, close-knit field. Without this entrée into his professional field, international students are likely to be excluded from important opportunities, while employers may miss out on the particular skills and attributes that students from diverse background bring to the workplace. In this case, the WIL experience significantly enhanced the student's social capital, providing key advantages in the graduate employment market.

3.5.5 Increased Confidence

Increased confidence was a clear benefit described by both students and WIL staff in Canada and Australia. Participating in WIL can be daunting for international students who may have had limited work experience and may harbour concerns about their English language competency and capacity to perform in the workplace. Often international students have limited exposure to the local community, socialising largely with other international students, often from their own language and/or cultural background. For many, participating in WIL requires them to step outside their comfort zone and challenge themselves on both a personal and professional level. While the experience can be highly challenging, the benefits are significant. International students in both Canada and Australia spoke of feeling more confident talking to other people and of attempting tasks that are unfamiliar:

> And I am good with, I am more good with people now what I feel. I am good at adjusting now. I won't hesitate to take up new things now. So I won't hesitate to learn new things now. (International student focus group, Australia)

> I think a recent skill I learnt from my third co-op is how to take initiatives. In school I'm more people who just follow the instructions, I think for most co-op work they develop the instruction for you and you just follow it and do a job, but in my current co-op they have been asking me to take more initiatives to explore more in the organisation and more in the culture. (International student focus group, Canada)

According to WIL academics and staff in both Australian and Canada, greater self-confidence is a key benefit associated with WIL. International students who have participated in WIL have both a better grasp of the academic requirements and expectations and a clearer understanding of the knowledge and skills required of graduates in the workplace. As a result, students are better equipped for the challenges they will face in the workplace. While WIL coordinators were of the view that WIL benefits all students, international students stand to gain the greatest benefits from participating in WIL:

> Participation in co-op makes them more successful in their career search. I think that effect is magnified tenfold with the international students. I can't imagine how some of these international students who I met in first year, who couldn't talk to me, and then I see them when they graduate and going on to getting careers, I can't imagine how they would've got from A to B without co-op. (WIL Coordinator/Academic focus group, Canada)

For some students, their WIL placement was perhaps the most powerful experience of their overseas study. This comment from an international engineering student in Australia highlights the profound impact WIL can have on an international student, both on a professional and personal level. The experience can be a catalyst for change and an opportunity for students to realise their own potential:

> To be honest, experience is the most important and no matter how I get a grade from this job I do know that I gained so much things, I learnt so much things from this. This from my heart. And it's hard to express also a real difference between current year and year before but I do realise I learned things and I do realise my—How do I say? Acknowledge myself, my capability of doing something, learning things, and this internship is like testing my limit, testing how I can do it. (International student focus group, Australia)

As noted by another Australian WIL coordinator, international students are not on a level-playing field with their domestic peers and often require extra assistance in both preparing for WIL and securing a placement. As previously discussed, international students often arrive in the host country with low stocks of social and cultural capital. Often, the social networks through which they had accumulated cultural capital in their home country no longer existed in Australia and Canada, which required them to develop other forms of personal or individual capital or to have universities provide this for them. If provided with the support required, international students are more likely to be on an even footing with local students. Importantly, WIL provides students with the confidence in their capacity to succeed as a graduate in the host country labour market. Here a Canadian student explains the transformative nature of her WIL experience:

> After the co-op I can see that I'm no worse than anybody else here and I have the same ability to work. It's not a language issue like it's your ability, it's not about where you come from. And yeah I think that's the most important thing, yeah that's it. (International student focus group, Canada)

3.6 Challenges

While most students recognise the importance of WIL and are motivated to participate, some students are more successful in both securing placements and deriving key benefits from the experience (Gribble 2014). In this study, we were interested in exploring what factors led to greater success in WIL as well as what constituted barriers. International students, many from the Asian middle class, bring different cultural and economic capitals to the university, the possession of which facilitates the accumulation of particular forms of cultural (e.g. educational credentials) and social capital (Rizvi 2005). This study suggests that international students who are both strategic and possess an agentic disposition are best placed to negotiate the diversity of cultural values, power relations and norms of universities, policies and the workplace. In contrast, those students with lower stocks of social and cultural capital are more likely to encounter difficulties in obtaining a placement and deriving the maximum benefit from their WIL experience. Challenges included English language proficiency,

inadequate understanding of job seeking, geographic location, the attitudes of employers and—for academics and employers—managing students' expectations.

3.6.1 English Language

English language proficiency (ELP) has been identified as a key barrier to workplace participation for international graduates (Arkoudis et al. 2009; Birrell and Healy 2008; Blackmore et al. 2014). Many international students lack the ELP required in Australian and Canadian workplaces (Arthur and Flynn 2011; Gribble 2014). Employers are often unwilling to recruit international graduates due to concerns surrounding ELP (Blackmore et al. 2014; Desai-Trilokekar et al. 2016). In this study, ELP was identified as a key challenge by students and institutional staff in both Canada and Australia. WIL coordinators expressed concern over what they considered to be the inadequate English language proficiency of many international students:

> But definitely English language. I mean if you come from China, you know, you've got to give them credit for the fact that they can actually speak some English but personally I think some of the English—I mean I've got students who we are actually asking them "Could you repeat it again" four or five times because we don't understand them. That's not going to get them a placement. Because their English is so poor. (WIL Coordinator/Academic focus group, Australia)

The development of English language is a form of social capital that takes on critical importance for international graduates competing with local native English speaking (Blackmore et al. 2015). However, results of this study concur with other research (Blackmore et al. 2014; Marginson 2014), suggesting that students are not always equipped with the disposition for agentic action that Maton (2008) argues is required to accumulate valued forms of social capital such as English language proficiency. For example, WIL staff in Canada noted the tendency of Chinese international students to confine their interactions to the Chinese community, therefore limiting opportunities to develop key linguistic capital while studying in Canada:

> Certainly their parents are here or big brother or sisters are there. I think the strength of the local [Chinese] community is also a challenge for them. I have no Chinese students who have absolutely said, "I want to learn English. I'm going to make an effort to make English friends, Canadian friends, people that speak English." And you talk to them a couple of months later and they're just sucked back into the community. (WIL Coordinator/Academic focus group, Canada)

> Exactly. So what I see the students doing is coming out of a lecture, they're all on their phones. And we pass by, they're communicating with their friends in China. They're sitting in the labs watching a Chinese show. They are in China. (WIL Coordinator/Academic focus group, Canada)

While in many instances the ELP of students may be a legitimate barrier to participation in WIL, other research suggests that accent and language interpretation, rather than language competency, are used by employers to determine a candidate's

fit into the organisational work culture (Harrison 2013; Hosoda et al. 2012). The following comment by a Canadian international student raises the issue of whether different accents or styles of communication are readily accepted in the workplace:

> I have several interviews and I think my words has been interpreted in a different way than what I was thinking, so that could be a language issue or that could be a culture issue. (International student focus group, Canada)

This student's reflection on the role that culture might play in how words are interpreted raises the importance of providing students with training that enables their effectiveness in intercultural encounters (McRae and Ramji 2011).

3.6.2 Limited Understanding of the Job-Seeking Process

Both Canadian and Australian university staff identified the sourcing of placements for international students as a significant challenge. In the Australian case study, there is the expectation in many discipline areas that students find their own placement. The rationale is that going out and finding a placement in many ways replicate the job-seeking experience and provide students with important skills. Students who have worked hard to find their own placement also have more sense of ownership and commitment to succeed in the placement (Blackmore et al. 2015). In addition, resourcing constraints mean that locating a placement for every student is impractical. However, for international students, who often lack the local cultural capital, securing a placement can be challenging. This Australian WIL coordinator advocated additional support for international students:

> The university can't find enough places for obviously every student, so there is still a big onus on well you'll just have to look for your own one. … I think that the university also needs to support those students that can't [get a placement]. They're not on a level playing field. (WIL Coordinator/Academic focus group, Australia)

Lack of understanding of the job application process also emerged as key barrier, highlighting the importance of linking international students with university career services and providing adequate career education:

> I would probably say first of all it's gaining the placement. So, the applications that I see even though we say there's all the resources at the Job Shop as far as writing resumes, cover letters, there's people there that can help. The applications, some that I receive are just atrocious. (WIL coordinator/academic focus group, Australia)

Some international students arrive with limited life experience compared with their Australian and Canadian counterparts. In China, the focus is on achieving high academic results, and Chinese school students are encouraged to prioritise study over other activities (Tan 2012), resulting in what a Chinese student called an "empty resume". This international student in Canada explains:

> In China we don't have the culture to volunteer from 12 or 13 years old. In Canada the high school students all have work experience or volunteer experience. I think a lot of Chinese

> high schools don't have those experiences to put on their resume. When I first get into the program and I showed my resume to my co-op coordinator and he says "it's almost empty. What did you do in high school?" I said "Study. Other than that, nothing really". (International student focus group, Canada)

One Canadian WIL coordinator believes that in order to overcome the problem of the *empty* resume, international students must be strongly encouraged to become more active on campus in order to develop key employability skills. Greater involvement in clubs and societies on campus and other activities that involve engaging with the community may enhance both international students' employability and their overall study abroad experience.

> To help reduce a hurdle for not having the work experience? … Again from a cultural perspective, just the networking outside their comfort group. So the domestic students, I'll mention clubs. With the international students, I'll talk about the specific clubs and what are your interests, kind of target them, "Go talk to so-and-so"…So a bit less with domestic, a bit more pushing or prodding with international students. (WIL Coordinator/Academic focus group, Canada)

In response to the challenge of finding placements for international students, a Canadian WIL coordinator discussed their strategy of reaching out to employers who themselves had been international students as a possible solution to this challenge. According to the WIL coordinator, these employers were more likely to empathise with the challenges faced by international students and offer them opportunities.

3.6.3 Geographic Location

The geographic location was noted as another challenge in both the Australian and Canadian case studies. With growing numbers of students participating in WIL, the likelihood of students needing to travel far afield for their placements also increases. In the Canadian case study, it is sometimes a requirement to relocate for a WIL placement as was the experience of this student:

> The thing is if you want a job and never had a job and you really want the experience, you should probably let go of Victoria and go somewhere far. So in my case, I got the job, I knew it was an hour's flight away, it's not a big deal. I'll go there…it'll be cheap, I meet other people. (International student focus group, Canada)

In the Australian case study, students from certain discipline areas such as engineering or food science are more likely to be placed in workplaces on the city outskirts where public transport is not always an option as noted by this Australian lecturer:

> A lot of industries are located in industrial estates. So the students have to be able to drive themselves to these places because transport is a problem. (WIL coordinator/academic focus group, Australia)

The challenges associated with participating in a WIL experience further afield relate to previous discussions of how individual students' disposition and agency

impact on their experiences as international students. While some students may consider the prospect of travelling to a new city to participate in a WIL placement *not a big deal* or even an adventure, for other students this could result in additional personal and financial stress.

3.6.4 Employer Attitudes

In the Australian case study, some students spoke of international experience not being recognised or valued by Australian employers. While the Australian government extolls the importance of boosting knowledge of Asian culture, language and business practices and creating and fostering links with the Asian region (Henry 2015), many employers still emphasise the need for local work experience, as was the experience of this international student studying information technology in Australia:

> I will have real world experience and most of the employers in Australia what they want from an international student is Australian experience. Even after ten years of experience in India you have to start from scratch in Australia. (International student focus group, Australia)

The findings of this study echo the findings of other studies suggesting a preference among employers for local students due to concerns surrounding language and culture as well as visa practicalities (Blackmore et al. 2014; Desai-Trilokekar et al. 2016). This Canadian WIL coordinator describes the hesitancy among employers to take on international students:

> Key factor I would say is just not having any kind of work experience. So again, it probably impacts the international students more so than the domestic students. They're an unknown entity and I don't see a lot of companies just taking that extra step to say, "I'm going to take the international student over the unknown domestic student." They'll take the unknown domestic student first. (WIL Coordinator/Academic focus group, Canada)

In the Australian case study, one WIL academic suggested that discrimination against international students was prevalent in the engineering profession in Australia and acts as a key barrier to WIL:

> The general xenophobic mode, I guess, particularly in the engineering industry. (WIL coordinator/academic focus group, Australia)

Workplace discrimination was also raised in relation to students' names and how having a non-English name impacted on students' success in the workplace. The interviews suggested that international students experienced discrimination in the Canadian workplace and that Canadian employers preferred to recruit Canadian students.

While employers may be slow to recognise the benefits of hiring an international graduate, the international students interviewed in this study were often quick to point out that the benefits of WIL are not only for the individual students. As many Australian and Canadian companies seek to expand and deepen their connections with Asia, knowledge of Asian culture and business practices is critical, along with personal relationships and connections (AUSCAN Forum 2015).

3.6.5 Managing Expectations

Managing the expectations of international students was also identified as a challenge by WIL coordinators in both Canada and Australia. That is, the very dispositions that led students to aspire to be educated internationally had to be modified and adjusted to accommodate the conditions of the Australian and Canadian workplace. This finding is echoed in other research suggesting that unrealistic expectations are a barrier to graduates' success in the labour market (Patton 2009; UNESCO 2012). In this study, WIL academics and staff reported that some international students may have unrealistic expectations about the type of work they will do as part of a placement. Other students may not appreciate their role in both procuring and preparing for placements. As noted by this WIL coordinator in Canada, staff must learn to manage the expectations of students from certain cultural backgrounds in order to ensure successful WIL placements:

> I have quite a few Nigerian students that I work with, and for that particular group the expectation is quite different. They're coming from extremely wealthy families in order to be here… and their expectations are far above and beyond. (WIL Coordinator/academic focus group, Canada)

The WIL experience can also be a reality check and horizon expander for the students. The experience provides students with the opportunity to test drive their chosen profession and, in some cases, leads students to change course or revise their career goals. One WIL coordinator stated:

> I think maybe as well just realising what the reality, what accounting is really. They might have a picture in their head of what they're going to be. I remember one student saying, "Oh I hate doing spreadsheets." I said, "Well you're an accountant, you're going to be doing those for the rest of your life, so get used to it." But, yeah she thought she'd be speaking to clients and you know so it's dispelling some of the myths. (WIL Coordinator/academic focus group, Australia)

3.7 Conclusion

The findings of this study add weight to a growing body of literature that explores the growing importance of work experience among international students. In the global labour market, a credential no longer guarantees employment. Graduates must also demonstrate a set of personal aptitudes and capabilities valued by employers. For employers, exposure to the workplace is considered a sign that graduates are motivated and more likely to be *work ready* (Blackmore et al. 2014; Desai-Trilokekar et al. 2016). The findings concur with other studies that emphasise the importance of understanding the subtler rules and expectations governing the local labour market around different cultural dispositions and social fields. They also confirm previously identified links between levels of linguistic capital, in this case English language proficiency, prior to entering Australia and the perception of employability

(Birrell and Healy 2008; Arkoudis et al. 2009; Blackmore et al. 2014). Low levels of English linguistic competence act as a barrier to active participation in the host country local community and the development of critical social networks and desirable forms of capital that may enhance students' professional habitus.

For universities, the implication is that international students could benefit from additional support such as having additional English language support, more encouragement to obtain additional experiences to strengthen their resumes and cultural training to help ease their transition to the workplace. Importantly, in an increasingly global workplace, domestic and international students are likely to benefit from cross-cultural training, exposing students to differences in workplace and expectations and etiquette across cultures (McRae and Ramji 2011). Limited local networks are a significant disadvantage to international students seeking work placements. While international students need to be encouraged to expand their local networks, institutions must also factor in the resource implications of the additional time and effort required to both support and secure placements for these students. The students themselves identified the power of learning from successful peers and role models in the employer community (McRae 2015).

There is significant scope to work with employers in order to promote the many benefits associated with a culturally diverse workforce (Smith 2016). While employers often espouse the advantages associated with a diverse workforce, there are indications that many are inclined to gravitate towards the familiar (Blackmore et al. 2014). Studies show that Asian talent regularly experiences bias and stereotyping, including about their cultural identity, leadership capability and English proficiency, with many organisations failing to leverage workforce cultural diversity to better service clients, particularly Asian markets (DCA 2014). Finally, it should be remembered that each student and culture have their own unique characteristics, so that assumptions about challenges should always be checked.

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Chapter 4
International Students, Inclusion and Professional Field Placements

Gai Harrison and Kathleen Felton

4.1 Introduction

Inclusive education is now a well-established agenda in higher education with increasing attention being given to how its scope may be extended to international students (Caruana and Ploner 2010; Leask and Carroll 2011; Marginson 2012; Stevenson 2014). However, educators have focused predominantly on how inclusivity can be enacted in the university environment rather than how it translates to professional field placement programmes. In light of this oversight, the purpose of this chapter is to examine how field placements for international students in the social and behavioural sciences can be made more inclusive.

For the purposes of this chapter, the term field placement is used to refer to the work-based learning component of professional degrees in the social and behavioural sciences, namely, social work, human services, psychology, counselling and education. In Australia, increasing numbers of international students are enrolling in these professional degrees (Harrison and Felton 2013). These students undertake much of their learning outside the academy in hospitals, health services, welfare agencies, schools and non-governmental organisations. University-based field education staff oversee these students' learning on placement and are tasked with sourcing placements. However, a growing body of research indicates a reluctance on the part of Australian workplaces to host international students whose cultural and linguistic differences are viewed as potentially problematic in the workplace (Harrison and Felton 2013; Orrell 2011; Patrick et al. 2008). Accordingly, access to work-based placements for international students has been identified as a key concern by the International

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Education Association of Australia (Gribble 2014). This situation is compounded by a shortage of field placements in many professional degree programmes across Australia fuelled by increased student enrolments (Patrick et al. 2008).

In addition to the problems experienced by international students in accessing field placements, as new migrants they often lack the taken-for-granted knowledge that domestic students have that enables them to adjust more readily to the workplace. For example, trying to decipher unwritten rules about how to dress, how to talk and how to behave in the workplace can be particularly stressful for international students who are unfamiliar with the workplace culture (Harrison and Ip 2013). For those students who use English as an additional language (EAL), these challenges may be compounded by communication difficulties (Arkoudis et al. 2012). In recognition of these challenges faced by international students, the discussion that follows examines how concepts from the literature on inclusion can be applied to the field placement.

The remainder of the chapter is structured as follows. First, we provide an overview of what constitutes inclusive education. Next, we examine the relevance of inclusion for field placements, as well as some of the tensions inherent to trying to transplant an inclusive ethos to the field. In the final part of the chapter, we outline a set of principles for inclusive field education and consider the implications of these principles for practice. Although this chapter focuses on the Australian context of professional field placements in the social and behavioural sciences, we suggest that many international students are likely to face similar issues when they embark on placement in a new country. Hence, the ideas presented in this chapter for facilitating inclusive placements may resonate with educators in other disciplines and contexts.

4.2 Inclusive Education

Although inclusive education has been defined in a range of ways and is equally context dependent, most definitions as they pertain to higher education encompass the core values of equity, participation, human rights and valuing difference (Gidley et al. 2010; Hardy and Woodcock 2015; Hockings 2010; Waitoller and Artiles 2013). In contrast to the idea of integration where students are expected to adapt to existing practices, inclusive approaches to education entail systemic change and recognise the need to proactively plan for all students' educational needs and entitlements. In this sense, inclusion encompasses much more than just avoiding discrimination and necessitates the affirmation of students' identities to ensure that this diversity is reflected in the curriculum (Caruana and Ploner 2010).

Inclusion conjures up the image of a centre and periphery, where the centre—or the mainstream practices of an institution—represents the potential zone of exclusion. The task of educators who endorse inclusion is to make explicit how the centre operates as the unquestioned norm with its attendant operations of power and privilege which exclude or stigmatise certain social groups (Mac Ruairc 2013). In other words, what is considered to be normal and taken for granted is subject to a process of criti-

cal analysis. This entails identifying and scrutinising "the normative assumptions that lead us to think we can even talk of including" (Mac Ruaic 2013, p. 13).

Other writers refer to degrees of social inclusion, which are informed by different ideological stances. For example, the view that inclusion signifies *access* is underpinned by a neoliberal ideology that adopts a deficit view of students and aims to increase student numbers but requires no real reconfiguration of existing institutional practices (Gidley et al. 2010). *Participation* signifies a greater degree of inclusion that is informed by the ideology of social justice, while *success* represents the ultimate degree of inclusion and is equated with empowerment and maximising human potential (Gidley et al. 2010). Waitoller and Artiles (2013) draw on Nancy Fraser's work on justice to put forward a three-dimensional view of inclusion that encompasses a fairer *redistribution* of resources and access to learning opportunities, the positive *recognition* of students' differences as evidenced by their incorporation into the curriculum and an ensurance that students have avenues of *representation* to voice their concerns and proposed solutions. However, higher education in Australia has not moved much beyond *inclusion as access* when it comes to students at risk of social exclusion (Gidley et al. 2010), a situation which is mirrored in other countries such as Wales and England (Caruana and Ploner 2010).

Inclusive education has evolved from a focus on the entitlements of students with a disability to a broader agenda encompassing a range of differences such as gender, race, religion and socioeconomic status. In other words, inclusive education is targeted at students who are perceived as different or those who are from "non-dominant groups" (Waitoller and Artiles 2013, p. 321). Accordingly, the inclusive education agenda has been extended to international students whose perceived differences heighten their risk of social exclusion both inside and outside the classroom (Australian Federation of International Students 2010; Caruana and Ploner 2010; Leask and Carroll 2011). As Marginson (2012) points out, these students are commonly ascribed *outsider status* in higher education.

In recent years, recognition has been given to the complex interplay of different social divisions in students' lives rather than seeing their identities as one-dimensional and fixed. In this regard, intersectionality theory has been seen as a valuable tool to assist educators move beyond boxing students into fixed categories when conceptualising inclusion (Waitoller and Artiles 2013). However, while more contemporary literature tends to highlight the diversity of international students, a deficit view of some international students is still apparent in the academy and is similarly evident in many workplaces where students complete their field placements (Tran and Vu 2016). This deficit view is especially the case for workers and students who use English as an additional language, have a discernible accent that is perceived as *different*, and are from an Asian or Middle Eastern background (Lippi-Green 2012).

A large body of literature has highlighted how in immigration settings, such as Australia, the United States and Canada, a nonmainstream accent may compromise employment (see Harrison 2014). In addition, research suggests that a combination of accent and an ethnically distinct name can create unfavourable impressions in the minds of employers (Segrest Purkiss et al. 2006). Discrimination on the basis of

ethnicity or race in the Australian labour market is now well recognised, so it is plausible that these politics will similarly pervade the work placement. For example, Tran and Vu (2016, p. 205) have highlighted the discriminatory effects of stereotyping international students who come to Australia as *migration hunters*. In recognition of the potential for difference to be viewed in a negative light in the workplace, the next section explores the relevance of an inclusive agenda for work-based learning. In this section we draw on findings from a needs analysis conducted as part of an Australian Office for Learning and Teaching (OLT) project on inclusive field education for international students (Harrison and Felton 2013). This needs analysis was informed by a literature review on inclusive education and interviews with key stakeholders in field placement education, including international students, field education staff, equity officers and professionals who supervise students on placement in southeast Queensland.

4.3 Extending Inclusion to Work-Based Placements

The challenges of both sourcing and maintaining professional field placements for international students are well documented (Felton and Harrison 2016; Harrison and Felton 2013; Orrell 2011; Patrick et al. 2008). Human services agencies and schools may be reluctant to host international students due to an assumption that they will not *fit in* or because they have concerns about their language proficiency. Alternatively, supervisors may feel ill equipped to supervise international students because they perceive them to have additional needs to those of local students. In some cases prejudicial attitudes on the part of managers and staff pose additional barriers. As indicated earlier, a shortage of field placements in many professional disciplines in the face of rising student enrolments has added to the pressure experienced by university-based staff in locating suitable placements for students. Academic staff also report that they lack the time and resources necessary to source quality field placements (Patrick et al. 2008).

Despite these concerns, the issue of access to work placements for international students has received minimal attention in Australia (Orrell 2011). Research indicates that many international students are frustrated by their limited access to work placements (Gribble 2014; Patrick et al. 2008). Our research with academics and field education staff tasked with sourcing field placements for international students similarly suggests that many workplaces are not open to accepting international students or are reluctant to host them. These agencies often express concerns about the English proficiency of international students. In their eyes, international students are likely to be *more work* as the following respondent who coordinates placements for social work students for a large metropolitan university explains: “They [international students] are too hard, they take too much time, we can’t trust them with clients, they can’t speak the language—the issue seems to be…primarily around language and also about written ability depending on the agency” (Harrison and Felton 2013, p. 24).

While the level of English proficiency for some EAL students may be a legitimate concern, other students have noted experiences of covert language-based discrimination when seeking placements (Sawir 2008). Resistance to placing international students is also fuelled by the belief that they are a poor investment for the workplace, underpinned by the unfounded assumption that they will leave Australia and return to their home countries after graduation (Tran and Vu 2016). This is apparent in the following comment by a programme coordinator reflecting on why it is difficult to place international students:

> I guess you know the myths that float around out there in the placement world about international students. Why would we train [them], why would we invest putting all of our resources in [them] when they're probably just going back home? (Harrison and Felton 2013, p. 21)

Although most higher education institutions in Australia have endorsed equity and diversity policies to ensure the fair treatment of students, these policies do not necessarily carry influence in the field. Our needs analysis revealed that educators do not have a lot of control over what happens to students once they enter the workplace. Students on field placements are usually supervised by professionals who work in organisations that have their own agendas, policies and work practices (Harrison and Felton 2013). In these contexts, compliance with the agency's norms is expected, reflecting a model of assimilation which is not necessarily in accord with the philosophy of inclusion. This is not to deny that individual supervisors do try to accommodate the needs of international students while also recognising what they may be able to contribute to the workplace. However, although many organisations have written policies that affirm the value of difference and a globalised workforce, there is often a gulf between the policy rhetoric and what happens on a day-to-day level in the workplace (Noon 2007).

Conceivably, the linguistic and cultural knowledge and skills of international students could be viewed as an asset for many organisations that have developed diversity policies. Nonetheless, racial and language-based discrimination is still pronounced in the labour market, and diversity initiatives have been criticised for their failure to address covert discriminatory practices in the workplace or challenge privilege (Noon 2007). Moreover, managers tend to value workers' differences for strategic purposes, only according them value when they are seen as meeting organisational goals. In this way, equity agendas are sidelined (Ogbanna and Harris 2006). For international students, this superficial adoption of diversity policies in the workplace means that they may need to relinquish their own cultural and language identity to some degree to fit in with the dominant workplace culture.

The possession of certain types of cultural capital is critical to successfully navigating higher education (Caruana and Ploner 2010), which includes navigating the workplace while on field placement. This cultural capital constitutes taken-for-granted knowledge, skills and behaviours or, put simply, a familiarity with how things are done (Bourdieu 1986, pp. 243–248). However, a key finding from our needs analysis was that international students do not necessarily know what kinds of cultural capital are valued in the workplace as social conventions and workplace norms constitute unwritten rules. Moreover, because the acquisition of cultural cap-

ital occurs at an unconscious level, students may not be aware of what it is they need to know or do in order to perform to the standard expected of them on placement. Developing this type of familiarity with the workplace culture poses further challenges for those students who have been in the country for only a short period of time (Harrison and Felton 2013). Although some universities do offer placement preparation programmes for international students, the onus is still on the student to adjust to the workplace rather than addressing systemic barriers to inclusion.

The previous discussion highlights some of the tensions and challenges surrounding developing inclusive field placements for international students. This includes the difficult balancing act of making sure that students are equipped with the necessary cultural capital to succeed on placement while at the same time ensuring that undue pressure is not placed on them to assimilate to the workplace. While we acknowledge that students must, do a degree, adapt to the workplace, this should not occur at the expense of compromising their learning or setting them up to fail. Inclusive education necessitates attending to both organisational and individual factors to optimise students' learning (Hockings 2010).

Crucially, the needs analysis we conducted revealed that without institutional backing inclusive field education is unlikely to become a reality. Other findings highlighted the importance of the following: addressing the current shortage of field placements in the human services to ensure equitable access to field placements, focusing on sustainable change rather than ad hoc initiatives to promote inclusion and involving all stakeholders in the process, viewing the field placement within the context of the whole student trajectory, providing opportunities for students to further develop their language skills while on field placement and ensuring greater recognition and accurate representation of international students in the public domain.

The principles of inclusive education subsequently developed from this needs analysis were developed in consultation with an expert reference group comprising an expert on inclusive education, a university equity officer, academics involved in field education, field placement supervisors and international students who had completed placement. In addition to outlining these principles, we provide examples of how they may be translated into practice. However, due to the diversity of professional degrees and field placements, the eight principles outlined below need to be adapted to fit the unique needs of specific field placement contexts.

4.4 Principles of Inclusive Education

- Build placement capacity to promote equitable access to field placements.
- Normalise and affirm the presence of international students.
- Adopt a coordinated approach that is inclusive of all stakeholders in field placements.
- Adopt a developmental approach to preparing students for field placement that targets critical stages of the student trajectory.

- Recognise students' ascribed status as *international students* while acknowledging their individuality.
- Promote students' meaningful participation in professional communities of practice.
- Embed language and communicative competence into the curriculum within both classroom and placement settings.
- Involve international students in initiatives aimed at promoting inclusion.

Fundamental to enabling and consolidating these eight principles is the overarching principle of *institutional commitment to inclusive field placement experiences*, which is discussed in the next section.

4.4.1 Institutional Commitment

A precondition for sustainable inclusive education is institutional commitment to the principles of equity and fairness. It is the responsibility of higher education institutions to review and, if necessary, reform their governance, practices and curricula to ensure that inclusion is embedded in all aspects of the organisation's operations (Caruana and Ploner 2010). As a first step, universities need to develop a common understanding and vision of inclusion and identify actions to achieve that vision (Waitoller and Artiles 2013). In the case of field education, this could entail management appointing a lead person to champion inclusive field placements for students and ensuring that field education is appropriately resourced. One-off initiatives are not enough to mount an effective response to engaging international students in a meaningful manner in field placements. As highlighted by Mac Ruairc (2013, p. 12), "[t]inkering at the edges produces little real change".

Arguably, maintaining a commitment to inclusive education presents a challenge for educators in the contemporary marketised environment where higher education is conceptualised as a consumer good. As public funding dries up, international students' tuition fees are seen as an important avenue of funding, with considerable export potential. However, if economic agendas are allowed to determine what inclusive education looks like, the risk is that it will be pared back to the basics rather than the meaningful recognition of students' rights and entitlements (Hardy and Woodcock 2015). Given these contemporary economic currents, it will be important for those educators tasked with promoting inclusion to continually highlight its benefits for both students and universities and make sure that inclusion has a permanent place on the institution's agenda. For students, these benefits include a better quality learning experience. For universities, potential outcomes include enhanced reputation and credibility with both existing and prospective international students (Caruana and Ploner 2010).

4.4.2 Build Placement Capacity to Promote Equitable Access to Field Placements

A level playing field for students is a prerequisite for meaningful inclusion (Gidley et al. 2010). There is an urgent need to forge university-industry partnerships and build placement capacity across a number of professional degree programmes in order to address a shortage of field placements in the health and human services sectors (Patrick et al. 2008). Notably, the pressure experienced by university staff to source appropriate placements in a competitive market compromises their ability to provide equitable access to placements for international students. Relying on the goodwill of host agencies to place students while also expecting them to ensure a quality learning experience for students is a tall ask. Educators need to be proactive in maintaining collaborative working relationships with placement providers in order to ensure that they continue to place students and, where possible, expand placement capacity. In order to do this, universities need to adequately resource their field education staff so that they can foster sustainable partnerships with host agencies (Orrell 2011). This is consistent with the inclusive principle of a fairer redistribution of resources to increase access to learning opportunities for groups at risk of exclusion (Waitoller and Artiles 2013).

In addition to building placement capacity, higher education institutions need to develop strategies to address barriers such as workplace discrimination that prevent students from obtaining placements or compromises their learning while on placement. In order to address the resistance on the part of some organisations to placing international students, it is necessary to first identify what concerns staff have about hosting these students. Conceivably, some of these concerns will relate to language proficiency or the belief that international students have particular needs that will require staff to devote more time to supporting these students (Gribble 2014). In these cases, it will be important to offer additional assistance and resources to these agencies and the students concerned. However, it is also possible that this resistance is fuelled by prejudicial attitudes and institutional barriers to inclusion that necessitate a more targeted approach to raising consciousness of workplace discrimination and social exclusion. Although many workplaces do have diversity and equity policies in place, these are not always adhered to or, alternatively, enacted in a superficial fashion (Noon 2007). In those placement agencies where a *deficit view* of international students has taken hold, educators may need to consult with equity staff to develop initiatives to promote a more positive understanding of difference and workforce diversity.

4.4.3 Normalise and Affirm the Presence of International Students

Internationalisation is now a well-established trend in higher education and, because of their sizable presence, international students are one of the most visible emblems of this trend. In 2014 approximately one in five students enrolled in Australian universities came from overseas, with most of these students coming from Asian countries (Australian government 2015). Nonetheless, it is questionable whether the placement agencies that host students are aware of this demographic or fully appreciate the reality of an internationalised higher education system.

Inclusion entails the positive recognition of students' differences (Waitoller and Artiles 2013). Placement providers need to be made aware that a diverse student population is the norm now and that international students are not the *exceptional cases* but are a core part of the student population (Caruana and Ploner 2010). As indicated in the previous section, because these students are sometimes viewed in a negative light, educators may need to work on attitudinal change in the workplace. One way of doing this is highlight the realities of a globalised and mobile workforce while also alerting placement providers to the positive contributions international students can make to the workplace (Felton and Harrison 2016).

Despite placing considerable emphasis on internationalising the curriculum, Australian universities have yet to expand the internationalisation agenda to field placements. In light of this omission, it is critical that those staff charged with promoting internationalisation develop a plan and strategies for extending this agenda to work-based learning and make a case to university management for the resources required to implement these strategies.

4.4.4 Adopt a Coordinated Approach that Is Inclusive of All Stakeholders in Field Placements

In order to facilitate inclusive field placements for international students, it is necessary to involve all relevant stakeholders and recognise their respective roles in supporting work-based learning (Gribble et al. 2015). These stakeholders include university-based staff who source and facilitate placements, professionals located in the field who supervise students and oversee their work, professional accreditation bodies that prescribe the learning that must take place on placement and students. Notably, these stakeholders' agendas can be quite different, particularly around expectations of students, which in turn can produce tensions in these relationships. On the other hand, international students themselves may have unrealistic expectations of field placement (Gribble et al. 2015). In these instances, universities may need to devote considerable effort and time to working with all relevant stakeholders to address these different expectations.

Stakeholders need to work together in such a way that any initiatives undertaken to build placement capacity and promote inclusion will have *buy in* and are sustainable. Historically, most initiatives developed to assist international students successfully negotiate learning on placement have focused on student preparation (Harrison and Ip 2013). These preparation programmes have been favourably received, but they put the onus on students to *fit in* with existing structures, which is not necessarily congruent with an inclusive ethos (Hockings 2010). While preparation programmes do have their place, it is equally important for universities to build placement providers' awareness of their role in providing inclusive placements to ensure that international students are not viewed as *the problem*. Universities need to encourage all stakeholders to critically reflect on their *normative assumptions* (Mac Ruaic 2013, p. 13) about the field placement and identify what they could do differently to facilitate inclusive placements for international students.

4.4.5 Adopt a Developmental Approach to Preparing Students for Field Placement That Targets Critical Stages of the Student Trajectory

International students enter Australia as temporary migrants and may experience a range of adjustment issues as well as acculturative stress, which in turn can impede their learning and preparation for placement. For these reasons, it is important to commence student preparation early. Two of the critical stages in the international student life cycle are predeparture and orientation (Lawson 2012). In order to adequately prepare students for placement, ideally a developmental approach should be adopted that commences prior to entering the country and continues for the duration of their studies. The field placement may be an unfamiliar concept for many students, and providing clear information about this practical component of their studies prior to departure may assist students adequately prepare for the experience. International students who have completed a placement may also be able to offer new students *insider information* on how field placement works and offer suggestions on the type of preparation students can engage in prior to departure.

The first semester of study is another critical stage in the international student trajectory (Yan and Sendall 2016), and providing intensive support at this point is likely to benefit those students who are studying professional degrees that include a field placement. For those students who are required to complete multiple placements, making the initial transition from the classroom to the workplace is often the most difficult. Commonly voiced concerns are that students do not understand the operations of the workplace and what is expected of them or how they should relate to their supervisors or other workers (Harrison and Ip 2013). For these reasons, international students may take more time to acculturate to the workplace, which may impede their learning on placement. Accordingly, early preparation for the first placement is crucial (Gribble et al. 2015). This could include agency visits to allow

exposure to the workplace or offering students the option of shadowing workers so that they have a better feel for the type of work they do.

Helping students prepare for exiting their studies marks the final critical stage of the student trajectory. Success is a meaningful indicator of inclusion (Gidley et al. 2010), and for many international graduates success is equated with securing employment in their chosen field of study. However, concerns have been expressed about the poor employment outcomes for international graduates in Australia, especially those who are EAL speakers (Gribble 2014). In order to ensure their work readiness, students need to be assisted to make the transition to paid employment. On a practical level, this could involve offering workshops on writing job applications and managing job interviews as well as providing forums for students to network with employers.

4.4.6 Recognise Students' Ascribed Status as International Students While Acknowledging Their Individuality

Categorising students as either *international* or *domestic* runs the risk of masking the diversity inherent to each group. Students' experiences of placement will be qualitatively different, so there is a danger inherent to assuming that collectively, as a group, international students will have the same needs (Barton et al. 2015). As highlighted earlier, the interplay of different identity markers shapes students' unique identities. Factors such as age, gender, ethnicity, religion, financial status and (dis)ability intersect in different ways, and, in this regard, it is important to recognise the individuality and fluidity of students' identities. This fluidity is exemplified by the simultaneous operation of privilege and disadvantage. For example, a student may be viewed as privileged because she has the financial resources to study at an overseas university but subsequently experience racial discrimination and marginalisation while on field placement.

Notably, minimal attention has been focused on the needs of international students with a disability or how religious affiliation impacts on international students' study experiences (Stevenson 2014; Supple and Abgenyega 2011). The needs of international students tend to be conflated with *culture*, which can then mask issues such as disability or religion. Hence, it is important to assess each student's situation holistically when planning strategies to ensure an inclusive placement. Formulaic *one size fits all* approaches to promoting inclusion are rarely effective and are not in accord with the underpinning philosophy of inclusion, which is to build on each student's needs and situation (Hockings 2010).

While it is necessary to see each student's identity as unique, it is also important to recognise what it means to be ascribed the status of *international student*. International students do not enjoy the same rights and entitlements as domestic students because they are positioned as temporary residents or *non-citizens* (Robertson 2013). In light of this, educators need to advocate for the rights of inter-

national students to ensure an inclusive learning experience (Marginson 2012). Full-fee-paying foreign students pay substantially higher fees than domestic students, and yet research indicates that they have fewer placement options open to them because of a reluctance on the part of placement agencies to host them (Gribble 2014). Hence, drawing attention to international students as a group with common needs is useful for strategic purposes. Subscribing to a group identity also enables international students to take collective action on their own behalf to improve their educational experiences and outcomes.

4.4.7 Promote Students' Meaningful Participation in Communities of Practice

Meaningful participation is a core aspect of inclusive education (Gidley et al. 2010). A community of practice framework is useful for conceptualising inclusion because it highlights the role of social participation as a crucial mechanism for learning. According to this theory, the workplace operates as a community of practice, where the student as newcomer is gradually socialised into becoming a full member of the professional group (Wenger 2000). Meaningful learning takes place only after students are granted legitimacy as potential members of the community (Arkoudis et al. 2012). Peripheral forms of participation allow the student to connect with and learn about practice, eventually making the transition from novice to core member of the professional group which in turn engenders a sense of belonging.

Wenger (2000) points out that not all communities of practice function effectively, with some ridden by racism or poor practice. On other occasions individuals may be denied membership of the community or experience marginalisation. The preceding discussion demonstrated how this has similarly been the experience of some international students who have been denied the opportunity to participate in the community of practice because of placement agencies' reluctance to host them. Accordingly, the challenge for educators working with students at risk of marginalisation is to create adequate opportunities for participation on placement and foster an inclusive community of practice. One way of doing this is to assist practitioners to develop a more global outlook on their professional community and to build their awareness of the reality of a transnational workforce as well as the mutual learning that can occur between staff and international students on placement.

4.4.8 Embed Language and Communicative Competence into the Curriculum in Both the Classroom and Field Placement

Language proficiency is a critical factor in both educational and employment outcomes for international EAL students (Arkoudis et al. 2012). However, many EAL students discover after arriving in Australia that their language abilities are regarded in a deficit light, despite being assessed as meeting the English language prerequisites for their respective programmes. Many of these students face the additional challenge of making the shift from a language learner to a language user (Liu 2012). Both educators and field-based supervisors have flagged the English proficiency of international EAL students as a significant concern that can impede their performance on placement or even prevent them from getting placements (Gribble et al. 2015). While on placement students also need to acquire the language conventions used in the day-to-day work. These distinct ways of using language are particularly pronounced in medical settings, but are equally the case in talk-focused professions such as social work, teaching and counselling (Harrison and Felton 2013).

In accordance with an inclusive approach, international EAL students need to be offered tailored language assistance to ensure that they are *placement ready* and have the communication and language skills required for the workplace after graduation. In order to optimise EAL students' chances of succeeding on placement, they should be provided with the opportunity to develop their language skills in the context of their particular discipline rather than offered general language assistance (Murray 2012). Ideally, a developmental model of English language support should be offered to students that commences at entry and continues for the duration of their studies (Arkoudis et al. 2012). Raising the language awareness of field supervisors who have a limited understanding of the issues faced by EAL students is an additional strategy that can be employed to promote inclusive placements.

4.4.9 Involve International Student in Consultation, Planning and Monitoring Initiatives

International students are often an untapped source of expertise on their own learning needs and should be actively involved in developing and evaluating strategies aimed at promoting inclusive work placements. Establishing forums for them to articulate their learning needs is a first step in ensuring their involvement and is consistent with the inclusive principle of representation (Waitoller and Artiles 2013). Moreover, those students who have completed work-based placements can offer important insights into what helped or hindered their participation and performance on placement.

On a practical level, students can be invited to act as consultants and assist in planning and overseeing local initiatives aimed at making field placements more

responsive to their needs. In our own case, international students were valued members of the reference group that guided our project on inclusive field education (Harrison and Felton 2013). They conducted their own survey on students' experiences of placement and provided feedback on the model of inclusive education that we developed. In this regard, the agency of international students should not be underestimated as well as their ability to act on a collective level to articulate their concerns and potential solutions. Viewing international students as activist citizens also challenges the pervasive view of these students as victims, which can ultimately disempower and further marginalise them (Robertson 2013).

4.5 Conclusion and Implications

The eight principles outlined in the preceding section represent a multifaceted approach to promoting inclusion that incorporates the core tenets of equity, participation, human rights and valuing difference, while also recognising the need for systemic change (Hockings 2010). Critically, they recognise the importance of international students having appropriate avenues of *representation* to voice their concerns, the positive *recognition* of their identities and their right to fair access to field placement learning opportunities via the *redistribution* of resources (Waitoller and Artiles 2013). Translating these principles into practice first requires inclusion to be embedded at the institutional level so that it infuses all aspects of the university's operations and structures. This is crucial to ensuring that interventions aimed at making field education inclusive for international students are meaningful and sustainable.

Ultimately, the utility of these principles for inclusive field placements will depend on how they are interpreted and applied in practice. In this regard, further research is needed that examines their applicability to a range of professional disciplines and sites. We suggest that the impact of any interventions derived from these principles needs to be measured in terms of meaningful outcomes for international students. Such outcomes include not only student satisfaction with placement experiences but also tangible measures of inclusion such as equitable access to field placements. As indicated earlier in this chapter, success, or maximising human potential, is the most meaningful measure of inclusion (Gidley et al. 2010). For international students, success is commonly equated with employment in their professional field, which represents a return on their investment in higher education. Yet, research indicates that many international graduates are not satisfied with either their employment outcomes or the opportunities provided to them to gain work experience while studying (Gribble 2014; Tran and Vu 2016).

International students report that they value work placements that will enhance their employability (Lawson 2012). Notably, the higher education sector in Australia similarly places considerable importance on ensuring that graduates are *work ready* and view work placements as a key route to shoring up students' employment prospects (Gribble 2014). Many universities also promote the skilled migrant pathway as a "selling point" to prospective international students who wish to remain in

Australia and work after they complete their studies (Robertson 2013, p. 13). We suggest that these agendas can be used strategically by educators to advocate for additional resources for building placement capacity for international students to improve their employment prospects. Monitoring placement and employment outcomes for international students and bringing this information to the attention of university managers is one way of making a case for institutional support to develop inclusive field placements.

One of the main challenges facing those who champion inclusive education is the fiscal pressures faced by universities, which has led to providers favouring a business model of higher education that shapes the type of education students now receive. Knight Abowitz (2016, p. 188) describes this as a crisis where "educational purposes and functions are subordinate to market pressures and logic" and educators have had to relinquish their control over the curriculum. In recognition of this challenge, it will be important for educators to continually remind administrators of their responsibilities to international students, which include providing appropriate learning opportunities that meet their needs. Highlighting the benefits that will accrue to both international students and the higher education institutions that host them is another way of strengthening the case for inclusive field placements. These benefits include students' increased satisfaction with their programmes of study, improved educational and employment outcomes and an inclusive university community.

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Chapter 5
Who Fails Whom? A Case Study Exploration of Factors Leading to Unsuccessful International Pre-service Teachers' Work Placements

Donna Tangen and Marilyn Campbell

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter we will explore the dynamics of partnerships as they occur in teacher education work-based placements (often called field experience) for international pre-service teachers. These partnerships have the potential to create both opportunities and barriers for these pre-service teachers to complete their field experiences successfully in schools. In this chapter we argue that the situated learning (Lave and Wenger 1991; Wenger 2008) that occurs for each member of the partnership is unique to that community; however, the lessons learned can be generalised to other similar situations. The chapter begins with an overview of situated learning as a theoretical framework. A series of four case studies of field experience partnerships will then be provided demonstrating how the concepts associated with situated learning can be used to gain a better understanding of how these relationships can help or hinder field experience placements for international students.

The essential purpose of field experience is to provide pre-service teachers with opportunities to observe and practice skills and knowledge essential to the teaching profession and provide them with opportunities to connect what they have learnt in their coursework with their learning in schools (Korthagen 2010). This learning can be enhanced when teacher training becomes a shared enterprise (Harlow and Cobb 2014) where all stakeholders (teacher educators, pre-service teachers, supervising teachers in schools) work towards a common outcome, which for pre-service teachers is completion of a successful field experience. However, not all pre-service teachers experience successful work placements. This chapter explores reasons that led to some international pre-service teachers "failing" field experience through the theoretical lens of situated learning.

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5.2 Situated Learning

Lave and Wenger's (1991) and Wenger's (2008) notion of situated learning within a community of practice describes learning as occurring in social settings where newcomers (e.g. international pre-service teachers) engage in the authentic activities of a particular community (e.g. schools). In this model workplace learning acts as a bridge between formal instructional learning (at university) and learning specific to a career pathway (the practicalities of how to be a teacher learned on field experience in schools). This kind of learning is described as learning occurring as social practice, referring to experiential learning that evolves through a pre-service teacher's engagement in the various practices of that particular community. In relation to experiential learning situated in schools, pre-service teachers take on the persona of being an *apprentice* to more knowledgeable and experienced teachers who have mastered what is required to work effectively in schools as teachers. The social aspects of this kind of learning depend on the characteristics of the division of labour in the school and the opportunities for learning to occur through the structure of work practices rather than through direct teaching.

Situatedness involves negotiated experiences which define who we are by our engagement in both the familiar and the unfamiliar as members of a community (Chapman and Pyvis 2005). Participation in a school community, therefore, can be either empowering or disempowering depending on the legitimacy of participation afforded to the pre-service teacher, particularly by their supervising teachers in the school. All knowledge has its roots in practical, socially constructed situations but not all socially constructed situations provide equal opportunities. Socially constructed situations inevitably involve power relationships. Thus the power of the supervising teacher can result in the pre-service teacher having a successful or unsuccessful field experience. In a study by Santoro's (1999) study, power was enacted by how the supervising teacher positioned the pre-service teachers in the class and in the school community as well as how much and what kind of access to the knowledge and practices of teaching the pre-service teachers were afforded. The pre-service teachers with a supportive, sharing supervising teacher gained positive feelings about being a participant in the school's community and in learning how to become a teacher. The pre-service teachers with an unsupportive supervising teacher felt discouraged and somewhat marginalised in their engagement within the school community.

As well as the influence of the supervising teacher, international pre-service teachers can struggle on field experience for many other reasons such as language and cultural barriers, including not understanding the culture and curriculum of schooling in Australia (Geer 2008; Han and Singh 2007; Spooner-Lane et al. 2009). This kind of misunderstanding is a form of culture shock that includes the many written and unwritten rules embedded in Australian school culture, including dress codes, norms of behaviour, beliefs, values, attitudes and prior knowledge of schooling (Buckworth et al. 2014). Not having grown up and completed their early schooling years in Australia, international pre-service teachers may struggle to understand

the subtle nuances of day-to-day teacher language and schooling practices. International pre-service teachers can be unfairly compared to their domestic colleagues who have an advantage over international pre-service in regard to field experience. Domestic students are likely to have greater local work-related knowledge having completed their schooling in Australia. Having an understanding of anticipated behaviours in their school placements allows domestic pre-service teachers to make better and more relevant connections between their university coursework and learning done on their placements (Orrell 2004). Without feelings of acceptance and inclusion in the school community, culturally and linguistically diverse pre-service teachers, which include international pre-service teachers, feel marginalised with little collaboration being established between them and their supervising teachers and other members of the school community (Iyer and Reece 2013).

In addition to the influence of the supervising teacher and the particular issues faced by international students, support from the academic institution is also critical for success in work-based learning (Smith et al. 2013). Higher education institutions have an obligation to provide quality work placement learning opportunities to international students (Crossman and Burdett 2012). While there is substantial research exploring field experience from the pre-service teachers' perspectives, what is less known is how the dynamic partnerships between international pre-service teachers and their supervising teachers and the universities work to support international pre-service teachers completing their work placements. The current study explored the dynamic relationships of four international pre-service teachers and proposed reasons why they failed their field experience in a series of case studies provided below.

5.3 A Series of Case Studies

This series of four case studies is part of a larger study of international pre-service teachers. These cases specifically explored reasons why international pre-service teachers did not have a successful work placement. It should be noted that while the focus of the case studies was on international pre-service teachers, some students were also included who had grown up and completed most of their schooling outside Australia but had attained permanent residency in Australia because they had completed the final 2 years of high school in Australia. These students were therefore classed as domestic students on their university transcripts and were accepted into university based on their high school graduation results in Australia. In comparison, a specific requirement for international pre-service teachers is that they must have a high IELTS score, indicating a high proficiency in English. The pre-service teachers who have permanent residency do not have to pass an IELTS test; however, many of these pre-service teachers show a similar lack of understanding of schooling in Australia and a less than ideal level of English language proficiency for teaching in Australian schools as do their international peers. This blanket kind of

classification does not address the situation that these so-called *domestic* students have many of the same difficulties as international pre-service teachers with English language and understanding the Australian school culture. By the same token, it cannot be taken for granted that all international students have limited English language proficiency. Students from New Zealand, Great Britain and Canada who apply for teacher education in Australia are all international students, but in general, their level of English language proficiency is of a high standard. For our research both the domestic and international pre-service teachers can be described as having adequate rather than high English language proficiency and middle to low levels of understanding of Australian schooling. Therefore, the four pre-service teachers are described as international students.

The project was granted ethical clearance both by the university ethics committee and by Education Queensland. After ethics was granted, both supervising teachers of pre-service teachers who had failed their field experience and the pre-service teachers themselves were contacted and invited to participate in the study. The main purpose of the study was to gain a better understanding of the dynamics of the partnership of the supervising teacher and the pre-service teachers during field experience to ascertain if there are patterns of behaviour that caused failure and, if identified early, what kind of support do international pre-service teachers at risk of failing practicum need.

5.4 Participants

All the pre-service teachers in the study attended the same Bachelor of Education course at the one university although two were studying to be early childhood/primary school teachers and two were studying to be secondary school teachers. There is a central administrative office at the university that places students in schools for field experience. Students rarely have a choice on where they are placed; therefore, there is no single process for assigning a pre-service teacher to a supervising teacher. The university places the pre-service teacher in a school, and the school determines in which classroom the pre-service teacher will be placed. These decisions are unique to each school site.

A purposive sampling technique was used to include four international or domestic students who were having an unsuccessful work placement together with their four supervising teachers. The details of the students and supervising teachers are shown in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1 Participants demographics

Pre-service teacher	Country of origin	Status	Supervising teacher	Years teaching	Teaching area
Mike	Taiwan	Domestic third year	Ann	3	Math/science high school
Wendy	Asia	Domestic fourth year	Beth	28	Early years
Gina	India	International grad dip	Kath	14	Early years
Matt	Philippines	International grad dip	Kylie	21	Drama: high school

5.5 Data Analysis

The research was completed as a qualitative case study using inductive thematic coding where patterns (themes) in the data were identified and analysed. With inductive analysis themes are not theory driven but are strongly linked to the data itself; this allows for coding of data without having to fit into pre-existing themes (Braun and Clarke 2008; Simons, 2009). The coding process began with open coding (also known as preliminary coding or provisional coding) which consisted of sorting units of meaning (words, phrases or sentences that indicated in some way subjects' way of thinking and/or behaviour patterns as a way of "exploring the general sense of the data") (Creswell 2012, p. 243). During this stage the researcher made notes of themes not explicitly sought out in the data. The data was entered onto a spreadsheet with the phrases or descriptions colour coded according to each theme. Three specific research questions guided analysis:

1. What is the role of the supervising teacher for field experience?
2. What is the role of the pre-service teacher for field experience?
3. What processes are in place for pre-service teachers failing field experience?

Each dyad (supervising teacher-pre-service teacher) was considered as an individual case before the data was collated and analysed into a large case. All participants have been given pseudonyms to protect their anonymity.

5.6 Findings

5.6.1 Case Study 1: Mike and Ann

Mike was a third-year domestic pre-service teacher from Taiwan who was completing a double degree in Applied Science and Education with the expectation of becoming a high school science teacher. He described he chose education as a career because he perceived it to be a *simple environment*:

> I started off training to be an engineer... I find that you had to think a lot…just a lot more. Education is just a simple environment. (Mike)

Mike's supervising teacher, Ann, was a third-year math and science teacher. This was her first experience supervising field experience. Ann, being new to the role, recalled what strategies worked for her as a pre-service teacher and applied these as much as possible to her supervisory role. These strategies included providing written feedback, reviewing lessons and discussing teaching in a general sense with Mike. She described that:

> You've got to be honest with them without being too harsh… and…also try and develop a relationship with that person because you've got them for like five weeks. (Ann)

Mike described that the supervising teacher was there to:

> Give advice and maybe step in when we are really in trouble. (Mike)

He thought that Ann was a real professional who gave him good advice, but he felt his status at the school was undermined when the supervising teacher introduced him to the class as a *student teacher*; Mike felt this lack of status (not being referred to as a *teacher*) contributed to the problems he had managing the behaviour in the class.

Mike revealed that he did not have a strong background understanding of schooling in Australia:

> …before I started I more expected…an old-style school, the rote teaching, pretty much what teachers said because I'm from Taiwan. Our school's run (on the military discipline). (Mike)

Mike's biggest challenge on field experience was classroom management. He described the students as *unruly*. He expected them to memorise concepts and did not feel well-prepared to deliver the more *energetic* lessons expected where he taught using a variety of strategies such as games and generally getting more student involvement:

> I have games planned but I just don't handle fun and the games…because back in Taiwan, my family expect me to memorise whole textbooks…

Because this was his experience of school, Mike did not feel that he had the *personality* to incorporate games, as he described, "they expect fun and games, I just don't know how…"

Ann described that a pre-service teacher needed to be prepared to do the work, be organised, proactive and ask for help when they need it and be able to take constructive criticism about their teaching. When asked to describe how Mike did not meet these expectations, she referred to her report where she cited that he had poor organisational skills so was not prepared for teaching each day. She attributed this in part to the fact that he also had a full-time job in a restaurant and would often fall asleep in class. She also described that he did not have a good understanding of schooling in Australia and would often refer to what he was used to back in Taiwan. His lack of high proficiency in English was also cited as a problem, particularly for writing on the whiteboard and worksheets that Mike handed out to the class.

When asked, what processes are in place for pre-service teachers failing field experience? Ann described that she contacted the university supervisor who came out to observe Mike teaching and:

> …he was basically cueing the whole lesson and after the lesson, he said, "yeah I could tell in the first five minutes that this is not gonna pass". (Ann)

Ann then began to reduce Mike's teaching load and modified the feedback she gave him as more prescriptive of what he had to do rather than asking him to reflect at a higher conceptual level about how his teaching went. Mike described that his university supervisor came out and talked with him and felt that his advice was helpful, but in the end felt that it was his own personality style that caused him to fail field experience because he was "not prepared for an unruly class".

5.6.2 Case Study 2: Wendy and Beth

Wendy was a fourth-year domestic pre-service teacher of Asian background who had been working in the childcare industry for over 16 years in several roles, one as a group leader. She was completing her third field experience placement in the Bachelor of Education in Early Years Education degree. Her supervising teacher, Beth, had 28 years teaching experience in the early years.

Beth described her role as a supervising teacher as being a mentor to guide, instruct and inspire pre-service teachers. She had pre-service teachers spend a considerable amount of time observing her classroom interaction before having them teach. Then, she provided feedback, both "positive and negative" with suggestions for improved teaching practices.

Wendy said that supervising teachers were there to provide support and guidance but not to "crucify a student for making a little mistake because, you know, no one is perfect". She also described that she valued having emotional support from her supervising teacher but did not feel that she received this from Beth:

> …I felt that, to me she should not be a supervising teacher because I didn't feel any emotional support. Because I felt that when the student [goes on prac] they should provide some emotional support. (Wendy)

Wendy went on to describe how she had felt supported in a previous field experience placement by a different supervising teacher and cited this as a main reason why the earlier placement had been successful. In her current field experience placement, she described that her supervising teacher was *critically assessing* her instead of *mentoring* her. She said that she felt frustrated because the supervising teacher constantly interrupted her lessons, correcting her oral and written language in front of the children. Wendy described that these interruptions left her feeling embarrassed as she tried to follow the guidelines and do as asked by her supervising teacher but never fully achieved Beth's expectations and did not know what she could do to improve:

> …the teachers make you feel this little; they don't appreciate how much work you do. (Wendy)

Beth described a *good* pre-service teacher as:

> …someone who has got a very keen attitude, who walks into the room and shows that they really want to be there and then, they're willing to listen to what you say, they watch what you model and then when they go off they take that all on board from their own experience plus what we're giving them and then they try and implement it. And then, at the end, this is probably the most important thing: they are willing to say to you what they think they did really well and what they need to improve on. (Beth)

While Wendy did exhibit some of these expected behaviours, Beth described some particular challenges for Wendy, in particular not having a strong command of the English language. Beth indicated that Wendy would mispronounce words, for example, "'five' was 'pibe'" and "she never had her 'f's and 'b's" which is crucial for teaching language skills to one-year students. Time management was another problem. Beth described that Wendy would over-prepare for each lesson but, even with this extended preparation, could not manage teaching these lessons during the required time for lesson, so Beth felt that Wendy's time management "got out of hand". In addition, Beth did not feel that Wendy was listening to any feedback or advice she was given to improve her teaching to the point where Beth described that she was "actually starting to feel a bit angry".

When discussing the processes that are in place for pre-service teachers failing field experience both were disappointed with the university supervisor's response. Beth was upset at what she felt was a lack of support from the university supervisor. When she contacted this person, she expected the university supervisor to come out the next day:

> I think she should've been out here the next day. Like I still find that really hard to believe that no one came out. She always said she was happy to go with whatever we thought…"if you want to fail her, you can fail her" but we wanted a bit of support…because we all felt a bit lost. I kept ringing because I'd feel sick about it again [failing Wendy] and I think, I don't know, I need help here. (Beth)

Wendy contacted her subject coordinator and her university supervisor about the challenges she was experiencing on this field experience. When she went to the subject coordinator, she felt dissatisfied because she did not get enough feedback from her:

> Well, I went to my subject coordinator and then she said, "oh well," she said, "your delivery of context was not really that good", and that was it, you know. And then I said, "oh well, I don't know what to do because this is what I was told to do". (Wendy)

She expressed a similar disappointment when she spoke about her interactions with the university supervisor:

> I said, "I'm a bit concerned that I'm in Week 3 and they [supervising teacher] haven't signed any of my lesson plans or my reflections. They haven't looked at my observation but they critically analysing me every single thing that I do." And he said, "oh, well, you didn't do this, you didn't do that", but they don't look at my lesson plans, you know. (Wendy)

5.6.3 Case Study 3: Gina and Kath

Gina was a pre-service teacher originally from India in the one-year Graduate Diploma course, Early Years of Schooling, completing her second field experience. She was a high school science teacher in India but was told that she needed to get Australian qualifications to teach in Australian schools. She described that she did not like working with high school students because of the attitude and behaviour management problems she had with this group so chose to teach early primary years. Gina's supervising teacher, Kath, had 14 years teaching experience in lower primary classes. She described that she had hosted "maybe five to seven" pre-service teachers previously from non-English-speaking backgrounds and that she enjoyed interacting with pre-service teachers under her supervision.

Gina said that the supervising teacher should be a support person but allow the pre-service teacher to do whatever they wanted to do to learn how to teach:

> It's like an opportunity for the students [pre-service teachers] to learn and show your potential, what you can do. It's not like you have to do what your host teacher says, it is like she can say, 'you have to do it' but it's not like you can do only whatever she says and you can't do whatever you want. It's like you are there to learn something, it's your like time to show what you can do. (Gina)

Gina also described that the supervising teacher should be helping by sharing resources and giving of their time to talk with her, which she felt did not happen:

> When I told her like, "I really want to talk to you" she will talk to me and then somebody came there and just started talking to her and then she just forgets about me. It was like that…whenever I need to talk, I had to go to her and then ask her "I need your time. I really need your time". (Gina)

Gina's supervising teacher, Kath, described that for her the role of a supervising teacher was:

> To give them experience in teaching, to scaffold them through and then give them opportunities to have a go on their own. (Kath)

She described that she struggled with getting Gina to use resources but assumed that she had come from a place "where they really don't use resources" so did not

"think to make or use or utilise resources". Kath described that this was a common occurrence she experienced with international students who were used to a "chalk-talk" thing.

As a pre-service teacher Gina described that she "… wasn't sure what she [Kath] wants from me". This comment came after Gina revealed that her interim report for performance on field experience was marked as her developing adequately and she was perplexed because now at the end of her field experience she was failing. Gina admitted that she struggled with her written grammar, something that is expected to be at a high standard for classroom teaching, particularly in the formative early years of primary education, but that she was working to improve this skill.

Kath had a very distinct way of describing international pre-service teachers:

> They think they're here on an easy ride. They just think because they'll say to you, "oh, but I'm just here for a year and then I'm going back to my country" then you will waiver all these considerations. But I think our responsibility is, these people may not go back to their country. They have to be assessed at the same level as everybody else and I'd be concerned if people were passing them and they got jobs in Queensland and teaching our own children. Yeah, they do think it's a bit of an easy ride, they use it as a bit of an excuse. (Kath)

When asked what kinds of approaches she took to work with international pre-service teachers, Kath described that she had to "get down" and explain things that she normally did not have to explain to domestic pre-service teachers and for Gina it was:

> …forever trying to bring her to what we were doing rather than her dragging the children into what she wanted to do with the children. (Kath)

Kath described that she had to "work through every individual little thing for her" to "reduce down exactly what she was doing" until it was decided that Gina was not going to be successful in her field experience.

Asked what processes were put in place in relation to Gina failing, Kath explained that the school contacted the university supervising teacher who came out to have numerous meetings with Gina and observed her teach, and she was quite happy to go along with whatever they recommended to help Gina, but in the end it was not enough. Gina also described working with and getting advice from the university supervising teacher, but the final decision was with the supervising teacher and school principal.

5.6.4 Case Study 4: Matt and Kylie

Matt was a student originally from the Philippines in the one-year Graduate Diploma course as part of a dual degree between the Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Creative Industries. His major was drama and he was completing his second and final field experience placement. He had completed his first placement successfully at the same school, although he admitted that he has struggled to complete his first

field experience successfully. Matt's supervising teacher, Kylie, had 21 years teaching experience.

Matt described that he wanted support but also independence in teaching lessons from the supervising teacher:

> …just sort of give them [pre-service teachers] feedback but also…let them do what they want…then if there's something that you've done that maybe you shouldn't have done, come in afterwards [rather than interrupting the lesson to correct him]. (Matt)

Matt complained that his supervising teacher was not happy because he was late in submitting his daily lesson plans and that he did not follow the lessons he did submit:

> …she would fully expect me to stick to the lesson plans and if I skipped something because I need to skip it or…if something's not working, I'm just going to…do something else, you know? She would make a complaint about that…and then that becomes a problem. (Matt)

Kylie said her role as supervising teacher was:

> I think that I'm a mentor for the student teacher that I'm here to support them. (Kylie)

Kylie described her high expectations of the pre-service teachers:

> I also have very high expectations of the students in my classroom for quality outcomes so I expect my pre-service teachers as well to be professional, to meet those high standards. (Kylie)

Kylie was then asked to speak directly about supervising Matt:

> I felt that the language, like I think English is a second language for him, that coming from the Philippines. He'd only done one year of Australian schools in Year 12. I'd said to him, "You did Drama?" I don't think he did…so early on I was puzzled as to… you don't have a lot of experience with what drama is, why have you chosen to be a Drama teacher? And he was someone who would smile and nod a lot but wouldn't articulate what he was thinking or what he needed, what he was feeling. And as much as I would ask, I don't know if he felt, "oh, I can't ask" or he didn't understand… and I found that he wouldn't act on anything [feedback that she had given]. (Kylie)

In support of what Kylie described, Matt revealed that Kylie did write up notes on her laptop after each class, suggesting what he could do next time to improve his teaching, but he then described that "I suppose I couldn't really catch up to her suggestions" but also revealed:

> …you have to impress them and you can't just really say, "I'm struggling" because then this, you know, you have a feeling that they're going to … well, if you're struggling it's not a good sign. (Matt)

Kylie described that she expected pre-service teachers to know the content of what they would be teaching in drama, to give her their lesson plans in advance so she can give them feedback on any weakness before they teach. They should have passion and a willingness to learn that they've got to listen to what she is saying and then act on it to improve their teaching, to have them say things like:

> I'm here. I want to learn. What can I do? Can I go to the library? You'll instruct students to do something and they won't do it, they won't. It's like they'll only do what they have to do to get through, and to me that's not what it's about. (Kylie)

When asked to describe what his expectations were as pre-service teacher on field experience, Matt described:

> I wasn't really expecting anything. I suppose that's one of the reasons why I didn't perform so well in the first prac was because I wasn't mentally prepared for it. (Matt)

He continued to explain that he felt at a disadvantage because he was comparing himself to third- and fourth-year undergraduates who had already experienced field experience. Teaching had not been his first career choice, but the university was phasing out the dual degree so he was advised to switch his major to Education instead of drama. He hadn't considered teaching before he changed courses. When asked what he found challenging about being a pre-service teacher, Matt described that he had a sleeping disorder that had an impact on his participation in field experience and the fact that he felt disadvantaged in being compared with other pre-service teachers. When Kylie was asked to describe challenges that she felt pre-service teachers faced, she replied:

> If they've got the right attitude, then there's nothing that they'll find difficult. (Kylie)

She then described that these days many of the pre-service teachers are also working and that they need to find a work/life balance to fit things in to avoid being stressed on field experience, something that Matt was struggling to achieve.

Both Matt and Kylie were asked about the processes that were put in place when it was determined that Matt was going to fail this field experience. Both mentioned liaising with the university supervisor in charge of supporting Matt in his placement. Kylie described that she had contacted the university for advice, describing Matt's performance to that point and was advised to fail him for that field experience. Kylie also outlined the school's process for accepting pre-service teachers, describing that she, other staff and some students had made a video of *what makes good practice* for teaching that she showed all new pre-service teachers to the school. Matt described that he had no contact from his university supervisor before field experience but commented that:

> …we should meet them beforehand so we know who they are and they're just not like, "oh, you have to contact this person if you have a problem"…you should already know them. (Matt)

5.7 Discussion

The four case studies in this chapter describe both individual and systemic causes for international pre-service teachers failing field experience. Individual factors included stakeholder expectations not being met, lack of communication and the failure of building collegial relationships between the pre-service teacher and the

supervising teacher. Systemic factors included stakeholder responsiveness to failure and responsibility for pre-service teachers completing successful field experiences.

5.7.1 Individual Factors

We know international students have had a different experience of schooling in their home country from their Australian work placement experience. It has been shown that most pre-service teachers fall back on how they were taught (Korthagen 2010). Similarly, the international pre-service teachers in our study expected the Australian classroom to be similar to their home country and had difficulty when this turned out not to be the case. The supervising teachers in our study demonstrated little understanding of this struggle for the international students and expected them to behave at the same high standard they held for domestic students. In particular, they expected that the pre-service teachers would listen, be keen, observe them teach, reflect and then discuss their teaching in follow-up feedback sessions, but expressed that this did not happen as they expected. The pre-service teachers also had expectations, for example, Gina expected more help from her supervising teacher and she expected to be supported with more resources and have more time to talk to the supervising teacher. Matt, on the other hand, said he had no expectations and thought therefore he was not mentally prepared for his work placement. Matt's unpreparedness cannot be attributed solely to his being an international pre-service teacher. He did not seem highly motivated to be a teacher. Any pre-service teacher, whether international or domestic, who is not highly motivated to succeed would struggle to successfully complete field experience. A common problem for expectations not being met was the general lack of communication between the pre-service teachers and their supervising teachers.

All the supervising teachers expected good English language skills from the international pre-service teachers. Ann sought a high proficiency in English. Beth especially expected good English language and pronunciation skills, needed when teaching one-year students. Kath also expected good English grammar skills and was adamant that international pre-service teachers would not get an easy ride just because they were returning to their home country. Expecting new teachers to have high language proficiency is not an unrealistic expectation. Teachers are expected to model good English for students to help them learn. These international pre-service teachers had a responsibility to produce high levels of English both in their oral language when teaching students and in their written work, both on the whiteboard and in handout worksheets. In not producing high levels of English in their work, they let down not only their supervising teachers and the students in the class but they also let themselves down.

However, communication for field experience goes beyond the language of lessons. It is at the heart of the relationships needed for pre-service teachers to feel supported as they learn to become teachers. Beth did not feel Wendy listened to any feedback she was giving her to improve her teaching, yet Wendy felt Beth was

critically assessing her as she constantly interrupted her lessons correcting her in front of the children. Ann articulated that relationships were very important when supervising pre-service teachers, and when she realised how much Mike was struggling, she reduced his teaching load and modified her feedback to be more prescriptive rather than asking him to be conceptually reflective. Wendy valued having emotional support from a supervising teacher but felt she was not receiving any from Beth. Instead she felt belittled as did Mike when he was introduced as a student teacher to the class. Gina wasn't sure what Kath wanted from her, yet Kath felt she was working through every little thing with her, while Matt felt he had to impress Kylie but Kylie felt Matt did not do as she asked.

There is always a problem of power relationships for pre-service teachers on field experience (Santoro 1999). Indeed, one criticism of exploring communities of practice in this workplace is directed at this fact (Hodkinson and Hodkinson 2004). It has been posited that when there is uneven power a genuine relationship cannot develop. One could argue that being newcomers in the school, pre-service teachers need to accept this power relationship and work within it to their advantage as they learn to become teachers; this does not mean that a successful relationship between a pre-service teacher and their supervising teacher cannot happen. Indeed, we know quite the opposite happens.

5.7.2 Systemic Factors

When they learned that they were going to fail their field experience, all the international pre-service teachers felt that the university had not assisted them sufficiently when they needed support. Wendy was particularly disappointed when she contacted both her subject coordinator and university supervisor and felt they both were siding with the supervising teacher. Gina was perplexed because her interim report was fine and she had numerous meetings with the university supervisors, but it was not enough and she failed anyway. Matt would not approach the university supervisors as he didn't know who they were before he started his work placement, and they did not contact him once he was at the school. The supervising teachers were also looking to the university staff for support, but this support did not occur how they hoped it would. Beth said she felt sick about failing Wendy and wanted university support but was told it was her responsibility to fail her if she wanted to, and the university supervisor failed to come to the school even though he was rung several times. Kath was also told it was entirely up to her to fail or pass the student.

This perceived lack of support is worrying because a fundamental component of teacher education is that the pre-service teachers are expected by university lecturers to make connections between their coursework learning and the learning they gain on field experience. When major players in the system feel let down, then it must be taken that the system is broken and, not surprisingly, field experience is compromised. Sim's (2010) research involved the Faculty of Education preparing materials regarding expectations and responsibilities of school staff supervising

pre-service teachers as a collaboration between the faculty and schools. It was found that simply preparing the materials without further consultation was not enough scaffolding for school staff's ideas about supporting pre-service teachers on field experience aligned with that of the university's. These findings align with those of Walkington (2004) who found there needs to be a clear direction for stakeholders in the community on the nature of the partnership and ownership of decision-making, particularly in relation to assessing pre-service teachers' performance.

5.8 Conclusion

Providing work placements is a key strategy in the process of internationalisation of the curriculum that not only meets the needs of students but also addresses national goals. The *National Strategy for International Education 2025* (Australian Government 2016), for example, suggests that internationalisation of education has great benefit for Australia's research, trade, investment and social engagement with the world. Australia's education systems are measured by international rankings, and worldwide, governments are competing to attract international students to study. To stay competitive Australia must profile itself as a desired destination for international students; it must promote key benefits to attract international students. Therefore, work placement is an increasingly important aspect of the internationalisation of the curriculum in higher education in Australian teacher education.

At present there is a dearth of research outlining a theoretical model of support for international students engaged in work placement, particularly work placements as field experience in Australian schools. The current research found that there is a need for better relationships between field experience stakeholders in order for international pre-service teachers and their supervising teachers to better understand what is required for international pre-service teachers to successfully pass their work placements in schools.

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Chapter 6
Reflection and Reflective Practice for International Students and Their Supervisors in Context

Georgina Barton and Mary Ryan

6.1 Introduction

Reflection and specifically reflective thinking are often noted as being critical, both personally and professionally, for growth. However, what is also acknowledged is that reflection is difficult to define, and perhaps this is because it can have multiple purposes. Indeed, Rodgers (2002) provides four functions of reflection: (1) as a meaning-making process, (2) as a rigorous way of thinking, (3) as being important in and for community and (4) as a set of attitudes. Each of these purposes of reflection is important at different times as well as within different contexts. One example where reflection is often expected in an academic setting is in higher education.

The importance of reflection in higher education and across disciplinary fields is widely recognised. It is generally embedded in university graduate attributes, professional standards and course objectives (Ryan and Bourke 2013). Reflection, then, is a common expectation for learners in higher education, both informally in the hope that learners will reflect and act upon feedback provided and also in formal assessment tasks and work integrated learning experiences. Despite the common (and often undefined) use of the terms *reflection* or *reflective* in assessment tasks (Kember et al. 2008), learners are not often taught *how* to reflect, which different types of reflection are possible, or how best to communicate their disciplinary knowledge through reflection (Ryan 2011). Indeed, attempts to include reflection in assessment tasks with little or no pedagogical scaffolding generally result in superficial reflections that have virtually no impact on learning or future practice (McIntosh 2010). Given that professional or academic reflection is not intuitive and

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requires specific pedagogic intervention to do well (Ryan 2015), it is essential that academic staff have substantive knowledge and clear expectations about the aims of the reflective activity, the most effective mode of representation and appropriate teaching strategies to support students in deep, critical reflection.

In relation to workplace components of students' study options, reflection is crucial for success as it is necessary in becoming work ready and therefore socialising into the profession successfully (see Chap. 2 in this volume). Reflection or reflective practice before, during and after a work placement can take many forms, as per Rodgers' (2002) suggestion. The act of reflection at these times can also have or expect different outcomes. Before work placement, for example, students may be required to think about what they expect to happen during their work placement and how they might best prepare for these anticipations. During work placement, as students socialise into the workplace setting and attain certain professional skills, they need to be able to reflect both in and on practice. These contemplations will ultimately impact on the ways in which they improve this practice. It is also important for the mentor or supervisor to reflect on this practice so that they are able to provide quality feedback and guidance to the student. Reflecting after a work placement is also integral for students to be able to debrief and interrogate their experience. For many programmes this is often not an activity that follows the work placement as students may complete a semester of study with this experience or indeed go directly home immediately after their work placement. When students do have the opportunity to reflect after their experience however, they find it powerful in terms of deeply understanding key learnings as well as other skills they need to attain further, what Sykes and Dean (2013) categorise as embedded (social), engaged (practice) and embodied (material) aspects of their workplace experience.

The *Work Placement for International Student Programs* (WISP) project (as outlined in Chap. 1 of this book) explored more comprehensively the experience of international students in relation to work placement. For international students, reflection may play a different role as they engage from varied cultural and social perspectives—aspects that need to be considered by university and workplace staff. This chapter therefore aims to unpack the notion of reflection within diverse sociocultural contexts and how the purpose of reflection may in fact be quite different or at least the outcomes resulting from reflective practice may present themselves differently from those with which people may be familiar.

6.2 The Processes of Reflection

Reflection, or reflective practice, has a long tradition and stems from philosophical underpinnings, particularly the work of Dewey (1933) on reflective thinking for personal and intellectual growth. Hegel (1949) was another early thinker in the area of reflection or what he termed the *sensible history of the mind* through phenomenology. He suggested that understanding of life experiences is progressive, increasing in meaning and complexity as experience and thought is personally and

consciously understood. Ryan (2013) explains that a more overtly critical and transformative approach to reflection, which is rooted in critical social theory, is evident in the work of Friere (1972), Habermas (1974) and others who have followed their lead (see, e.g. Hatton and Smith 1995; Mezirow 2006). Critical, transformative reflection suggests that an alternative reality can be recast in which the student or professional can take an intellectual stance in dealing with critical issues and practices and is empowered to initiate change (Giroux 1988). This more transformative view of reflection is most generative for professional learning contexts.

Schön's (1983) work on the *reflective practitioner* has also influenced many scholars interested in the work of professionals and how *reflection-in-action* and *reflection-on-action* can influence their professional education. Schön's (1983) approach is steeped in practice, particularly in building theory from praxis. His ideas about improving practice through reflectivity and theory-in-use have inspired much debate around the role of espoused theory and how it best applies to performance. This view has been criticised for not moving beyond the immediate situation (Ryan 2013) and for potentially perpetuating hegemonic or normalising forms of practice rather than enacting change at a broader level (Gur-Ze'ev et al. 2001). However, as Giroux (1988) and Mezirow (2006) remind us, it is in the dialogue about everyday practice as an element of social and cultural conditions that can trigger change both at a personal level and at a broader contextual level. In treating *self* as a subject of critical study in relation to others and the contextual conditions of professional learning, *lifelong learning* can be fostered.

Reflection for learning has been variously defined from different perspectives and disciplines (see Boud 1999; Ryan 2013), but at the broad level, the definition we suggest as the most generative for professional learning includes two key elements: (1) making sense of experience in relation to self, others and contextual conditions and, importantly, (2) reimagining and/or planning future experience for personal, professional and social benefit. This definition reflects the belief that reflection can operate through a number of domains and suggests that to achieve the second element (reimagining), one must engage in critical or transformative reflection as outlined below.

Transformative reflection is context dependent (Ovens and Tinning 2009) and is characterised, in learning and professional contexts, by mental and self-referential bending back upon oneself of some idea or thought. This involves the consideration of associated factors and influences and deciding whether and how to respond or act to improve conditions or outcomes (Ryan 2013). Many researchers and commentators agree that there are different types or stages of reflection. Grossman (2008) suggests that there are at least four different levels of reflection along a depth continuum. These range from descriptive accounts, to different levels of mental processing, to transformative or intensive reflection. Similarly, Bain et al. (2002) suggest different stages of reflection with their 5Rs framework of reporting, responding, relating, reasoning and reconstructing. Hatton and Smith (1995) also posit a depth model, which moves from description to dialogic (stepping back to evaluate) and finally to critical reflection. The application of reflection as self-analysis of knowledge, skills, motivations and priorities in relation to contextual conditions and expectations is crucial for improving one's practice.

The WISP project has therefore drawn upon Bain et al.'s (2002) terminology of the *5Rs*—reporting, responding, relating, reasoning and reconstructing—a useful heuristic for prompting and examining reflective practice in professional contexts. These have been conflated to *4Rs* as reporting and responding are often difficult to separate in the processes of professional reflection (Ryan 2013). Unlike some models of reflection, we argue that the different processes of reflection are not linear but can be triggered differently at different times as one engages with particular issues or encounters of practice (Barton and Ryan 2013).

Reporting/Responding is the process of reflection, where students are taught to *notice* and deliberate about aspects of their practice. They should form an opinion or have an initial emotional response to an issue or incident that is relevant to the discipline, the professional field or the learning space. Self-dialogue can compare and contrast reflective, retrospective and prospective considerations. Identifying and recounting incidents seem easy enough to do; however, it is crucial that the reflection has a clear focus if one intends to improve practice.

Relating is the process of reflection that specifically draws on personal experiences in relation to similar issues or contexts. Students make connections with their skills and knowledge thus far, along with their values and priorities and how these relate to the values and priorities of other stakeholders and of society more broadly. They can then begin to determine whether they have the resources to deal with the issue, whether to consult others or access resources or how to plan a way forward.

Reasoning is the process of reflection that elicits an intellectually rigorous analysis of the context, the issue and the possible impacting factors. Ways of working within the discipline and the profession will determine the types of evidence or analysis that should be undertaken, and students' choice of evidence should demonstrate their knowledge of the discipline and the specific subject matter (Freebody and Muspratt 2007). Opportunities to explain and discuss are useful strategies for students to examine different possibilities and sometimes consider ethical implications.

Reconstructing is the most difficult process to navigate as it involves putting new ideas into practice. Specific decisions that students and/or their mentors make should be justified in relation to the best possible outcomes in the given context. Different options should be explored, with predictions about possible cause and/or effect. Students can consider the ways in which possible actions will benefit self and/or others and whether new questions or solutions might arise for a broader good.

Reflective processes should not be left to chance. It is not always clear to students why they have been successful (or not) or whether particular choices are effective (or not). Feedback is capable of guiding students to improve learning, but the mere provision of feedback does not necessarily lead to improvement, a fact well known to teachers in all sectors of education, including higher education (Sadler 2010). It is not an innate skill to be able to analyse one's performance, or even feedback received, and know how to improve learning outcomes (Ryan 2013). Self-analysis in a learning situation requires a number of skills and capabilities. First, it is necessary to have an understanding of the requirements of the task and the requisite knowledge to

complete it. Second, the implications of one's own investment in the task, including emotional investment, are integral. Third, one must possess the ability to recognise or judge what constitutes quality in this particular context. Fourth, an understanding of the discourse of assessment feedback is an oft-forgotten yet crucial aspect of learning in formal educational settings. These capabilities can be made visible (and can be targeted by teachers) through critical reflection as part of the learning cycle. Sadler (2010) argues that we need to provide students with substantial evaluative experience not as an extra but as a strategic part of the teaching design.

Higher education teachers can help students to self-analyse and understand their limits, so that they can take appropriate risks and reflective opportunities as part of their professional learning journey. However, for this to happen, teachers need to have an understanding that knowing and knowledge in their discipline is not the same as knowing and knowledge in *teaching* the discipline. An understanding of how students learn in different ways is paramount, and part of this understanding relates to helping students to understand themselves and how they learn. In this way, they can become self-analytical and independent learners as they move from higher education into the profession. The next section discusses the different ways that reflection can be enabled for deep and relevant learning in different fields.

6.3 Disciplinary Reflection

Reflection is most commonly undertaken as a written exercise in higher education (see Carrington and Selva 2010; Fitzgerald 2009), although some researchers report on successful use of oral modes of reflection (see, e.g. Yancy 2015). Ryan (2012) and Barton and Ryan (2013) provide guidance for how higher education teachers can enable reflection through various activities that use written, visual, oral or performance modes of expression (Harris 2008; Moon 2006). Choosing reflective tasks and discursive and/or performative modes of reflection with due consideration to the ways of working within the discipline and expressive styles of individuals can enable higher education students to develop these higher-order skills in ways that are appropriate for their future professional field and which showcase their communicative competence in that field (Ryan 2012; Hymes 1974).

Deep and substantive knowledge of discipline areas is a precursor for transformative professional reflection. Freebody et al. (2008) argue that the ways of working within disciplines will vary according to key topics, social and cultural functions and the ways in which knowledge is generated and represented. These values and philosophies about how knowledge is generated, its purposes and cultural functions, also determine the kinds of "texts" that are consumed and produced and the type of reflective activity that is valued. Moje (2008) argues that students should learn how to enact particular *identities* in different disciplines. She suggests that teachers need to provide opportunities for students to develop meta-discursive skills, whereby they not only engage in the different discourse communities of the different disciplines but they also know how and why they are engaging and what those engagements

mean for them and others in terms of social positioning and power relations. This is particularly pertinent in professional contexts, which are steeped in particular disciplines and which prioritise particular types of knowledge, skills and relationships.

Disciplinary reflection can take many forms and should resonate with contexts of professional practice. Cope and Kalantzis (2000) posit multiple modes of representation as *multiliteracies* describing these modes of meaning-making as creating a different way of learning or coming to know "in which language and other modes of meaning are dynamic representational resources, constantly being remade by their users as they work to achieve their various cultural purposes" (p. 5). Haseman (2006) asserts that *situations of practice* (p. 3) can stimulate alternative representations of knowledge and understanding in nondiscursive or performative forms of expression. He elucidates the performative expression as one that conceptualises aspects of reality and communicates ideas to others, with the aim of improving practice. Providing higher education students with opportunities to demonstrate their reflective skills via both discursive and performative modes will enable them to engage in the potentially diverse discourse communities of their professional field(s).

In formal education, students are generally required to demonstrate their mastery of knowledge in a way that can be graded and compared. Assessment thus relies on certainty—making a case for what you know. Reflective processes, on the other hand, thrive on uncertainty and doubt (Boud 1999; Ryan 2015). Questions such as What is it I don't know? What are the factors that might be affecting my performance? Will this course of action work? Am I invested enough to make an effort? Who else is impacted by my decisions? are important for meaningful learning. Workplaces mostly require skills in negotiating the latter—uncertainty—and responding with *in-the-moment* problem-solving, levels of risk-taking and innovative solutions. In preparing students for contemporary professional learning contexts, where digital disruption promotes rapid change, it is important for higher education experiences to be imbued with speculative reflective processes. Well-designed reflective opportunities should involve demonstration and application of disciplinary and professional knowledge but with added expectations of adaptability and agility necessary for the professional context.

6.4 Work Experience for International Students: The Importance of Reflective Practice

To become a practitioner, one learns the key distinctions that constitute practice in order to apply them in the service of that practice. Such knowledge is acquired through active engagement in and with the practice world, not through thought alone. Practitioners' ability to do their work is informed by a background understanding that is inarticulate, albeit known—tacitly. A student, for example, can develop particular expertise insofar as one is able to spontaneously employ relevant distinctions in carrying out a particular practice relevant task (Schatzki 2005; see

also Dreyfus and Dreyfus 2005). Repeated practice (usually) leads to mastery or competence (Yanow and Tsoukas 2009, p. 9).

For international students in workplace settings, reflection enables students to think about their professional practice in relation to the context in which they are working. This contextual focus includes any feedback they may be provided from mentors/supervisors and other staff members as they socialise into the profession. Not only is reflection a way of making meaning, it also requires international students to think critically through a process of linking theory to practice—something they may not have had much experience of previously. Further, some international students are initiated into a new university context relatively quickly. For example, in nursing, students may have only arrived in their new cultural surroundings days before having to undertake an intensive 2-week programme prior to entering a new workplace for their clinical placements, and in education, students may only have approximately 3 months to study at the university before entering a school site for 6 weeks training. With limited knowledge of culturally and contextually relevant research related to these new situations, it can be challenging for international students. Of interest here is Rodgers' (2002) third notion of reflection—that is, reflecting as a member of a community (for instance, a workplace community) as well as making a contribution to that community. This presupposes a required influence on the workplace community in which the international student is placed, and of course, this entails a certain set of attitudes and competencies necessary and appropriate within the particular workplaces' norms and expectations.

For international students these intentions can be highly influenced by cultural values and perceptions, and therefore their own personal understanding of community can look different from what the workplace staff and even university staff may expect of the student. An intercultural approach would therefore take into account these differences, and all stakeholders involved would need to be aware of multiple approaches to reflection and subsequent reformation of practice within workplace contexts. In unpacking reflection in community more thoroughly, Rodgers (2002) revisits John Dewey's notion that effective reflection for, and with, community purposes requires one to get outside of *the experience* and see it as another would see it. This aligns with Hunter et al. (2015) idea of interculturalisation as a process where you think about others first, yourself second. For international students undertaking work placement, this process is critical—on behalf of all involved.

Further, in Chap. 2 of this volume, it was argued that international students undergo a multi-socialisation process as they are required to socialise into a new country—which brings a range of unique cultural norms—a new university context, which can be quite different to their previous experience in the higher education sector, and a new workplace environment. Such complex conditions can impact greatly on students' capacities to reflect, and therefore it is necessary for their supervisors/mentors to understand the context in which the international student is having to contend with. In the *Work Placement for International Student Programs* or WISP data, it was found that where deep reflective practice was undertaken by both the international student and their mentor then success was more likely. Such practice was where both participants were also appreciative of and acknowledged the

views of each other. We draw illustrative examples from the WISP project to demonstrate the different foci of reflection across contexts. In education, for example, one student commented:

> We've definitely made—forged a personal relationship as well as a professional relationship so there's that and then there's the personal side as well. I do feel comfortable in talking to her just about anything. Because I trust her and I know that she has the experience. My two mentor teachers were completely different. The reason I feel like we've made that relationship is because she's just very approachable and she's very—I don't know what the word is—non-invasive. She's not—she doesn't hover—she just lets me make the mistakes that I need to make. So, she's very open-minded person and that makes me trust her…It's not threatening. (Education international student)

Here the student has reasoned why his second professional experience was more effective than the first by relating them to each other. The fact that the second mentor allowed the student to make errors, with the view of learning from them, means that the mentor is also highly reflective and understands that this is all part of the learning process in a workplace context.

In speech pathology, international students attended work placement in an educational setting. This required them to work alongside educators, who may not have had training in speech pathology themselves, but the students commented on how the educators took more of a collaborative approach in supporting the children in their centre:

> So they obviously had built their understanding of speech pathology and we were a bit more confident in asking them anything because we were invited to come there, we didn't just go in there and do what we thought was needed and they were really the cornerstones of everything we were doing, they were just invaluable in that way. So yes, probably would just collaborate with them from the start, if I could do it again. (Speech Pathology international student)

International students in this context reasoned the need to research about more culturally appropriate ways to support their clients (Howells et al. 2016). They could also relate their experience to some problem-based learning modules that they had completed while at university. They reasoned the need to do more of these types of cases in order to have an understanding of cultural and linguistic diversity in placement contexts. The international students acknowledged that without interculturalisation as a critical component of these work placements, effective SLP practices would be at risk, and the capacity to reconstruct practice would be limited.

We therefore acknowledge that reflection is not only different across each disciplinary area, for example, in the arts this may be more embodied and in the moment, while in the health sector, reflection is often carried out with colleagues and peers in a supportive manner. Along with these unique subject-specific attributes, reflection can also vary according to the individuals involved, particularly if they have culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

6.5 Cultural Considerations and Reflection

Reflection may be expressed differently depending on people's cultural and linguistic backgrounds as prior experience impacts on the ways in which we report, relate, reason and reconstruct how and why we do things. Additionally, many scholars and practitioners have emphasised the important role reflection, and in particular self-reflection, plays for international and cross-cultural work and understanding (Furman et al. 2008). For example, Komins and Nicholls (2003) found reflection within diverse contexts allows deeper empathy towards others through a process of understanding "cultural and social realities other than one's own" (as cited in Schuldberg et al. 2012, p. 22). Others have also found that reflection assists with breaking down prejudices and resistance to cross-cultural educational practices (Genor and Schulte 2002; Khalili et al. 2013). Reflection and reflective practice therefore can be utilised to support students in understanding themselves, others and contexts, but as a process, it can be executed differently.

A study carried out by Ma et al. (2014) explored how culturally specific self-construals are mediated by the human brain. The study explored how East Asian (Chinese) and Western (Danish) cultural contexts may impact on neural responses of people when asked to make judgments of social, mental and physical attributes of themselves. The main aim was to survey if self-concept is different as a result of sociocultural upbringing and experience. Findings indicated that discernments of "self vs a public figure elicited greater activation in the medial prefrontal cortex in Danish than in Chinese participants", yet "self-judgments of social attributes induced greater activity in the temporoparietal junction in Chinese than in Danish participants" (Ma et al. 2014, p. 73). This means that how people encode their own personal attributes including mental, physical and social aspects differs depending on their upbringing. Even though this study only investigated two brain functions, it points to the fact that self-construals are multidimensional. Further, self-reflection about "personal attributes may depend on others' thoughts and expectations in certain cultural contexts" (p. 79). The authors suggest that Westerners and East Asians may have different access to and awareness of their self, due to cultural differences, and that individuals may learn to adopt distinct strategies, at a neural level (p. 80).

In Volet's (2003) study, strategies to improve intercultural competence through an embedded approach to curriculum development were explored. In relation to enhancing intercultural competence, Volet and Ang (1998) found five obstacles for students: cultural-emotional connectedness, language, pragmatism, prejudice or apathy and contextual factors. They argued that universities have a responsibility to ensure embedded international perspectives across programmes and courses through explicit practice. Volet (2003) also discussed the importance of fostering critical reflection skills. She contended that the "added value of internationalisation to the development of intercultural competence, would not do justice to universities' fundamental role in generating social debate and enhancing students' capacity for critical thinking" (p. 7). This, she says, would open up discourse related to the diverse

nature of knowledge and alternative perspectives, ultimately addressing the distinct student and staff cohorts in higher education contexts.

Interculturalisation is particularly important in workplace components of students' programmes. Not only do university staff need to consider and embed intercultural perspectives through a reflective process but so too do workplace staff. Of course, international students also need to participate and socialise into the workplace environment by reflecting on the ways in which they engage with their mentor or supervisor/s but also their own practice in the quest to becoming work ready and employable. As such, it is important to consider an effective model that employs the four levels of reflection—reporting, relating, reasoning and reconstructing.

McAllister et al. (2006) offer a critical incident approach as a consequence of people being expected to work within diverse, multicultural circumstances. The main purpose of this research was to identify key processes required in developing both education and health higher education students' intercultural competencies while undertaking an international experience in Indonesia and Vietnam. Students were invited to reflect on key critical incidents they experienced when in a new country via a narrative approach (similar to Furman et al. (2008) who employed the processes of journaling and poetry). This allowed them to focus on a "continuum of intercultural learning" (p. 377) that explored key concepts of culture shock, challenging stereotypes, personal coping strategies and negotiating intercultural communication. Each of these notions requires any student in a diverse working environment to report on the critical incident identified, relating this particular encounter to other experiences they may have had before, reasoning why they react to a certain situation the way they do and subsequently reconstructing or at least questioning any initial reactions and/or prejudices they portrayed. As such, McAllister et al. (2006) offer a number of recommendations for improved practice related to intercultural learning in higher education including preparing students well for international experiences; offering opportunities to debrief both in country and upon returning to the home country; using critical incidents as a structured tool for teaching, learning and reflection; resourcing appropriately at the university level; and increasing research in the area.

A similar study by Dharamsi et al. (2010) in the field of medicine investigated medical students' experience undertaking international experiences in low-income countries. Reporting on three of the students' international service learning (ISL), the authors found that the students had a greater understanding of what it means to be vulnerable and marginalised and that they learnt more about socially just approaches to medical practice. Critical reflection was employed so that students could consider how their experience impacted on the ways in which they worked with clients and patients in the clinical setting. One student commented that the encounter "broadened their understanding of…concepts such as patient advocacy, vulnerable populations and social determinants of health…that will direct my future learning and approach in medicine" (Dharamsi et al. 2010, p. 979). It was apparent that the immersion in socioculturally diverse populations for these medical students was highly influential to the ways in which they conceptualised their future practice in the profession.

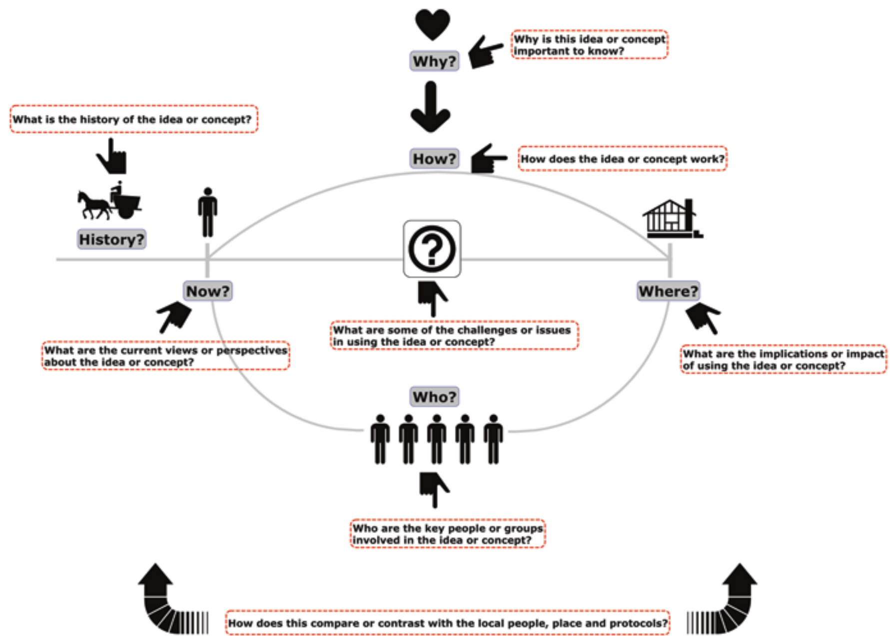

Fig. 6.1 Narrative framework for indigenous learners (Barton 2017)

Another model relevant to reflection for culturally diverse students is offered by R. Barton (2017) (refer to Fig. 6.1). Reflection often concerns itself with a narrative response to an idea or concept including an event. Taking an Indigenous approach to reflection, Barton (2017) argues that the sequencing and application of reflective questions "across time and place as a pedagogical framework in relation to forming narratives for Indigenous learners is distinct" (p. 15–16). It is explained that the framework has a complex network of relationships and cause and effect and starts with asking the question *Why* first. For other cultural contexts the idea of *What* is usually the first point of call. Second, the idea of one's personal *History* to the left and then moving to the right to *Where* is critical for Indigenous people. Relating to culture, country and community provides "a road map of the journey students will undertake throughout the course of a lesson/topic area" (p. 16).

The narrative framework centres on the notion that culturally diverse students are the experts of their own experience. A range of personal and professional resources in the "form of knowledge, understandings, experience and perspective" are carried with each individual. It could be argued that this is also the case with the mentor or supervisor within the workplace context. Local, cultural, social, political and historical knowledge from both parties impact on the ways in which they interact and express this knowledge to each other. Barton (2017) states that this framework allows individuals to share what they know and reflect on a critical incident in ways that others may not be familiar. An awareness and acceptance of these differences are crucial for success and can be empowering.

The model is inherently reflective in its conception and application and is demonstrated in the question structure and sequencing. Each perspective or question requires a deep reflective process in order to yield quality responses that are meaningful, accurate and congruent with learner's repository of lived experience and knowledge.

6.6 Why?

The *Why* question establishes relevance and grounds the topic or concept in terms of its underlying meaning and purpose. In practice particularly when using this question as a starting point for reflection, the initial responses given by respondents are typically by default—that is—responses involving marginal if any reflection. If relevance and purpose are to be established, then it is important to consider further and apply the *Why* question to initial responses in a cyclical reflective process.

6.7 History?

History is a foundation perspective in the model as it grounds the content and context of what is being learned. *History* whether it is tethered to the dreaming as is the case with Indigenous learners or about the important antecedents of a contemporary issue is essential in moving forward. We are doomed to repeat mistakes if we cannot learn from history. *History* is important from a people perspective because while events and incidents happen, these are experienced by people, recorded in their lived experience and retold through their narratives.

6.8 Now?

The *Now* is the starting point in the narrative structure. The *Now* however is a result of all that has gone before it and relates causally to the history of relationships, decisions, actions, behaviours and incidents/events. The *Now* provides clarity around the present state without which any visioning of a prospective future would be meaningless or most certainly inaccurate. This is the equivalent of a store location map when you are lost in a shopping centre. You know where you want to go, but if you don't know where you are starting from, it is difficult to get there without time and effort wasted on detours and wrong turns.

6.9 Where?

The *Where* question concerns itself with ideating and visioning a prospective future. While it is intimately tied to the present and historical contexts, it also represents opportunities for new pathways and destinations to be imagined, created and realised. This can be a very useful lens to reflect through as it enables respondents to consider a range of possible futures or consequences. *Where* is also a critical consideration in setting goals and objectives at the individual and group levels.

6.10 How?

The *How* question is about the mechanics of strategy, decision and action. The *How* links the present starting point of *Now* with the preferred vision of the future as defined by the *Where*. This relationship is in turn mediated through the *Why*. The *How* is about the steps required to bridge the gap between the present and the future.

6.11 Who?

The *Who* position works on several levels about the relationships and people involved in the process of moving from *Now* to *Where*. The *Who* perspective is also important from a historical point of view and in terms of establishing context. Almost all narratives have characters which the audience can process emotionally.

6.12 Compare and Contrast with Local Cultural Context?

In respect to the local cultural context, it's important to have a working model of the way in which roles, rules, rituals, relationships and relics operate as units of culture. Indigenous learners will have direct experience in much of this even if they are not consciously aware about certain protocols and processes. Establishing this working model enables the teacher and students to compare and contrast an idea, concept or process being learned with the pre-existing knowledge or experience and deepens the understanding of both.

6.13 Relationship Between the Narrative Model and the 4Rs Model

There is a complimentary fit between the narrative model and other reflective schemas such as the 4Rs model. Table 6.1 shows the relationships and synergies between these models and illustrates that the 4Rs model can be undertaken in different ways, starting at different points.

Reflective practice is both individual and contextual. Not all students or supervisors need to start with reporting and work their way through the 4Rs. Some students, for example, may begin with *Why* which means that they start to reason in the first instance, for example, the relevance of the issue in this new context. Or they may begin with their own personal history and how it fits with the local cultural context. On the other hand, some supervisors may begin with envisioning a desired future state in this context, which means they start to reconstruct and then back-map to make it happen. We argue that these models are flexible enough to enable culturally diverse students and supervisors to start at the point that triggers the reflection, but that at some point, they should consider all elements of the model for a transformative reflective experience.

6.14 Implications and Future Considerations

Reflection is an essential feature of work integrated learning in higher education. Despite its importance, reflection is not well implemented or undertaken, particularly in regard to explicit support for culturally diverse students and their supervisors. We suggest that there are three key implications for reflective practice in work placements for international students:

1. Reflective models or frameworks can provide a useful way to structure reflection in more explicit ways for students and supervisors who are engaging with different contexts and cultures from those with which they are most familiar.
2. Intercultural considerations should be made much more explicit in reflective contexts, that is, there is no prioritised way in which to reflect. Reflection can be

Table 6.1 Relationship between 4Rs model and narrative model

4Rs model	Narrative model
Reporting	Descriptions of history, who, local context, now, why
Relating	Nexus between local cultural context and the context and content of what is being learned; history of the individual and the context
Reasoning	Why an issue is relevant and important for culture and community; current status
Reconstructing	Ideation: envisioning a desired future state, implications of an issue, longer-term consequences including cultural ones

mapped out from different triggers and can start at different points of an issue or context.

3. Reflective practice is always both contextual and personal. It requires mediation between current self, personal histories and the social and cultural contexts of practice and the profession.

We suggest that a linear approach to reflection, which starts with description, moves onto dialogic reasoning and ends with critical transformation, is too rigid for culturally diverse students and their supervisors. Rather, reflection should be more fluid and embodied so that personal narratives and histories are considered alongside the issues of practice and expectations of context. Different triggers and priorities can shape reflective practice so it becomes meaningful and transformative (Barton and Ryan 2013). We need to prepare our students for productively diverse workplaces (Cope and Kalantzis 2000), whereby a multitude of skills, capabilities and global worldviews can be brought to bear on solving real issues and delivering better outcomes for stakeholders. The first step in enabling productive diversity is to ensure that higher education graduates are capable of deep, intercultural reflection that enables them to interrogate and harness their capabilities and beliefs in relation to their work contexts.

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Chapter 7
Personal Epistemologies and Disciplinarity in the Workplace: Implications for International Students in Higher Education

Georgina Barton and Stephen Billett

7.1 International Students and Work Placements

> The social work degree programme prided itself in being highly applied. In the second week of the programme, the students engaged in their first practicum within a social welfare agency. This was the first of a series of work placements across the degree programme that aimed to provide experiences of social work and integrate these experiences into what was taught in the university setting as a central element of its educational design. However, this design created particular challenges for international students. Many of these students had only arrived in Australia the week prior to the programme's commencement. Many of these students also came from countries that did not have a social welfare system, or social workers. They were largely uninformed about what social workers do, for what purposes and how they went about their work. Hence, there were conflicts between the design of this programme and these students' readiness to engage effectively in these work placements that commenced within two weeks of the programme's commencement. (Billett 2015)

Whilst potentially rewarding, undertaking higher education in another country can also be both daunting and confronting for many international students. As we can see in the above vignette, students may not only arrive in a new country and experience a challenging university context but are also required to undertake a work placement soon after this arrival. These feelings of being overwhelmed can be particularly accentuated during the workplace placement components which are increasingly becoming a common and essential element of these students' higher education programmes (Barton et al. 2015). Findings from inquiries into work integrated learning or work experience in higher education often identify issues that international students may face during their work placements. These issues are

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often attributed to the international student's personal dispositions and capabilities (Roberts et al. 2010) and how the range of practices they need to exercise to contribute to the success of the work placement leads to a smooth transition into the workforce (Knoch et al. 2016). What is less understood, however, is how the disciplinary aspects of the selected occupation influence international students' experiences. Also not fully appreciated is how their personal epistemologies, abilities and readiness to engage in, and effectively learn in, the workplace setting are applied. These capacities are shaped by any previous work experience they may have had prior to arriving in a new country and its direct relevance.

This chapter seeks to advance understandings about how international students come to experience and learn through their work placements. It does so through discussing the propositions that international students' personal, social and cultural histories or *experiences* potentially enable or inhibit workplace success. It also explores the notion of *experiencing* and the importance of all involved in the provision of workplace experiences. It is necessary that all stakeholders are open and honest and have an overt awareness of difference. This is critical in any interaction within the workplace for success. It progresses this case by firstly proposing the centrality of learners' epistemologies in how they come to engage with what they experience and come to know, do and value. Then, the demands of discipline and the challenges of interculturalisation are discussed to elaborate the range of factors that shape both what experiences are provided in both educational and work settings and how international students might come to engage with and learn them. Hence, an enduring and salient point made in advancing the case made across this chapter is to consider both the social context of what afforded these students and how they came to engage with those affordances.

7.2 Epistemologies, Disciplinarity and Interculturalisation

In considering international students' experience during work placements, it is necessary to explore the following key terms: epistemology, including personal epistemology, disciplinarity and interculturalisation.

7.2.1 Epistemology and Personal Epistemologies

At its most inclusive conception, epistemology refers to the nature and origins of knowledge. It concerns how knowledge is derived, but also how it should be tested and validated. Even though epistemology is about how people acquire and curate their own personal knowledge base, it is also concerned about how this knowledge can work to limit human understanding and practices. Understanding how individual's personal epistemologies impact on and within workplace contexts is critical in

developing, enacting and evaluating effective models of educational practice (Barton 2015). According to Billett (2009), personal epistemologies are:

> … individuals' ways of knowing and acting arising from their capacities, earlier experiences, and ongoing negotiations … that together shape how they engage with and learn through work activities and interactions (p. 211).

In essence, they comprise what individuals know, can do and value which then directs how they think, act and learn. In consideration of engaging in intentional educational experiences, the epistemologies elaborate what has long been referred to within educational science as *readiness*: having the capacities to engage effectively and learn from what is experienced (Jollands et al. 2012; Billett 2015). So, taking the vignette provided at the beginning of this chapter, the following information could be speculated. Coming from countries without or with minimal social welfare provisions, the international students participating in this programme would likely lack basic premises of the role of social work; the kinds of precepts under which it is enacted; and the kinds of programme, approaches, and policies that drive a social welfare provision; and the scope of social work (Harrison and Ip 2013). Hence, their language skills and the ability to comprehend and respond appropriately might not be well aligned to crucial aspects of this work in a particular cultural context (Huang 2013). In addition, they might be unaware of the kinds of tasks that would need to be undertaken, including direct interactions and negotiations with clients who may be distressed, depressed or unwell and the kinds of difficulties they face, and the kinds of turmoil that render them in need of social welfare and other forms of support (Coffey et al. 2012). So, in these ways they lack a level of readiness that those growing up in a welfare state would know about.

Yet, another aspect of the readiness is the intentionality and interest of these students. Some of these international students had selected the social work degree on the basis of its relatively low entry requirements. Their selection of this programme was based on what they could gain admittance to and that they did not have any interest in learning to be or practice as a social worker or as Kelleher et al. (2016) also found in nursing. Indeed, possibly for some of these students, their goal is to secure a degree, regardless of its focus, principally as a means to accrue points to apply for Australian residency. Hence, their interests and intentionalities are not necessarily directed towards the programme in which they are enrolled, but rather as a means to an end. Of course, these are not conditions that all or only international students face. Many domestic students are not wholly informed about the occupations in which they engage. There is no guarantee that domestic students would have adequate knowledge of what social work or nursing is about or have understanding about the role. This situation is particularly likely if these students have not had any contact with the social welfare system and social workers. But the complexity of factors that international students face in engaging in practicums is likely to be of a qualitatively different kind than their domestic counterparts (McDermott-Levy et al. 2014). A particular quality that may be lacking with these students is their ability to be agentic, that is, their ability to be active in engaging in activities and directing their interactions and learning guided by goals to become competent in their work-related learning (Barton et al. 2015; Billett 2009). It is in these ways that their personal epistemologies may not be well placed to assist them

to effectively engage in and learn during their practicums, including being able to make connections and integrate what they have learnt into their course.

To ensure productive engagement in work placement components of higher education programmes, it is necessary for students to be able to *think on their feet*, have a *hands-on* approach to solving problems and also negotiate with others within the workplace context. In addition, students need to be receptive to critical feedback from their mentors in the workplace in relation to how to improve their practice—often involving both professional and personal introspection, rehearsal and conscious monitoring. Unless students have strong personal epistemological intents, these skills and attributes are less likely to be present and, therefore, impact negatively on work placement success (see Chap. 1 also).

7.2.2 Disciplinarity

Epistemology is related to disciplinarity as it both concerns knowledge and the adaptation of this knowledge in specific situations of practice. Minati and Collen (1997) define disciplinarity as "phases or forms of human activity to seek, develop, and produce knowledge" (as cited in Collen 2002, p. 285). Accepting that occupations are examples of distinct disciplinary areas that have specific approaches—epistemologies—to building knowledge and associated literacies, it is important for the learning of and teaching disciplinarity (Anderson and Valente 2002; Freebody et al. 2013; Freebody et al. 2008; Scardamalia and Bereiter 2006). Such distinctions mean that teaching strategies, assessment practices, and even socialisation into the profession may differ across disciplines (Barton and Ryan 2013). In fact, Davies and Devlin (2007, p. 1) state that disciplines are "embodied in collections of like-minded people, each with their own codes of conduct, sets of values, and distinctive intellectual tasks" (p. 109). For instance, taking the above example further, there are particular disciplinary mores and practices that underpin the conduct of occupations, such as social work and nursing. This could include an orientation to caring and placing the interests of the clients as being central to social work and nursing practice, or perhaps to the extent that duty of care to clients/patients might lead to contestation with workplace policies and practices. The learning of such disciplinarities likely arises through the kinds of activities that come from engaging with clients ascertaining their circumstances and identifying pathways for them. Balancing needs and responses of these kinds are likely to be part of the disciplinarity of social work and nursing, to name just two.

Similarly, Barton (2015) explored the disciplinarity present in undergraduate and postgraduate teacher education students' experience in the area of music. Students were preparing for their first practicum in schools and, as such, developed personal philosophies—epistemological beliefs (Patrick and Pintrich 2001) about the teaching of music. Many of these students commented on their previous learning experiences in music and how these impacted on their perceptions as nascent teacher. Also, the discipline of music itself greatly impacted on how these students

conceptualised their approaches to learning and teaching music. For example, various music education philosophies or methods distinctly influenced how the students considered aspects of those experiences, such as inclusivity and access, the theory-praxis relationship and cultural and social meanings inherent in music making and diversity. One student commented on how their own experiences working in an Australian Indigenous community had directly influenced the ways in which they taught music in mainstream classes including greater reliance on aural/oral processes, more collaborative approaches to composition and performance and acknowledging the need to invite community members into the school context to share knowledge and understanding of music learning and teaching.

Newton et al. (2016) explored experiences of international students and their supervisors in a clinical nursing context. The study found that a number of areas were heightened in relation to the supervision of international students, particularly in terms of effective nursing dispositional capacities. These included sense of responsibility, additional pastoral care challenges, considerable time investments, communication challenges and cultural differences between teaching and learning styles. A number of themes were also identified including role preparation for both supervisors and international students within workplaces that was heavily accentuated towards the care of patients.

In this way, personal epistemologies are held to be central to students' learning, and there may well be a broader and more diverse base of those epistemologies amongst international students that shapes their readiness to engage in higher education and the workplace-based components of their courses.

Like the personal epistemologies discussed above, there are a set of concerns for international students associated with securing such disciplinarities. Here, the concept of interculturalisation is used to elaborate the particular processes faced by international students.

7.2.3 Interculturalisation

In understanding how international students' previous experiences, knowledge and learning impacts on their ability to engage in activities and interaction in their work placements, it is important to note cultural difference. The notion of interculturalisation has been identified as an approach that "understands others first, yourself second, and in a truly reflective nature, the introspective analysis of teaching and learning" (Hunter et al. 2015, p. i). For instance, Howells et al. (2016) explored how culture impacted on postgraduate Speech Pathology students during their clinical placement. Findings from this study showed that students had a high interest in working with people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, but acknowledged their limited understanding in this area. Some of the Speech Pathology students were, however, from diverse backgrounds themselves and had a heightened awareness of their cultural identities, stereotypes or biases (i.e. preferences) yet exercised their intentionalities in not allowing these perceptions to impact

on the provision of effective Speech Language Pathology (SLP) services for their paediatric clients and their families. An intercultural approach was, therefore, evident as these students were emerging as culturally competent practitioners (Howells et al. 2016, p. 267). Ultimately, this study showed that it is increasingly important for SLP students in particular, to meet their client's needs by having a greater understanding of cultural and linguistic diversity in placement contexts. Without acknowledging interculturalisation as a critical component of these work placements, effective SLP practices would be at risk.

As illustrated above, interculturalisation also encompasses how individuals consciously or unconsciously utilise culturally derived preferences towards others, which have often been the product of previous experience. Such preferences may be deployed uncritically as they have been appropriated by individuals as have viability for them. So, for example, an international student from a Confucian heritage country where self-sufficiency is accepted might view recipients of social welfare as being unworthy or to be admonished for their lack of efforts or efforts to be self-sufficient. Equally, these students' familiarity with filial piety (i.e. respect for older people) may lead to difficulties in dealing with older clients. Conversely, students from Scandinavian countries might struggle with the level and kinds of social welfare provided in other countries as being insufficient or unsubstantial against what they know and expect. They might question efforts that are intended to move clients off of social support as quickly as possible. An intercultural approach to international students and work placement requires both students and mentors to be aware of the diverse range of ways that people bring what they know, can do and value (i.e. their personal epistemologies) when engaging in activities and interactions in workplace setting and work placements. This awareness requires an openness to prospects of difference in interpretations, understandings and actions founded on a tolerance for other beliefs, background and experiences than their own.

Hunter et al. (2015) note a method of exercising this tolerance, and openness can be understood through a process of *transcending* one cultural system for another, that is, when others are able to consider a phenomenon from a different perspective consciously, then transformational practice is more likely. Further, they acknowledge the need for people to be cultural agents (i.e. meaning) by learning about other's "shared knowledge, values, and behaviours that connect us" (p. 1) or possibly serve to divide us. Yet, this process is as much to be exercised by students as their teachers or workplace mentors. Positive and agentic engagement is, therefore, necessary for intercultural exchanges to be successful amongst international students, their mentors and others participating in the provision of practicum experiences.

Yet, there is also a need to be reasonable and realistic about the ease by which embedded values and precepts that are the product of earlier experiences (i.e. enculturalisation) can likely be changed. A group of refugee migrants claimed that their teachers in a vocational college did not understand the traumatic experiences they had encountered in Africa that had caused them to flee the country of their birth and become refugees (Onsando and Billett 2009). Whilst such teachers might be informed about the needs of their students, it is possibly unreasonable and improbable to expect these teachers to truly understand the students' past experiences. This

would impact on the ways in which the teachers could address how the students come to engage with their studies and how their struggles may not be fully addressed.

The point here is that empathy and reciprocity are likely to be helpful but, ultimately, insufficient on the part of higher education teachers and workplace mentors, but also reciprocity and engagement on the part of the students. An intercultural approach involves exchanges, negotiation and a complete openness to view the world differently than to what people are most familiar with.

In this way, the concept of interculturalisation is something that is central to the experience of international students as they seek to make sense of what they experience in their host country, albeit in diverse ways for these learners. It positions the provision of higher education as being more than one that dispenses values, cultural values in ways that may not always be consistent with students and socially and culturally derived sentiments, values and preferences. When authentic intercultural understanding is apparent in a relationship, then the potential for positive experiences and experiencing is more likely for all involved in such an exchange (Byram et al. 2001).

7.3 Experiences and Experiencing

Prior to considering educational implications of the explanatory concepts advanced above, it is helpful to place centre-stage two further concepts and the relationships between them that can assist considerations of the curriculum, pedagogies and student engagement in seeking to enhance and promote the educational worth of international students engaging in work placements. These two concepts are experiences and experiencing. What has been proposed above is that sets of experiences are provided for students, in both educational and in work settings. Yet, as has been proposed more than the provision of experiences, ultimately the educational worth of both the intended and unintended experiences in educational and workplace settings are what students make of them, that is, how they construe and construct knowledge from these experiences: the process of experiencing. As with so much that has been advanced in the sections above, there is an inevitable duality between the provision of experiences and how students come to experience them. That duality means seeking to understand the relations between the experiences provided and how it will be experienced by international students.

A long-standing maxim for education is that what is provided for students is nothing more than an invitation to change. What is most important is how students come to engage with that invitation. Hence, it is important to consider the bases by which students might come to engage with what is afforded to them. For instance, in one project, information technology students were provided with work experiences as part of their course. However, the university hosting the students had great difficulty getting quality placements for international students. So, whilst their domestic peers went to work in software companies and IT technology labs, the university could only find placements for these international students in not-for-profit

organisations such as charities and schools. Whilst their domestic counterparts were engaged with high-end technologies, emerging processes and new applications, the international students' experience was restricted to basic maintenance of often outdated computers and assisting their users. On the one hand, the experiences provided for the two groups of students were quite distinct in terms of what is likely to be learnt from them. On the other hand, how these students came to experience what is provided for them would only add to that distinction, particularly when opportunities arose to realise the difference in the experiences. Doubtless, the international students will come to realise they were being positioned in terms of jobs, both within the university and within Australian society.

Ultimately, it is students' experiencing of what is provided for them that is central to their learning. The quality of that experiencing and the degree by which students are likely to engage effortfully with that process is central to what and how they will learn. Therefore, as consideration is given to educational implications of personal epistemologies, disciplinarity and interculturalisation, it is helpful to engage with this duality of experience and experiencing as an organising principle.

7.4 Implications for International Students and Work Placement

Having set out some conceptual premises to understand students' engagement in work placements and the integration of those experiences within their higher education studies, it is necessary now to consider how the educational worth of these experiences can be promoted and extended. The authors' current university, for example, has a *Good Practice Guide* (Barker and Griffith Institute of Higher Education 2011) related to internationalising the curriculum and interculturalisation and offers a range of strategies to improve an intercultural perspective in both teaching and learning. It also hosts the generation of a range of curriculum and pedagogic practices about how experiences in tertiary education and work settings might be effectively enacted to secure the optimum educational worth of these experiences (Billett 2011). The following section draws upon the intentions of these guides in elaborating the kinds of curriculum and pedagogic practices that might be helpful and also how the engagement of international students, their mentors and other stakeholders involved in the work placement process might be ordered and promoted.

7.4.1 Curriculum Considerations

Curriculum, as discussed here, refers to a dynamic process rather than a static document (e.g. a syllabus) or policy (e.g. a set of content) (Ewing 2012; Marsh 2009; Marsh and Willis 2003), in which students play a key part. Indeed, for Angelo (2002), effective curriculum needs to be learner centred. He states that:

> Well-designed learner-centred curriculum is one that helps all willing and able students achieve and demonstrate the expected standard of learning more effectively, efficiently and successfully than they could on their own (p. 110).

Hence, considerations of the intended curriculum (i.e. what is supposed to be learnt) as well as how it is enacted include a learner-centred approach that emphasises and acknowledges students' needs and their own personal experiences and experiencing. Interestingly, a scanning and mapping exercise, for the *Work placement for International Student Programs* or WISP project, of all curriculum documents related to work placement across six university sites in Australia found that there was limited acknowledgement of potentially rich cultural exchanges during work placement components of study across a range of disciplinary areas. This project comprised a range of data collected via interviews, focus groups, artefacts and a large-scale survey involving six universities and across a number of disciplinary areas including Business, Education, Engineering, Nursing, Occupational Therapy, Psychology and Speech Pathology. In the WISP project, it was found that, unless intercultural perspectives are embedded in what we do, then it is unlikely that what might be taken as socially authentic practices will occur. The first consideration is the kind of educational philosophies that embrace diversity, as well as understanding the reciprocal exchanges required in ensuring success for international students during work placements.

To impact curriculum procedures positively, via an international or intercultural perspective, it is necessary to explore a number of levels of enactments. These include at the university, programme, course and classroom levels. The kinds of recommendations made in the *Good Practice Guide* (Barker and GIHE 2011) could be at the core of an internationalisation strategy that requires effective engagement by staff and students as well as industry partners if these practices are to be embedded in daily work.

Firstly, higher education institutions need to make a strong commitment to making a difference to and having a positive impact on the international student experience—not just because they are fee paying. At the broader institutional level, universities need to consider specific needs of international students and provide quality services for support, particularly when students are undertaking work placement, and then market responsibly. This includes acknowledging international students' readiness with admission and orientation processes.

At the programme level, it is important for leadership teams including programme directors or coordinators to view programmes in terms of their intents (i.e. aims, goals and objectives) and also the kinds of experiences being provided to realise those goals and identify where international perspectives and considerations

are most appropriate throughout the programme moving towards an intention to embed appropriate experiences across each course. This action can support richer learning experiences by working from a surface to a deep level of engagement (Peck et al. 2015). If students perceive approaches to inclusion as being tokenistic, then they are less likely to engage with learning, and evidence suggests students will carry out tasks for assessment purposes only (Entwistle and Peterson 2004; Lublin 2003).

At the course level, convenors might need also to exercise their educational discretion to accommodate international perspectives through considering the following aspects of the courses: content and design, materials and tools, learning and teaching activities, classroom practices, assessment, evaluation and review and internal accreditation. As course delivery is the point of engagement between what is intended to be learnt and the students' participation in learning, it is critical that higher educators understand practices associated with intercultural education. The exercise of these capacities may well need to occur at the course level for courses directly related to workplace experience whereby discipline experts highlight workplace practices that benefit from international perspectives. For instance, because of cultural preferences, nurses need to be aware that for some patients using a pillow to rest a patient's head on that has previously been used to near their feet is culturally insensitive. So, even though hospitals catering for a Pacifica and Islander people have colour-coded pillows, unless a content expert makes students' aware of this sensitivity and the coding of the pillows, they inadvertently cause offence in the workplace.

In relation to courses that include or are a complete workplace learning experience, intercultural perspectives can be critical in ensuring success in those experiences for reasons advanced above. The WISP project, for example, highlighted a number of instances where an enhanced awareness of cultural difference and/or cultural sensitivities and insights is more likely the successful outcome. This was particularly important in regard to students working with industry mentors and the kinds of communication amongst university staff, international students and work placement staff, because it is the collective interactions amongst them that will mediate understandings, expectations and ways of proceeding.

7.4.2 Pedagogic Considerations

As stated previously, elements of the intended curriculum, including programme and course learning outcomes, content and materials in specific disciplinary domains will only be optimised if appropriate support for or mediation of students' learning is enacted. A central element of an appropriate enactment is the use of appropriate approaches to education and particular kinds of pedagogies. For instance, many educators refer to productive pedagogies or what Shulman refers to as signature pedagogies (Shulman 2005). The *Good Practice Guide* (Barker and GIHE 2011)

offers a range of teaching and learning strategies that foster and ensure intercultural understanding and acceptance.

These include problem-based learning that constitutes an international case study, having students critically reflect on international or intercultural matters, highlighting the ideologies behind certain disciplines and cultural elements of the discipline, exploring the impact of culture on the development of disciplinary methods, and undertaking a work placement in a variety of contexts (Barker and GIHE 2011, pp. 12–13).

Classroom or pedagogical practices have also been provided. Similarly, a set of pedagogic practices for integrating higher education students' experiences workplace settings were identified through 20 studies across a range of occupational domains. These pedagogic practices were categorised into those that stand to be particularly productive before students engage in workplace experiences, during those and then after their completion (Billett 2015). At the core of these practices are grounded strategies that have been identified, trailed and also selected on the basis that they can be undertaken as part of their usual teaching practices. Such strategies can address diversity and inclusion when international students are working to reconcile their experiences across their study programmes and workplace experiences.

Of course, more broadly applicable approaches such as demonstrating mutual respect through interculturally competent interactions with students may be essential in fostering and practising effective and productive pedagogies. Yet, and as foreshadowed earlier, beyond the provision of experiences as in the intended and enacted curriculum alone are insufficient, as it will be the agency students' exercise when engaging with what is afforded them in terms of experiences that will ultimately shape how and what they learn. That is, their processes of experiencing are essential and crucial. However, it would be educationally negligent not to find ways of supporting and guiding their engagement. Therefore, encouraging students to participate fully and engage effortfully in their learning processes is also a consideration for higher education and the role that falls to its teachers.

7.4.3 Ways of Engaging Students and Their Mentors

Earlier in this chapter, reference was made to students' personal epistemologies, their role in engaging in intentional learning activities: the process of experiencing and learning through experiences provided. Given that the kinds of learning aimed to be achieved through higher education are usually a product of effortful engagement, deliberation, critical appraisal and comparative analyses, none of these outcomes are likely to arise without student engagement. So, it is important to find ways of engaging international students with the course content and experiences afforded by both the university and workplace-based components of their course. As noted in the opening vignette, the international social work students did not have the same kind of motivations and bases for engagement as students with long-standing

interest in social work, for instance. In that particular circumstance, the teachers organised a day and a half orientation for students so that they would understand the social welfare system; the kinds of tasks that social workers undertake; and also the kinds of roles that they need to perform. In this instance, it was to prepare naive learners about how they would come to engage in work settings where the occupation they have selected to learn is being enacted. All this points to the need for specific educational interventions to assist students to engage productively in learning experiences for which they may not be ready. Indeed, a key set of findings from the study identified a range of pedagogic practices that could be enacted to assist higher education students in being prepared for and engaging effectively with the work experiences. The lessons here, although not specifically intended for international students, likely have applicability to the student cohort.

Beyond preparing students for their work experiences, the findings suggest students may require support during those experiences to maximise their engagement and promote productive learning. The findings also consistently suggest that the provision of guidance and support may be required after the students have completed their workplace experiences. This would allow students to more effectively consider, share and otherwise optimise the outcomes of their workplace experiences. As a result of these considerations across the projects, some key pedagogic practices were identified in each of these three moments (i.e. before, during and after work experiences). It would seem that educational practices have fairly direct applicability for effectively engaging international students in work experiences and also in optimising the learning from them.

In overview, these pedagogic practices are as follows:

1. *Prior to the workplace experience*, it is helpful to:
   - Establish bases for experiences in work settings, including developing or identifying capacities in workplaces (i.e. practice-based curriculum, interactions).
   - Clarify expectations about purposes, support, responsibilities, etc. (i.e. goals for learning).
   - Inform about purposes, roles and expectations of different parties (e.g. advance organisers).
   - Prepare students as agentic learners (i.e. develop their personal epistemologies)—including the importance of observations, interactions and activities through which they learn.
   - Develop the procedural capacities required for practice.
   - Prepare students for contestations (e.g. being advised to forget everything learnt at university) (Billett 2015).
2. *During workplace experiences*, it is helpful for there to be:
   - Direct guidance by more experienced practitioners (i.e. proximal guidance)
   - Sequencing and combinations of activities (i.e. learning curriculum, practice-based curriculum)

- Active engagement in pedagogically rich work activities or interactions (e.g. handovers)
- Effective peer interactions (i.e. collaborative learning)
- Active and purposeful engagement by learners in workplace settings (Billett 2015)

3. *After the workplace experiences*, it is helpful to:

- Facilitate the sharing and drawing out of experiences (i.e. articulating and comparing—commonalities and distinctiveness, e.g. canonical and situational requirements for practice).
- Explicitly make links to what is taught (learnt) in the academy and what is experienced in practice settings.
- Emphasise the agentic and selective qualities of learning through practice (i.e. personal epistemologies).
- Generate critical perspectives on work and learning processes in students (Billett 2015).

All of what is proposed here is quite consistent with what was advanced in Chap. 1 of this volume which explores a model of effective educational practice. In this way, it accounted for the kinds of experiences that will confront learners, including societal mores, practices and sentiments, particular kinds of activities from which learning arises, and also how students come to engage with and learn through those experiences. Of significance here is the influence of the discipline in which the international student is immersed in for work placement components of study. Equally important though is their own personal epistemologies—that is, their own personal and professional experiences prior to undertaking study in another country as well as once they arrive—upon this process and collaboration. For teachers in higher education, the lessons here are quite explicit. Without an openness to accept the confluence of experiences and experiencing that these students will encounter, it will be difficult for them to provide effective experiences for students. This means being open to the kinds of pedagogic practices and educational processes that are listed above and not be limited to the didactic such as oral presentation, texts or electronic formats. Essentially, it comes down to placing the students at the core of any educational interactions, which should always be the case.

Perhaps a starting point for any educational experience is understanding what is intended from the perspective of the learner. Whilst it is possible to generate aims, goals and objectives for educational provisions remote from the circumstances of practice and without knowing the students involved, it is a perilous educational project to proceed without accounting for the learners' readiness, which includes their interests, capacities, concerns and intentionalities. Then, the concern is to accommodate such readiness as directed towards the intended educational outcomes. Of course, programmes can be delivered in the absence of understanding such readiness. However, the delivery of programmes does not in itself guarantee the quality of experiencing and the kinds of outcomes intended. With the growing practice of international students commencing study in another country set to rise

across the globe (Garrett 2014), as well as the fact that many international students desire workplace experiences, then engaging all stakeholders, including the students, being opened to a broad range of educational goals, and extending a consideration of curriculum and pedagogy may well be required.

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Part II
Work Placement for International Student Programs

Chapter 8
Practicum for International Students in Teacher Education Programmes: An Investigation of Three University Sites Through Multisocialisation, Interculturalisation and Reflection

Georgina Barton, Kay Hartwig, Dawn Joseph, and Anna Podorova

8.1 Introduction

Experience in the workplace is an important component of many study programmes in universities across the world, particularly in teacher education programmes (Darling-Hammond 2006a, b; Korthagen 2001; Korthagen and Kessels 1999). This experience, often referred to as practicum, professional or field experience, enables students to see first-hand how schools work, specifically where classroom practice is concerned. While experience in educational contexts such as schools is important for all teacher education students, it could be considered more high stakes for international students studying in these programmes due to differences in education systems, visa requirements and graduation timelines (Barton et al. 2015). Therefore, it is critical that workplace experiences for international students in teacher education courses are positive and viewed as a space for learning for both student and mentor teacher.

The practicum experience for teacher education students is a critical part of their university study. In many programmes in universities across the world, teacher education students partake in a practicum each year of their study. This expectation also applies to international students as practicum is a compulsory component for teacher

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registration boards and regulatory bodies such as professional organisations. Past research has identified a number of concerns for international students during the teacher education practicum such as difficulty in understanding the cultural context and differences in language for students from other linguistic backgrounds (Brown 2008; Campbell and Uusimaki 2006), the mismatch between university theory and practical classroom applications (Cameron et al. 2011) and pre-service teacher stress, both before and during the practicum (Cole and Knowles 1993).

Common reasons, outlined in the literature, as to why the practicum experience may not be successful include poor communication between the student, the mentor teacher and the university context, differences in expectations from each party and suitability of teachers to take on the role of the mentor (Allen 2011; Cole and Knowles 1993). These concerns may be similar for both domestic and international students.

Much research on international students in teacher education programmes tends to focus on students from non-English-speaking backgrounds undertaking programmes in English-speaking universities (Andrade 2006; Jackson and Heggins 2003) as well as issues that international students may find challenging including homesickness, not having the regular support systems available through family and friends, difficulty settling into a new environment and financial and legislative concerns (Brown 2008; Campbell and Uusimaki, 2006; Spooner-Lane et al. 2009; Walters 2012). Not only do international students reportedly have a number of issues to deal with while studying in another country, these can be exemplified during work placement experiences (Cruickshank and Westbrook 2013). What is not reported on as much, however, are the positive ways in which international students, their mentors and university staff can work together to ensure success.

This chapter draws on data from three university sites in a large-scale research project that explored the practicum experience for international students in Australia. We identify some of the issues reflected upon in relation to international teacher education students at each site and offer succinct suggestions as to how these concerns can be viewed through a more positive lens. We employ conceptual frameworks of multisocialisation, interculturalisation and reflection to investigate the experiences of international teacher education students, their mentors and other stakeholders including school coordinators and university staff.

8.2 Theorising the Practicum Experience for International Students in Teacher Education Contexts

International students do experience the practicum differently as they need to socialise into not only the workplace context but also the cultural environment in which they carry out their practicum. According to Golde (1998), international students undergo a *double socialisation* process, but the *Work placement for International Student Programs* (WISP) project further argues that a *multisocialisation* process

occurs (e.g. see Chap. 2). In order to participate successfully in their practicum, it is vital that both international students and their mentors are able to reflect critically in and on action (Schőn 1983) as well as consider the ways in which intercultural exchanges between all stakeholders can be effective and positive.

Hunter et al. (2015) explored interculturalisation as the intersection of teacher education and culture through discourse on systems, structures and social context. Interculturalisation has much resonance with the term internationalisation. Internationalisation includes the diversity of international student cohorts and the associated policy, practices, and assessment related to international students in higher education. Knight's (1999, 2004) work presented a strategic view of a number of approaches to internationalisation (for more, see Chap. 1). In order to respect others, a deep understanding of their beliefs, background and experiences is essential, what Hunter et al. (2015) called *transcending* one cultural system for another (for more, see Chap. 1).

Education is a vehicle by which such intercultural exchanges are constant (Byram et al. 2001). This is made possible through interaction with diverse students in classrooms as well as positive engagement with teaching staff who may be from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Further, education can be viewed as "the primary means of cultural transmission and acquisitions through which the current generation builds upon and extends the knowledge, skills, and cultural traditions of the previous generation" (Hunter et al. 2015, p. 2). Therefore, it makes sense that a practicum experience for teacher education students has the potential to be an exemplary practice in the area of interculturalisation.

For international students, the practicum experience can provide a positive platform whereby they can learn about effective models of teaching and learning for diverse students as well as partake in positive intercultural exchanges with their mentor teacher. A reciprocal relationship has been noted to be of benefit in the teacher education experience (Healy and Welchert 1990). Allen (2011) highlighted how the relationship between the student and mentor teacher is crucial for success and presented three issues that are worthy of consideration: task authenticity, task expectations and emotional engagement. In Allen's (2011) study, discrepancies between stakeholder perceptions of assessment task authenticity, lack of university-school communication and perceived breakdowns in partnership arrangements had a negative impact on emotional engagement of mentors and teacher students. These concerns are heightened when cultural differences influence the student-mentor relationship. In order for positive intercultural exchanges to occur between both student and mentor teacher, it is essential for reflection and reflective practice to take place.

Reflection and reflective practice are increasingly important skills to utilise in many professional contexts, including education. In fact, many professions highlight reflection as a key attribute in appropriate professional standards. The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) lists one's capacity to engage in reflective practices among the key attributes of high-performing principals and school leaders (AITSL 2014a) and provides tools such as the AITSL Reflection on Practice Tool (RPT) for teachers, which aims to "support teachers to

reflect on their professional knowledge, practice and engagement with reference to the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers" (AITSL 2014b). Being able to reflect on learning and teaching in the role of a teacher or leader means that purposeful approaches can be taken in order to improve practice. This is also important for students undertaking study in the field of education.

Research on reflection often emanates from seminal work by researchers such as Dewey (1993) and Schön (1983). Dewey's (1993) research explored the idea that people can reflect on both personal and intellectual levels, while Schön's (1983) work extended the concept of reflection *in* and *on* action. This is important for professionals as they reflect throughout their everyday work but also as they *step back* to evaluate how they are going, how they got there, why their work is important and where and when to improve next time. Reflection is a critical component of the work placement for pre-service international teacher education students as it allows them to understand the ways in which their own experiences culturally, linguistically and socially impact on how they interact with others in the workplace and how these experiences can help create learning opportunities for their own students in the classroom.

Reflection occurs at various levels and is a cyclic, not linear, process. Bain, Ballantyne, Mills and Lester (2002) noted that in fact there are five levels of reflection which Ryan and Ryan (2013) collapsed to be called the 4Rs model. These levels increase in complexity and move from the description of, and personal response to, an issue or situation to the use of theory and experience to explain, interrogate and ultimately transform practice (for more, see Chap. 1).

The theoretical approaches described above will be considered in the investigation of the data in this paper.

8.3 Background to the Case Studies: Work Placement for International Student Programs (WISP) Project

The data featured in this chapter come from the large-scale WISP project that explored the experiences of international students during various work placements across a number of disciplinary areas including business, education, engineering, nursing, occupational therapy, psychology and speech pathology. This chapter reports on international students' experience undertaking study in teacher education programmes from three of the university sites involved in the overall project.

8.3.1 University Sites

Site 1 has an enrolment of approximately 45,000 students with over 9000 international students. The Graduate Diploma of Education Secondary programme is a one-year programme that leads to registration as a teacher. Students in the pro-

gramme complete eight core courses across two semesters of study, and this includes two supervised professional experiences in schools (32 and 33 days).

Site 2 has over 53,000 students and 8000+ international students. The largest education international cohort is located within the Masters of Teaching (Early Childhood) course. This is a two-year course, and students undertake 12 core units and four electives. In addition, students undertake 70 days of supervised professional experience in early childhood settings.

Site 3 has 70,000 enrolments and over 26,000 international students. The student participants in this project site came from the Master of Teaching Early Years and the Bachelor of Education in Primary and Early Years. The number of days of work placement varied from 5 to 25 days each semester.

8.4 Research Design and Methods

The data collection for the overall WISP project was both quantitative and qualitative and included a large-scale survey for international students and a range of interviews and focus groups with students, academic staff and placement officers at the university and work placement staff including teacher mentors and site coordinators, as well as a collection of student reports and other artefacts related to the study. For the purpose of this chapter, we have focused on the qualitative interview data at each university site that explored teacher education practices. Table 8.1 outlines how many interviews and/or focus groups were undertaken at each university site.

As mentioned, each site is distinctly different in terms of how many interviews were able to be carried out. For example, more international students were inter-

Table 8.1 Interview/focus data collected at each site

University site	Number of international student interviews/focus groups	Number of university staff interviews/focus groups	Number of work placement staff interviews
1	7 interviews	6 individual interviews with academics	5
	3 focus groups	1 focus group with placement staff	
2	3 individual interviews	Individual interviews:	N/A
		8 with academics	
		3 with placement officers	
		3 with international students	
		4 with administration staff (international student support services, mentoring and support service)	
3	11 individual interviews with 7 students	5 individual interviews and 1 focus group with academics, 2 interviews with placement staff and 1 interview with support staff	6

viewed at Site 1 compared to Sites 2 and 3 while Site 2 had more university staff interviewed. This was due to the fact that ethical considerations at each site impacted on the types of data that was able to be collected, and some international students were not able to be contacted during the practicum. Each site was able to focus on particular aspects of their programme.

8.5 Data Analysis

Each university site collected various data related to teacher education and international students' practicum experiences with each team being responsible for their own data sets. All interviews and focus groups were transcribed and analysed using interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) via a coding system that was also influenced by the theoretical frameworks of multisocialisation, interculturalisation and reflection. IPA explores the lifeworlds and perceptions of the interviewees (Allan et al. 2016; Brocki and Wearden 2006; Callary et al. 2015). After reading and rereading the transcripts, the data was thematically grouped into broad overarching themes. Direct quotations are used to illustrate the findings (Tzanidaki and Reynolds 2011) in this chapter.

According to Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006), a hybrid approach to data analysis, utilising both inductive and deductive coding, is possible. An IPA approach enabled the team to allow themes to reveal themselves upon multiple readings of the transcripts. Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006) describe the process of thematic analysis as a form of pattern recognition within the data, where emerging themes become the categories for analysis (p. 85).

We were then able to code or map points within the data that related to the two frameworks detailed previously. This process ensured rigour by demonstrating integrity and competence within the study (Aroni et al. 1999) via a number of stages. What became apparent as the team worked through the data was that each site was unique and distinct due to the data set that were able to be collected. To ensure that each university site was able to communicate about a significant issue revealed through their own data sets, each is represented in a case study.

8.6 Results

8.6.1 University Site 1

8.6.1.1 The Student, Teacher and University Relationship

The data revealed that the relationship between the international students, their mentor and university staff is critical for practicum success. If this relationship was not positive, then challenges were faced. For example, if the students had

experienced some difficulty during the practicum, they often *reported* that the relationship with their mentor was diminished. Shen, for example, noted that:

> Everything just went wrong and she had to help me and that made her very angry, even more angry at me because she had to help me set things up. (Shen)

Shen said that her mentor teacher expected her to already display high-level *competencies* as a beginning teacher, even though this was her first practicum. Shen *related* and *reasoned* that her mentor should:

> Stand in my shoes and think about my problem, to think about how I feel as an international student and also a new pre-service teacher. (Shen)

On the other hand, Cathy's teacher showed a high level of *ethos* and viewed her more as a teaching colleague:

> I really like my teacher. She's very warm and kind and she's helped me out just being in Australia too. She's invited us for dinner. She makes me feel comfortable in class and she shows what I've done in prac and kind of goes over what she did in her own prac (Cathy).

The ways in which students reflected about their mentors showed how their relationship with them impacted on the practicum's progress—either positively or negatively.

This was also evident in terms of communication and input by university staff. For instance, there was evidence that the expectations from schools differed to what the university had planned. The importance of effective communication between all stakeholders before, during and after the practicum experience was highlighted. This was particularly evident for the students who had done more than one practicum:

> I felt like my teacher didn't really know what to do with me the first couple of days. He never had a prac teacher before, so I had to explain to him why I'm here and go over my outline of the handbook. (Angela)

> My first prac teacher was a little disorganised…but this time it just fits like a glove. My mentor teacher is mentoring me and she's letting me take risks. She's made me feel safe and that's giving me the confidence that I need, so it's been a wonderful experience. She's someone I want to stay in touch with. (Mark)

Further, in the interview data, one student said that her mentor teacher did not expect written lesson plans for every lesson whereas other students spoke about the fact that they were awake until 2:00 am every night planning and preparing for their classes. This inconsistency is mentioned in the literature (Brown 2008), and at this university site, it was confirmed that unless a positive relationship is established between the student and mentor up front then a number of concerns can arise throughout the practicum.

One solution for this positive relationship to occur was offered by a school coordinator for the international students:

> With an international student, I need a teacher with some experience and a bit of maturity about themselves as well, because they are likely going to have to handle some language barriers, they're going to have to explain to parents about if in the classroom there's going to [be a] change the teaching pedagogy. (School coordinator)

While it is important for schools to consider the challenges international students might face, it does ultimately position the students in deficit discourse as highlighted above in a phrase "they are likely to have to handle some language barriers". Not all international students are English as second-language learners; in fact, many of the students at this university site were from English-speaking countries or students whose English is an additional language.

The triadic relationship between international student, university staff and school staff is critical for practicum success.

> If we don't have good support from the university, from the university supervisors to bounce ideas off when they come out here, because then we feel like it's all, it's all sitting on our shoulders. (Teacher mentor)

8.6.1.2 Being Effective Pre-service Teachers and Learners

In terms of competencies, it was important that international students were able to reflect on their progress and start to be able to *reconstruct* their practice by implementing feedback from their mentors, *reasoning* as to why some strategies were more effective than others and *relating* this to theory learnt at university.

Issues arose when mentor teachers provided limited feedback or were not open and honest with the student in relation to areas of weakness or in need of improvement. Wendy, for example, was provided limited feedback from her mentor teacher and was requested to teach in an area that she knew nothing about. This would undoubtedly impact on her competency to teach in this area:

> For my prac two I haven't done any study for English which is my other teaching area…But I have been told to do SOSE [Studies of Society and Environment] as well. It's a really great pressure for me, especially for me as an international student. (Wendy)

On the other hand, a mentor teacher noted that students need to be more agentic in asking for feedback as well as having the capacity to enact this in practice.

> The students need to be a bit more forthcoming to advice given when they're out on practicums…They've got to remember that they come here, that they are a learner, and the fact is that this is all about experience. (Teacher mentor)

8.6.1.3 The Notion of Intercultural Agency (Ethos)

International students face challenges that domestic students often do not. This includes being away from family and friends, often not having transport and having to socialise into a new cultural context. It is therefore critical for their mentors to have an understanding of the challenging situations that international students may face.

> It's just harder—financial reasons. It costs a lot of money when you're an international student…and during the prac I needed to earn some money. So it's really hard because you have to plan the lessons for the day after, but you also have to work. (John)

Being able to identify these challenges and thinking of ways to best support the students is crucial for success and to sustain future positive practices. This site found that each international student faced different challenges and that their own individual personal attributes largely contributed to whether or not they completed their practicum successfully.

> I learn from my mistakes. I'm trying to be a reflective teacher…just trying to be the best teacher I can. (Penny)
>
> With international students…that come to our school have some maturity about them, have already got a degree behind them in the first place anyway and I think that that information is probably critical about me matching them with the most appropriate mentor on staff to have the most successful practicum. (Teacher mentor)

Results from the interview and focus group data showed that students generally enjoyed their practicum experience regardless of whether or not they faced certain challenges. For international students, it was clear that what made the difference was the ways in which their mentor teachers supported and scaffolded them through the practicum via an intercultural and reflective understanding. Equally important was how the international students rose to the occasion and were able to reflect effectively on how to improve their practice and take on board their mentor teachers' feedback.

8.6.2 University Site 2

Most of the international students at this site come from various countries across Asia. The overarching themes of social and linguistic issues and concerns are explored in this storyline.

8.6.2.1 Social Issues and Concerns

Issues surrounding social isolation and exclusion, cultural misunderstandings and linguistic concerns were apparent. Interviewees *reasoned* that many students experienced feelings of homesickness and needed to feel welcomed and assimilated into Australia and university life, as this would help their overall wellbeing, which would positively impact on their studies. One academic said "they get quite a lot of intensive support from us, and I play a role as 'den mother'. Because as I said these young kids, they are homesick, they are lonely and they're deer in the headlights". This was similar to the international student advisor who remarked they find themselves "acting like social workers". She stated "we visit hospitals, call students families, help them to get medical visas… we ensure their visas aren't cancelled". These day-to-day personal encounters significantly impact on students' learning as many do not necessary have the skills to be proactive and act independently. One placement officer found "perhaps some of the Asian students are more reserved than others". A senior administration officer said "the students just don't want to do

anything wrong" even when asked to join staff at lunchtime on placement they "did not want to intrude".

The university provides activities to help students assimilate into Australian and university life. The placement officer found small group settings "really suit, such as the trivia night, they are socialising in small groups, while they certainly get amongst the action they're not particularly leading it". An academic, formerly from another country, recognised "they are away from their families and need a variety of social experiences". Hence, the social activities may assist international students to gain a better understanding of Australia in terms of culture and language:

> We talk about the features of an Australian workplace and the particular importance of networking and social interaction. In our manuals we provide ideas for initiating conversations, and Australian slang terms they might encounter such as 'grab a cuppa'. (International careers and employment officer)

Though support resources (academic skills workshops offered online and face to face, student writing mentor drop-in services, language and learning advisors, email advice service and division of student life offers online resources) are offered, it is not possible to cover every aspect as one student pointed out:

> I was confused by terms commonly used in Australian schools that I didn't know such as *calling the roll* and *put your hands up*…I really needed to work on learning these terms. My supervisor was very helpful, she understood I was a student [teacher] and didn't know everything.

Terminology, codes of conduct, workplace/university expectations and language were often unfamiliar to international students. In some cultures, students see teachers as authority figures and therefore were unfamiliar or uncomfortable with a more collaborative and informal Australian workplace setting. One student placement officer found "international students can struggle with the local *collaborative* style of teaching". She further added:

> Students from places like Japan, where the culture is one of obedience and the teacher is in control, find it confronting to be in a noisy classroom where the teacher is called by her/his first name. In another example a Sri Lankan student told students they were "naughty" compared with students from her country.

8.6.2.2 Linguistic Issues and Concerns

As English often is not the students' first language, one academic who provides support to international students *reasoned* they:

> …find it very difficult to understand local students because of the locals' use of colloquial language. When the locals use text language [for arranging group work etc.], this is even more difficult for the international students.

This was similar for a student who when on placement *related* that:

> The main difficulty I experienced in the placements was with language. But I think they understood I was an international student and I had only been in Australia for five months.

This student *related* and *reasoned* that though she was not fluent in English she:

> …was able to talk to the new Chinese students who didn't speak English, so I felt I could make a contribution to the classroom. The students appreciated this and so did the teacher.

In contrast, another student found her mentor helped her improve her spoken voice by *reasoning* they needed to be more firm, to use a stronger tone and to be more assertive. This cultural difference was evident in other situations where one student reported that they:

> …didn't understand what the students or teacher said. I couldn't always understand the children's expressions for things like toilet requests. And I couldn't remember the children's names because they were so unfamiliar.

These linguistic and cultural differences can at times prove challenging for the international student. Language issues and concerns are paramount when placing students as one placement officer found "the IELTS test does not always seem to be effective". Though they pass the test, this does not necessarily aid them as she further said "some students have an 'awkward' accent" which can be hard to understand. The language issue can create problems when finding a placement as one placement officer reported that they:

> …might make seven to eight calls before I can find a placement. The reasons for refusing student placements include the teacher having too many students that year.

It is sometimes also difficult for the workplace centres to help student with their language problems, as one placement officer identified "they don't have time to help international students with their language and general understanding, or I haven't had great experiences with international students so I don't want another one". It was apparent that mentors can find it difficult to have international students, and some put up barriers as one academic *reasoned*:

> …some will tell you that they are not having any more international students unless they can speak English properly because I'm sick to death of them and they take too much work.

She thought this was being culturally insensitive to the students and found it to be "astonishing" as these organisational work placements "are caring for young children and building young children to be culturally sensitive adults".

In sum, the above results indicate some of the social, cultural and linguistic issues international students experience in a new place and space. It also highlighted aspects of the university and workplace expectations in Australia. Though students, academics and professional staff commented on the various support systems, there is always room for improvement to make the experience a fulfilling one for all stakeholders.

8.6.3 University Site 3

A recurring theme in the data storyline at Site 3 was that of time and timing. Staff and students discussed their suggestions for what they saw as desired placement duration and feedback timing. They talked about lack of time as an issue impacting effective reflection and competency development. The results also identified characteristics of successful placement experiences.

8.6.3.1 Placement Duration

Time was mentioned by students, workplace and university staff as a positive factor in terms of longer placement duration. By that the participants often meant an introductory less-intensive observation period of 1 day per week over several weeks, followed by a full-time block of 2 to 4 weeks. The study participants thought that longer engagement with placement settings allowed for improved socialisation and confidence development opportunities:

> I feel like an outsider because I'm not [on prac] long. Not because I'm international. (Student)
>
> And it's so quick. Everything is shifting, moving and they are quite overwhelmed by it. (Early Childhood Education (ECE) mentor)
>
> Time is a big factor. If I had more time I would organise more gatherings. But the students are time poor as well. […] If the students were there for longer periods, it might be possible to encourage more socialisation. (ECE coordinator)
>
> Time! More time. Placement almost on day one once a week over a period of time for the first semester and then blocks after that. You have time to get to know people. (University staff)

This seemed to be especially true with regards to demonstrating initiative:

> The more time they have, the more initiative they can demonstrate. Or they can be more proactive because they know routines, they know children, they know expectations of families, of management, of their mentor, and they respond much more professionally (ECE mentor).

Longer periods of engagement with educational settings could also provide possibilities for competency development and richer planning experiences. Both students and mentors in Early Childhood Education (ECE) settings felt that students lacked opportunities for developing their curriculum design skills during shorter placements.

The themes of providing opportunities for reflection, skill development and professionalism as mentors and educators were further linked to that of time, or rather, lack of it.

8.6.3.2 (Lack of) Time and (Inappropriate) Time and Timing

Lack of time was found to be the most detrimental factor in fostering relationships and reflective practices in workplaces. Both workplace and university staff stressed the importance of reflection in educational settings and urged students to become reflective learners and practitioners. Mentors talked about time for communication, reflection and feedback provision:

> Probably more time on conversations. More talking with each other, not being in the room. This time is very difficult to find. […] Not on my way from one crying child to another, or the parents who really would like to talk, and [Student 4] asking something, when will you have time? When can I talk to you? It's a very busy environment so there [needs to be] some allocated time when we can sit and talk. We can do it every day after practice. Reflection. [It's better] to react immediately, not save it for the last day. (ECE mentor)

The process of finalising the placement report was often used by mentors as a means to trigger reflection and provide feedback. This often happened towards the end of placement, and such timing was considered problematic.

Lack of allocated mentoring time resulted in conflicting professional priorities and affected mentors' ability to provide appropriate support to their mentees:

> Programming time that educators have—you can't sacrifice that. Even though we are trying to write these reports for students but, unfortunately, it's not our first priority. (ECE mentor)

This issue of insufficient time for mentoring was exacerbated when students had additional needs:

> I guess if I was told by the University that we were having international students, I would approach it differently and assign them an experienced teacher because they are more time consuming. This is an additional responsibility. (Primary school coordinator).

Additional demands also triggered feelings of dissatisfaction and made mentors question the fairness of the situation where they found themselves:

> […] and I'm doing the hands on to gear this person up to get her degree and I'm getting not even 20$ a day and I'm planning lessons painstakingly and the poor girl is stressed out […]. Then I got the next girl in and she grew up in Hong Kong and her English was good but the amount of guidance and work you have to weigh up… I'm expected to reach goals and expectations within my own class but I've got this one student teacher that is draining me…. (Primary school mentor)

8.6.3.3 Respect, Enrichment and Success

Although mentors and university staff certainly recognised existing challenges for international students, workplace staff participants repeatedly stressed the importance of inclusion and advantages that international students bring with them, including programme enrichment in terms of multiculturalism:

> They can promote their culture and I'm heavily using this opportunity to ask them to sing in their language, to give any experiences or games from their childhood, so our children

> can learn to respect different cultures and that English is not the only language in the world. So it's a great opportunity, it's like having a multicultural program non-stop, different cultures. (ECE mentor)

For students, results were important but did not determine success of placement. The student participants wanted to learn and felt they learnt something in each placement, more so when they developed productive relationships with their mentors. The students did engage in extensive reflective practices within their peer support networks and seemed to be aware of the need to be reflective practitioners. However, they made comments about their insufficient engagement in proper reflection practices because their university and workplaces allowed them to "get away with it". The student participants felt that they raised to the challenge when required, especially when expectations were made clear. The students also felt that not all placement settings provided opportunities for rich practicum experiences due to low quality, minimal workplace staff engagement and at times indifference. Supplying such information to universities seemed important to the students at this university site as they believed the next cohort of students would benefit from supportive placement environments and high-quality educational experiences.

Despite the challenges described above, the data at Site 3 demonstrated that the students in this study used skills developed during their work and life experiences that helped them cope in unfamiliar Australian educational contexts. The mentors and workplace coordinators were proud to be mentoring a new generation of educators and felt responsible for their mentees; university staff also expressed feelings of care and deep concern for students' wellbeing and professional development.

8.7 Discussion and Conclusion

Findings from the data across the three sites echo very similar sentiments: relationships and social issues, linguistic issues and time constraints. Breakdowns in the relationship between students, work placement and university staff seem to influence perceived success of placement for students, independent on their actual grade for that practicum. Some staff remembered being in students' "shoes" and did not expect perfection. At the same time, students' strengths were acknowledged, and students themselves expressed their desire to be professionally challenged and wanted to be treated with respect. Mentors' and students' personalities will always present challenges as well as socialisation processes in work placement settings. Many of such issues can be resolved through effective communication and respectful relationship development among all stakeholders.

Placement outcomes can also be affected by students' English language proficiency levels. Although Australian classrooms today are often multicultural and cater for all students, many with different accents, many schools are hesitant to host international students with concerns that the student teacher accents or language inaccuracies will be an issue in school classrooms. Therefore, having a pre-service

teacher from another country can provide the opportunity to build on the ethos of creating culturally sensitive students and adults of the future.

Time constraints will probably always be an issue as universities and schools navigate the challenges of curriculum, assessment and teaching time. The findings of this study indicated that longer periods for school placements would provide time for the development of the pre-service teacher. Perhaps universities need to be very clear on the goals of these placements and the expectations of what can be achieved not only in one placement but across all placements in the full delivery of the programme/course for the student. This would then also allow individual mentors to focus on the goals and objectives for students in each particular placement.

This chapter has discussed the data collected from teacher education sectors across three university sites. Using the conceptual frameworks of multisocialisation, interculturalisation and reflection, the experiences of international teacher education students, their mentors and other stakeholders (school coordinators and university staff) have been presented through three case studies. Although difficulties and issues arise, the students indicated that they have learnt from their experiences. It seemed that treating students as individuals with their own strengths and weaknesses was conducive to successful placement experiences. The data indicated that respectful relationships contribute to professional and personal development of all stakeholders during a work placement. The rich and informative data on the challenges and successful approaches across the three sites in this study add to the body of literature regarding effective ways to improve work placements for international students.

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Chapter 9
International Healthcare Students in Clinical Learning Environments

Kristina Mikkonen, Marianne Pitkäjärvi, and Maria Kääriäinen

9.1 Introduction

For several decades the internationalisation of higher education in healthcare has been growing in line with increasing globalisation. This has enabled people to cross borders and take their professional experience to new countries. Over this period, governments around the world have supported the internationalisation of higher education (de Wit et al. 2015), because it provides a supportive environment for health professionals' development increasing their awareness of diverse cultures, different ways of making decisions (Allen and Ogilvie 2004) and sharing of cultural experiences (Parker and McMillan 2007). However, migration can be challenging in terms of adhering to national regulations for healthcare professionals and maintaining national standards (Cutcliffe et al. 2011). Cultural and linguistic diversity in higher education and professional working environments create both new possibilities and further challenges (Brown 2008). These include opportunities for diverse enriching experiences and risks of negative attitude building, potentially resulting in hidden or open discrimination, social isolation and humiliation (Pitkäjärvi et al. 2012). The greatest challenges arise in clinical placements (Mikkonen et al. 2016a), in which international healthcare students' experiences revolve around their relationships with clinical mentors, other clinical staff and patients.

The clinical learning environment plays a significant role in healthcare students' professional development. The objective of this chapter is to highlight some key factors influencing international students' learning in clinical environments, with a view to helping educators promote an optimal learning environment and good

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clinical mentorship practices for international students. The chapter addresses three main themes: education in culture and communication in clinical learning environment, learning in the clinical environment and key players and their functions. Firstly, we discuss the cultural and linguistic considerations that influence students' success in a clinical learning environment. The second part focuses on important factors for promoting students' learning in a clinical placement, including well-planned orientation, clinical activities and student assessment procedures. The third part discusses the roles of clinical mentors, clinical facilitators and international students in meeting the challenges of intercultural learning.

9.2 Education in Culture and Communication in Clinical Learning Environment

Integrating theoretical knowledge into professional settings through clinical placements plays an essential role in higher healthcare education. Providing opportunities for students to apply their knowledge and demonstrate their skills in authentic clinical settings prepares them as future healthcare professionals (Woodley 2013). However, mentoring international students requires a sound theoretical knowledge base and clinical judgement, good interpersonal skills, teaching and evaluation skills and readiness to act as an advocate of cultural diversity and create a welcoming learning environment (Hall-Lord et al. 2013; Jokelainen et al. 2011; Mikkonen et al. 2016b).

The clinical component of healthcare education generally builds professional competences in "psycho-social support of a patient, procedures and diagnostic test, [healthcare] interventions, infection control, and pharmacological treatment" (Eriksson et al. 2015, p. 63). For international students, clinical placements also build their cultural and linguistic competencies. Competence in the language of the country is critical to success in clinical learning: placements provide opportunities for students to connect with patients and to grow and improve in their use of the local language. Positive experiences of using the new language help students to feel like part of a team (Myhre 2011), facilitate provision of more diverse learning opportunities (Rogan et al. 2006) and help students to consolidate their professional confidence.

Conversely, without culture and language education, the challenges associated with cultural and linguistic diversity may limit students' learning opportunities (Green et al. 2008; Mattila et al. 2010). Feelings of isolation, loneliness and humiliation may arise (Arieli 2013; Jeong et al. 2011), and misunderstandings in communication and students' performance may occur (Green et al. 2008; Jeong et al. 2011; Rogan et al. 2006). Examples of potentially difficult situations include talking on the phone, taking care of terminally ill patients, giving handover reports (San Miguel and Rogan 2009) and handling language barriers in an environment where students are not meant to make mistakes (Pitkäjärvi et al. 2012). Students' accents may also be interpreted as a sign of ignorance or lack of healthcare knowledge and the required clinical skills (Sedgwick et al. 2014). At the same time, students sometimes respond positively to linguistic barriers by developing better nonverbal communication skills (Myhre, 2011) and greater empathy towards other people who struggle with lan-

guage (Koskinen and Tossavainen 2003a). Additionally, empathy from teachers has been shown to lead to better communication by students because they feel free to ask questions, share their worries and interact with others (Mikkonen et al. 2015).

The Hand Model: Cultural Safety in Your Hands is a useful tool for fostering *cultural awareness*, *cultural connections*, *communication*, *negotiation* and *advocacy* (Mackay et al. 2012). It could be introduced to international students and their clinical mentors from the beginning of their relationship to build shared understanding and enhance their experience of cultural and linguistic diversity. The aspects of the five levels (aspects of cultural diversity and communication) considered are summarised in Table 9.1 and outlined below.

At the *cultural awareness* level, students can be taught to recognise their own culture while also learning to respect other cultures. Information about the host country's healthcare systems and providers can be introduced to the students, along with an explanation of the significance and meaning of cultural diversity in that context.

At the *connection* level, students learn more about cultural differences by making connections with people from the local and other cultures. Educators can maximise opportunities to bring international students together with domestic students in order to promote peer support.

The *communication* level involves integrating knowledge of the verbal and written language with understanding of nonverbal meanings and clinical vocabulary. It

Table 9.1 *A hand model: cultural safety in your hands* integrated for international healthcare students

Shared meaning	
Awareness	Recognition of student's/mentor's own culture
	Acceptance of student's/mentor's own culture
	Respect for all other cultures
	Looking at other cultures' healthcare system and principles
Connection	Culturally appropriate connection with client, family, other students
	Connection through knowledge, communication skills and acknowledgement of cultural differences
Communication	Verbal and written language
	Nonverbal communication
	Clinical vocabulary and norms
	Collaborative skills
Negotiation	Reaching out to the other
	Mutual understanding with mutual agreement
	Encouraging student to be self-directed learner
	Enhancing autonomy and self-responsibility in learning
	Accepting cultural diversity
	Creating safe environment for learning
Partnership and advocacy	Supporting student's interaction with the client
	Enhancing client's safety and confidence in student's ability to perform
	Building a mentorship relationship

is also important to practice collaborative skills, firstly with other students and then with clinical mentors and other clinical staff. Linguistic challenges in clinical education include learning clinical terminology and abbreviations, knowing how to interact with clinical staff and patients, exchanging health information with patients and other parties involved in their care, documentation, conducting handovers, asking for guidance from clinical mentors when necessary, and understanding different dialects. Cultural aspects include learning small talk suitable to the host country, reading and acting on nonverbal cues from patients, developing appropriate behaviours and *bedside manner*, recognising and being able to apply local social norms and understanding cultural behaviour patterns (San Miguel and Rogan 2009, 2012; Rogan et al. 2006; Seibold et al. 2007).

At the *negotiation* level, students start to reach out towards the different other by learning to express mutual understanding and mutual agreement. Students are encouraged to be self-directed learners, taking responsibility for their own learning and professional development. The concept of autonomy can pose major challenges for students from collectivistic cultures, who may need therefore more support by clinical facilitators early in their placements. Generally, in the collectivistic cultures' characteristic of many Asian, African, First Nations, Native American, Arab, Latin and Southern European countries, group goals are prioritised over personal goals, and a sense of *we* is more important than *I*. By contrast the opposite is true of *individualistic* cultures which are common in, for example, the United States, Australia and Northern Europe (Thompson 2012, 2013).

At the final level, *partnership and advocacy*, the students enter their clinical placement and start interacting with patients, enhancing patients' safety and growing in their confidence and ability to perform their duties. At this point support from clinical mentors and facilitators to build safe and sustaining relationships with students is needed (Mikkonen and Kääriäinen 2016). *A Hand Model: Cultural Safety in Your Hands* may be introduced to and used by clinical facilitators and mentors for this purpose.

By carrying out this kind of cultural and language learning exercise prior to a clinical placement, students have a better understanding of expectations about their performance and behaviour during the placement. Furthermore, such education boosts students' confidence in problem-solving and decision-making, provides them with a more successful learning experience and reduces their anxiety about starting a new clinical placement (San Miguel and Rogan 2009; Rogan and San Miguel 2013). Students may also develop confidence in requesting assistance when unsure of the correct response to a patient's request for help (San Miguel and Rogan 2009). Finally, students can learn to challenge any unacceptable staff behaviours, which are not compatible with supporting students' learning needs (Rogan et al. 2006).

Ideally, diverse channels and pedagogical strategies should be used in culture and language education, including visual and audio learning methods, simulations, and accessible online materials, to encourage continual learning and development (Rogan and San Miguel 2013; Seibold et al. 2007). Intensive language workshops may be offered prior to the first clinical placements (Rogan and San Miguel 2013), but continued opportunities for language learning may still be needed to address

challenges that arise during clinical placements and further develop language proficiency (San Miguel and Rogan 2009; Pitkäjärvi et al. 2012).

9.3 Learning in the Clinical Environment

9.3.1 Orientation

A well-planned and thorough orientation provides students with a clear picture of the function and purpose of a clinical placement. This reinforces the professional nature of their learning and establishes an atmosphere of appreciation and recognition of the students as future professionals (Robinson et al. 2008; Worrall 2007). The orientation process should include a thorough introduction to the students as this gives clinical mentors critical information about their students, including their cultural background, previous education, and experiences in the healthcare field. This can be accomplished by allowing clinical mentors access to students' professional portfolios. To facilitate easy and quick introduction of individual students, some organisations have designed curriculum-vitae-type documents, which the students keep updated throughout their studies and present as the first step of orientation into a placement. Similarly, the students should have access to essential information about key parameters of the placement, such as daily schedules, routines and traditions, safety regulations, mentorship protocols and expectations of students' performance (Woodley 2013).

There is greater risk of misunderstanding and confusion in clinical mentorship when there is inadequate knowledge about the international students' background, their learning outcomes and any regulations set by their higher education institutions. Unorganised clinical learning practices may cause problems with clinical mentoring (Jeong et al. 2011), leading to absenteeism and feelings of frustration (Koskinen and Tossavainen 2003b). In such situations students may even feel invisible at the beginning of a clinical placement (Sedgwick et al. 2014).

Cultural differences at the start of a clinical placement can cause distress for international students (Green et al. 2008) and engender feelings of helplessness. As suggested above, without appropriate culture and language studies prior to a practice period, there are much greater risks that it will have a difficult start or be unsuccessful. International students may critically compare and unfavourably interpret cultural aspects of patients' care that differ from characteristic practices in their native culture (Grant and McKenna 2003; Green et al. 2008). Students may feel that they have to compromise their own cultural values, for instance, finding it uncomfortable to challenge requests from clinical staff because they see them as the "big boss" (Rogan et al. 2006). That is why international students need additional support from their clinical mentors and require additional time to learn, especially in the beginning of their placement (Mikkonen et al. 2016a).

Whilst adapting, students become more aware of any differences in healthcare practice and nursing culture. On one hand, this may make them appreciate healthcare in their own country more. On the other hand, reflecting on both previous knowledge and new experiences promotes the development of their analytical thinking and may lead to an appreciation of the positive aspects of a different culture and its approach to healthcare. Comparisons often relate to differences in healthcare professionals' status, hierarchy and level of autonomy between home and host countries (Grant and McKenna 2003; Green et al. 2008; Myhre 2011). Students move from a micro to a macro transition over time (Grant and McKenna 2003), as their focus gradually shifts from critically comparing small details towards a broader understanding of healthcare and its organisation in the new country (Green et al. 2008). The transition process can eventually become a rewarding experience (Grant and McKenna 2003) involving a conscious normalisation of the differences as students become accustomed to new professional ways of working and cultural norms and values and develop greater tolerance towards the other culture (Green et al. 2008).

Students do not just experience cultural differences at work during their clinical placements but also when socialising with others and interacting with the wider population (Green et al. 2008). Evidence suggests that having international experience gives students a more holistic understanding of patient care (Green et al. 2008) and that linguistic and cultural difficulties help them relate to patients who are helpless in their own situation (Myhre 2011; Mikkonen et al. 2016a).

9.3.2 *Creating Meaningful Activities*

Opportunities for international students to practice their clinical skills may be limited due to the cultural and linguistic challenges. A key constraint can be that students need to consistently prove their own competence and to counter distrust shown to them by staff, patients and domestic students (Jeong et al. 2011; Mattila et al. 2010; Sedgwick et al. 2014). Otherwise, learning opportunities may be limited to observation (Green et al. 2008; Pitkäjärvi et al. 2012), basic patient care or performing tasks which are not relevant to their learning needs (Mattila et al. 2010). This conflicts with good practice for clinical learning in healthcare education. Due to the constant need for students to prove their ability as responsible learners, they can end up learning mainly through trial and error, losing their motivation (Mattila et al. 2010), or even failing the clinical practice period.

These problems are illustrated by the following Cases 1–3 by interviewees in a recent project on international students' experiences in a clinical learning environment. Other illustrative cases drawn from the same source are also reported in this chapter.

Experiences of being from a minority ethnic or cultural group in the host country (Grant and McKenna 2003; Green et al. 2008) can place students in a vulnerable position and expose them to risks of social isolation and rejection (Jeong et al. 2011). Without creating a system which can foster an atmosphere of belonging for

Cases 1 to 3 of International Students' Experiences in a Clinical Learning Environment

After her third placement, a 35-year-old international female student from Europe observed that domestic students received more challenging and more interesting tasks without having to ask for them. She felt that domestic students received higher-quality clinical education than international students. She expressed a view that staff were less willing to invest in teaching international students, which she found discouraging.

A similar case was shared by a 44-year-old European female student who expressed frustration and blamed herself for allowing staff and mentors to boss her around. The student demonstrated her willingness to help in situations where she felt that an extra pair of hands was needed. As an exchange student, she felt that she was exploited by being expected to help in the performance of basic practical nursing tasks, without getting opportunities to learn the more specialised procedures required for a professional nurse.

A 28-year-old female student from Asia experienced that sometimes, at really busy times of the day, mentors did not have time to explain things or even talk with students. She said that during such times, when a student does not understand the clinical situation at all, all he/she can do is follow the mentor around with a blank brain or perform tasks on command like a robot.

international students (Sedgwick et al. 2014), there is a risk of leaving space for direct or hidden discrimination to arise (Arieli 2013; Mattila et al. 2010). These issues are illustrated by Cases 4–6.

Clinical mentors need to adopt varied and flexible teaching methods in order to mentor international students effectively (Koskinen and Tossavainen 2003b). International students may take longer to perform a task than domestic students, partly because it takes them longer to assimilate verbal instructions (Jeong et al. 2011). Additional time and patience can create a safe environment for students to ask questions about performing tasks correctly. Positive experiences in clinical settings have a positive influence on the student's self-esteem. For international students such positive experiences have particularly significant and unique value as they promote integration into the society at large (Mattila et al. 2010). Saying good things about a student in the presence of other staff members, allowing autonomy with tasks whenever possible and showing trust are valuable ways of promoting positive learning experiences (Mattila et al. 2010), as illustrated by Case 7 and 8.

Safety lies at the core of all healthcare. Therefore, overcoming a potential language barrier is important. One way to ensure safe practice is asking the student to explain their intended actions prior to care interventions. Adhering to structured methods of communication while giving oral or written reports about patients' health status (e.g. the ISBAR mnemonic tool—Identify, Situation, Background, Assessment and Recommendation) helps to ensure clarity of communication. Plentiful use of visual aids supports learning (O'Reilly and Milner 2015). Dictionaries should be available in all units hosting international students.

Cases 4 to 6 of International Students' Experiences in a Clinical Learning Environment

A 24-year-old European female student felt isolated on the wards, unable to participate in social interactions and afraid to ask questions. The student felt that the language barrier caused her to miss out on learning opportunities. She observed that many of the staff were unwilling to take the time to explain things to her in simpler language or in English. She often felt like a burden to the ward and that they would have preferred that she was not there.

Two female African students in their twenties felt that the wards they worked in were unfriendly and cold towards international students. One of them felt that it had been a mistake to choose healthcare as a major. She expressed discouragement and frustration. She found that language competence was considered more important than the student's subject knowledge on the course. She would have liked to have been better appreciated by clinical staff because she was making an effort to learn and speak the domestic language, instead of being despised because of her still-developing language skills. Both students said that discrimination and racism were present on the wards and wished that the schools would intervene or even cancel the international degree programmes altogether rather than allowing students to go through such experiences. The second student felt saddened and worried for her fellow classmates as they had been bullied, mocked and treated very badly. It was shocking to her that some healthcare workers were disrespectful towards international students. She said that it is not easy to quickly adapt to a new country and learn the language straightaway. She also said that the way the students were treated discourages them and affects them in a very negative way so, for example, a little understanding from nurses would help.

A 35-year-old African female student felt that international students are not treated well in clinical placements because of language barriers. In her experience isolation was a common issue, with experienced healthcare staff gossiping about her without any justification.

9.3.3 Assessment and Evaluation

Ensuring that learning outcomes, continuous assessment and final evaluation are thoroughly planned is important for providing students an effective clinical learning experience (Elcigil and Sari 2008). Students should receive guidance to plan their own learning outcomes in the clinical environment and be supportively evaluated by healthcare professionals. Assessment of clinical learning should allow enough time for clinical reflection as this contributes to the students' personal and professional development (Myhre 2011). This involves considering different approaches to care (Green et al. 2008), critical thinking and reflection on theory and practice (Mattila et al. 2010), making connections between basic concepts and healthcare practice and the student's personal and professional growth (Myhre 2011). These issues are

Cases 7 and 8 of International Students' Experiences in a Clinical Learning Environment

A 26-year-old female student from Europe expressed only positive experiences during her clinical placements. She felt that the healthcare staff understood that she was an international student and they responded by speaking a little more slowly to her or using simpler language. She did not experience any differences in attitudes towards her compared with domestic students. She received a lot of support from the staff, and they encouraged her to speak more bravely. Patients were also understanding, and there were no problems arising from the fact that she did not speak the local language perfectly. Because of the supportive learning environment, the student noticed that with every clinical placement, her language skills improved.

A 25-year-old male student from Africa said that his clinical practice was great despite the language. He received a lot of support from the healthcare staff. His language skills improved a lot, and he really loved and enjoyed the clinical practice.

Case 9 of International Students' Experiences in a Clinical Learning Environment

A 27-year-old female student from North America described experiencing formative assessment, when she directly asked her mentor for feedback, as a "false positive" feedback. She gave an example of a time when her mentor said, "Oh yes, you're doing very well. Maybe you could work on this a little." However, when her clinical facilitator from the university came to the final evaluation, many problematic issues relating to this student were suddenly raised, regarding, for example, an occasion when the student was left to take care of patients alone for a day, since her mentor was in charge of the ward. At the end of the shift, the mentor wrote a lengthy email about the student being a threat to patient safety. It did not mention that, despite the student being such a safety risk, the mentor herself/himself entrusted the care of her patients to the student for the entire day. The mentor recommended that the student be failed and "kindly" timed this recommendation so that it would be received on the day of the student's final evaluation. The student felt frustrated because she had expected honesty from her mentors, and she felt that she had not had a chance to prove her competence: instead, she was just waved off with a confused look on her face.

illustrated by Case 9, with emphasis where assessment and evaluation are poor, and there is inadequate reflection; serious problems can arise for the student.

Reflection helps the clinical mentors to determine students' learning needs (Myhre 2011) and to provide continual feedback (Mattila et al. 2010). It also helps students to voice possible anxieties about their clinical placement (San Miguel and

Rogan 2009) and can be used to help international and domestic students connect and to encourage students to share their experiences of clinical learning (Grant and McKenna 2003; Rogan et al. 2006). Moreover, reflection can be used by clinical facilitators, clinical mentors and international students to review the purpose of students' learning in their clinical placements, support students to gain confidence (Rogan et al. 2006) and validate both their learning and importance.

9.4 Key Players and Their Functions

9.4.1 Intercultural Clinical Mentor

The clinical mentor's role draws on his/her knowledge in healthcare, clinical judgement and decision-making and teaching and evaluation skills. Clinical mentorship is also shaped by the mentor's personal characteristics and interpersonal skills (Ferrara 2012; Madhavanpraphakaran et al. 2014; McIntosh et al. 2014; Omansky 2010). An additional element of the clinical mentor's role, for international students, is to be an intercultural mediator who helps them to handle cultural diversity and any differences in patient care whilst adapting to a new cultural environment and connecting with other staff involved in the placement. The clinical mentor has a responsibility to demonstrate intercultural sensitivity and to be aware of the cultural challenges that may arise. Having a mentor who is an effective intercultural mediator may reduce students' stress (Koskinen and Tossavainen 2003a), help them to understand the culture and behaviours in the host country and increase empathy and positive humility towards others (Koskinen and Tossavainen 2003a). The importance of this is illustrated by Cases 10 to 12.

Insufficient time and other workload pressures on clinical mentors can increase their stress levels (Pitkäjärvi et al. 2012), creating risks that they may become less tolerant in dealing with students' learning processes and time demands. It may be necessary to increase the motivation, incentives and capacities of clinical staff to mentor international students, for instance, by suggesting appropriate pedagogical strategies, reducing patient loads for the duration of a placement (Pitkäjärvi et al. 2012), sharing mentorship responsibilities with other colleagues (Pitkäjärvi et al. 2011) and/or increasing the rewards for mentoring international students (Pitkäjärvi et al. 2012). Offering staff further education in mentoring may also lead to more consistency of experience and understanding around cultural diversity and effective ways to mentor international students. Designating some clinical staff as specialist mentors for international students may enable them to develop better capacities for handling communication and cultural challenges in the clinical learning environment and reducing the stressful situations associated with such placements (Jeong et al. 2011). These issues are illustrated by Cases 13 and 14.

Clinical staff can enhance opportunities to mentor and work with international students (Jeong et al. 2011) by encouraging reciprocal learning and variety

Cases 10 to 12 of International Students' Experiences in a Clinical Learning Environment

A 22-year-old female student from Europe said that her mentors were really kind and attentive to her, despite other staff not wanting to help her. An example was when one nurse shouted at her because she could not understand the student. After the incident the student almost lost her motivation, but the mentor helped her by talking with the nurse.

A 33-year-old African male student was grateful to his mentor for accepting him as a culturally different student. He felt that he had the best mentor with a background of multicultural experiences. He experienced the mentor helping other healthcare staff to consider and respect his own learning goals during the clinical placement.

A 22-year-old European female student mentioned that language barriers were her biggest obstacles to learning. She had to spend a lot of time translating documents and procedural guidelines. All the healthcare staff (especially her mentor) tried to help her, making her feel comfortable and stay motivated to keep learning the domestic language during the clinical placement in order to practice her clinical skills.

Cases 13 and 14 of International Students' Experiences in a Clinical Learning Environment

A 24-year-old female student from Europe completed a placement in which she had 13 mentors within 4 weeks: sometimes the mentor changed almost every day. She did not develop any relationship with her named mentor during this placement.

A 32-year-old female student from Africa said that on two occasions her mentor preferred working alone or with fellow colleagues rather than with her, because the mentor could not communicate well with her due to the language barrier.

(Pitkäjärvi et al. 2012). Involving students in clinical decision-making as a team member further minimises the feeling of being an outsider and helps students to mature into future professionals (Mattila et al. 2010). Moreover, a positive pedagogical atmosphere enables students to take pride in being able to take care of their own patients (Grant and McKenna 2003), taking care of concepts into the placement (Myhre, 2011) and building a bond with patients (Rogan et al. 2006). Students can grow through taking responsibility when they are entrusted with clinical tasks by staff (Myhre 2011).

Absence of a positive pedagogical atmosphere in a clinical placement can have the opposite effect. Clinical staff may have inappropriate expectations of students'

language skills and their ability to perform different types of professional tasks independently (Mattila et al. 2010). Expectations may be too demanding and unfair compared with the demands placed on domestic students (Rogan et al. 2006). Students' confidence may decrease as the pressure builds on them (San Miguel and Rogan 2009), leading to restricted learning (Mattila et al. 2010). International students may be neglected or left alone without any supervision (Mattila et al. 2010; Rogan et al. 2006). Problems can be caused by telling students what to do instead of including them in decision-making (San Miguel and Rogan 2009), not acknowledging their cultural and professional backgrounds (Seibold et al. 2007), getting angry at them because of language limitations (Mattila et al. 2010) and demanding that they must be active despite being ignored and poorly mentored (Pitkäjärvi et al. 2012). Moreover, any suspicion and apprehensive behaviour by staff may cause patients to have doubts and treat the international students unkindly (Mattila et al. 2010; Pitkäjärvi et al. 2012), as illustrated by Cases 15 and 16.

Cases 15 and 16 of International Students' Experiences in a Clinical Learning Environment

A 46-year-old male student from North America mentioned that when he completed medical procedures in a manner that was not acceptable—including being too slow when attempting to do the steps correctly—he was never offered another chance to do those procedures. The lack of positive reinforcement left him feeling that his mentor thought he was doing everything wrong. He thought he was meeting clients' needs on all levels but was still left feeling that his work was substandard. By the third week, his mentor made it clear that she would rather work without him following her, rather than continue to teach. The student said that while he did not suffer from discrimination because of his language failings, he did feel isolated and often neglected, for instance, not being shown any new procedures. He felt it was obvious that the mentor found it too laborious to explain the procedures and allow him to learn.

A 22-year-old female student from Europe experienced negative attitudes. She recognised that mentors were busy and lacked time. She also noted that mentors did not get additional financial rewards for mentoring. At the same time, she felt that the staff's behaviour was unfair because they had been students themselves and experienced being on clinical placements in the past. The other issue was time. As the mentor needed to guide the student without her own workload being reduced, she had little time to properly mentor the student and answer her questions. Everything was rushed through and the expectations upon students only grew. This student also experienced a lack of trust, which hindered her learning because she was not allowed to do much with or without her mentor. The negative attitude was also reflected in the way her mentor referred to her as the "student" the whole time.

9.4.2 Clinical Facilitator

The clinical facilitator has the responsibility for guiding students' learning during their clinical placement. The clinical facilitator seeks to balance the needs and requirements of students with the demands of the clinical placement. In cases where facilitators cannot be present during placements, the university should make other arrangements to provide students with the pedagogical supervision required. During this era of digitalised services, video conferencing and other virtual platforms have been successfully used for such purposes. There is evidence to suggest that the presence of the clinical facilitator promotes a student's confidence in becoming an independent future professional (Rogan et al. 2006). Facilitators' presence may be manifested as visits to the clinical placement, provision of feedback or taking time to explain and answer questions (Rogan et al. 2006). Evidence further indicates that international students' professional development in placements is enhanced through the facilitators' support, attention and advocacy (Seibold et al. 2007), as illustrated by Case 17.

9.4.3 Students

Students develop coping mechanisms despite facing cultural and linguistic challenges in clinical learning environments (Grant and McKenna 2003). Taking initiative to learn and handle new situations helps students to build their own coping strategies (Grant and McKenna 2003). International students' determination to succeed and their desire to learn to communicate and behave according to the customs of the host country are reportedly strong (Rogan et al. 2006). Students also find that staying true to their own values of care keeps them motivated (Grant and McKenna 2003). Furthermore, making connections between previous and new experiences helps students to learn during clinical placements (Grant and McKenna 2003; Green et al. 2008). Students need to have opportunities to complete clinical placements with real patients rather than practicing through simulation alone (San Miguel and

Case 17 of International Student's Experiences in a Clinical Learning Environment

A 27-year-old female student from Asia was hoping for more guidance and involvement from her clinical facilitator, especially in areas where she lacked confidence in her clinical skills. She commented that the learning experience during the placement was otherwise good, improving her knowledge and skills in providing care to patients. However, she felt that this was partly due to her having a previous degree in the same field from her own country, which made it easier for her.

Cases 18 and 19 of International Students' Experiences in a Clinical Learning Environment

A 19-year-old male student and a 28-year-old female student from Europe declared that the only way to learn was through their own motivation. They felt that if they have motivation and positive attitudes, it is possible to reach all their targets.

A 36-year-old female from Africa saw learning as a process which required her positivity and urge to learn the language. During her placement she managed to progress and build confidence in her language skills by being patient.

Rogan 2009). Although international students build individual strategies to cope with any cultural and linguistic difficulties, there is still a risk that they may start to minimise any negative experiences such as being treated unfairly in grading (Arieli 2013) or giving up on their education (Mattila et al. 2010).

Self-determination, self-direction and motivation are known to be important for students' success in clinical learning environments (Koskinen and Tossavainen 2003a, b; San Miguel and Rogan 2012). These qualities may be demonstrated by students taking the initiative and seeming to adjust to the cultural and linguistic differences they experience (Koskinen and Tossavainen 2003b). They can also be manifested as assertiveness and proactive behaviour, including students taking responsibility for their own learning (San Miguel and Rogan 2012), as shown by Cases 18 and 19.

9.5 Summary

Higher education in healthcare gives international students opportunities to experience different cultural thinking, ways of making decisions and approaches to solving problems. Students can enjoy the advantage of experiencing patient care from different perspectives while learning to appreciate their own cultural and professional healthcare traditions. Students may gain a sense of achievement from living and working in different countries. Furthermore, they may help disseminate global developments in healthcare. Students can improve their career prospects by gaining a wider range of professional working opportunities. International education gives students valuable experiences such as challenging themselves, connecting previous experiences with new ones and growing in confidence while facing practical challenges in a new country (Grant and McKenna 2003; Green et al. 2008). This chapter has identified and discussed some of the key factors involved in ensuring that international students have successful learning experiences in clinical settings. Prior education in communication and culture plays an essential role in reducing experiences of social isolation and stress and dealing with language barriers, thereby

improving students' clinical learning. Key players in the clinical learning environment are also critical, specifically intercultural mentors who can help create an environment conducive to learning, clinical facilitators who can support international students particularly in the beginning of placements and international students themselves who must have determination to learn.

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Chapter 10
Revisiting Cultural and Linguistic Diversity in Speech Pathology Programs in Australia: Listening to the Voices of Staff and International Students

Simone Howells, Marleen Westerveld, and Susanne Garvis

10.1 Introduction

Speech pathologists are university-trained allied health professionals who assess, diagnose, and treat communication and/or swallowing difficulties in individuals across the life span (Speech Pathology Australia 2016). In an increasingly global market, speech pathology programs the world over graduate students from a range of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, who complete their studies enrolled as either domestic or international students. This diversity in the profession is to be celebrated, as previous research in Australia has clearly shown that a mismatch exists between the linguistic and cultural diversity of our speech pathology workforce and the clients we service (McLeod 2011; Williams and McLeod 2012).

In Australia, entry into the speech pathology profession is dictated by Competency Based Occupational Standards (CBOS) which describe the minimum skills, knowledge, and professional standards required for entry-level practice (Speech Pathology Australia 2011). In order to do this and satisfy degree program accreditation requirements, speech pathology programs in Australia comprise a significant work placement component (also known as clinical placement). Speech pathology students across Australia and in some other parts of the world (e.g. Hong Kong) are assessed during their work placement using the COMPASS(R) tool, which is a competency-based assessment that comprises professional competencies and CBOS competencies. Combined, these competencies determine overall competency in speech pathology practice (McAllister et al. 2013).

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10.2 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this chapter is situated learning within workplaces (Billett 2011). This perspective acknowledges that workplaces are highly structured and individuals learn how to navigate within the settings to allow continuity of the community. Learning as such occurs "through practice, through errors and by processes of observation and imitation, practice and the direct guidance of experienced co-workers" (Billett 2011, p. 13). Billett (2001) argues that workplace activities are structured by a number of different factors that influence the quality of learning that occurs. Factors include historical, cultural and situational factors. The practices within the workplace also determine the kinds of activities that individuals participate in and create guidance for how people within them learn. Interactions between people are continuously shaped by practices. In this case, the workplace is both the university and the training workplace (i.e. clinical placement) for the speech pathology students. A key feature within this framework is that concepts of learning of professional practice need to emphasise the role of personal epistemologies and agencies (Billett 2009). In order to develop effective professional practice, students are required to be agentic in their control of their own professional practice. Thus, allowing students to become agents of change is seen as an important goal for both professional preparation and ongoing development within the workplace. In the cases presented later in this chapter, we explore episodes of agentic moments that allow international students to exercise their own agency.

10.3 Focus of the Chapter

The focus of this chapter is to provide a snapshot of international students studying speech pathology. This chapter will present three vignettes: one from a clinical placement officer who is instrumental in assisting students to be placement -ready at the university and two from graduated international students to explore their experiences within a speech pathology context. Trends emerge from the retellings of the students around cultural and linguistic diversity. The students also offer advice for program improvement as they reflect on their own needs prior to and during their two-year speech pathology degree course. The chapter concludes with a section on considerations for the future to best accommodate the needs of international students studying speech pathology in Australia, with the ultimate aim to ensure a successful study and work experience.

10.4 Workplace-Based Learning in Speech Pathology

Clinical placements provide students with the opportunity to develop clinical skills as well as skills in reflection and self-evaluation (Speech Pathology Australia 2005). Placements may occur in a range of workplace settings where speech pathologists work, including schools, community centres and hospitals. Not only do students on placement need to possess adequate knowledge, skills and personal attributes to succeed (Best et al. 2005), they also need to adjust to the language, culture and practices in these many and varied workplace settings in which they undertake placement (Remedios and Webb 2005). This can often be a daunting task for students and particularly international students (Attrill et al. 2015; Remedios and Webb 2005). During these clinical experiences, students are supervised by a qualified speech pathologist, known as a clinical educator (CE). The CE role is to supervise, teach, support and assess the student in the clinical environment (Stewart 2013). The value of the CE-student relationship in a clinical placement cannot be underestimated, and in a recent study carried out by Attrill et al. (2015), both domestic and international speech pathology students identified the importance of the CE relationship as being central to placement success. Also involved in the clinical education of students are the university placement staff, often comprised of speech pathology academics (who are qualified speech pathologists) and administration staff (such as a clinical placement officer). The role the university staff play varies but may include working with students for health and safety training requirements, allocating placements, liaising with CEs about placement queries and student concerns and providing direct student support through discussion and supervision at the placement site.

10.5 International Students in Speech Pathology Programs in Australia

From an economic standpoint, the value of international students to the Australian economy is substantial. From 2009 to 2014, international students injected $18.5 billion into the Australian university sector which in turn has led to the creation of jobs and benefited the tourism industry (Group of Eight Australia 2014). According to the latest OECD report, 10% of students enrolled in health and welfare programs in Australia were international enrolments (OECD 2015). At a speech pathology level, according to the most recent available data, international enrolments comprised of 7.9% of all students studying speech pathology in Australia (Health Workforce Australia 2014).

Given that a significant component of speech pathology programs are made up of clinical placement time and that a range of cultural and linguistic adaptations may be needed by international students on placement, it is important to explore what the implications of this may be for student success. Work carried out by Attrill

et al. (2012) revealed that international students required more placement support, experienced higher placement failure, and needed more supplementary placements than domestic students. This finding suggests that university programs need to ensure international students are well supported, not just in the academic aspects of the program but also in the clinical placement components.

Two major categories identified in the literature that international students may have difficulty with in the clinical environment are communication issues and cultural issues (Andrade 2006; Bolderston et al. 2008; Goldbart et al. 2005; Remedios and Webb 2005). Communication issues may mean the student has difficulties with written or verbal communication and/or the ability to understand the verbal and non-verbal information that is being communicated, whereas cultural issues can encompass difficulties understanding various cultures including the clinical, patient, supervisor and/or peer cultures (Remedios and Webb 2005). The theme of communication issues impacting international students on speech pathology placements was further reinforced with the work of Attrill et al. (2015) who interviewed 23 international students about their perspectives on clinical placement. The authors found that, particularly for students where English was not a first language, communication skills were perceived by the students to negatively influence their competency development and placement assessment. The same cohort of international students also reported feeling burdened by "constantly attending to their own communication as well as their clients, whilst still learning their professional craft and competencies" (Attrill et al. 2015, p. 319). Compounding these communication and cultural issues is the often corresponding lack of confidence that international students reportedly experience (Attrill et al. 2015; Bolderston et al. 2008). These factors may combine to ultimately result in the international student taking longer to develop the required competencies (Attrill et al. 2015; Quail et al. 2013).

Although much of this discussion so far has focused on the unique challenges that *international* students may experience during clinical placement, it has been suggested in the allied health literature that cultural and/or linguistic status may contribute significantly to student success on placement, regardless of whether the student is considered international or domestic (Attrill et al. 2012; Clouten et al. 2006). That is, a student from an English-as-an-additional-language background and/or from a culture quite different to Western culture, but who is enrolled as a domestic student, may experience more difficulties (e.g. difficulties reaching the required competencies) on placement than an international student whose first language was English and who is from a Western culture.

Navigating the potential language issues and culture of the clinical environment is a process that CEs can support all students through, including international students. In the Attrill et al. (2015) study, both domestic and international students reported that "open communication, transparent expectations and regular feedback from the CE assisted to establish beneficial relationships and learning from the placement outset" (p. 318). The unique needs of international students in this regard, however, also extend to include direct instruction as well as modelling of the desired skills and behaviours (Attrill et al. 2015). The CEs' expectations of all students may also be challenging for international students. The literature indicates that CEs

expect students to be independent, self-directed and assertive learners (Attrill et al. 2015; Ladyshewsky 1996), though this is not always made explicit to students on placement. Currently in Australia there is no "set" training or accreditation process that speech pathologists undertake to become CEs, with many different organisations (including universities and workplace-based organisations) instead offering their own training module/s, which may or may not cover information and strategies about working with students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. It is important CEs feel equipped to be able to support international students, and one means of doing this would be through targeted training in this area.

10.5.1 The Lived Experience of International Students

This chapter is interested in the lived experience of the international students during their time in the speech pathology program. A narrative approach was implemented. Narrative has been taken to "refer to a discourse form in which events and happenings are configured into a temporal unity by means of a plot" (Polkinghorne 1995, p. 5). Narrative research in contemporary times can also free social scientists from the rhetorical forms (Emihovich 1995) that alienate people from their own traditions. In this case, it allows the actual lived experience of the international students to be presented within qualitative data. The intention is that readers engage with the stories and begin to reflect. The stories are constructed from "a metaphorical three-dimensional inquiry space" (Clandinin and Connelly 2000, p. 50) and fosters engagement with the "story as data" (Pinnegar and Daynes 2007, p. 7). It enables the authors to capture and communicate the emotional nature of our lived experience as well as capturing the dynamic nature of these lived experiences (Clandinin and Connelly 2000). In this chapter, vignettes have been created to capture the lived experiences of working with or of being an international student completing a graduate-entry speech pathology program at an Australian university. The clinical placement officer's experience is used to illuminate the university's perspective. To provide the reader with a better understanding of the placement officer's and students' context, a brief overview of the course, the faculty, and its student cohorts is provided below, followed by the first vignette.

10.5.2 The Current Context

The speech pathology course is a two-year (four semesters in duration) graduate entry course. The course has an average enrolment of 70 students annually (across the 2 years), comprised of approximately 10% international enrolments at any one time. The majority of the students are female, speak English as a first language, and are born in Australia or New Zealand (Howells et al. 2016). To qualify for entry into the Master of Speech Pathology (MSP) program, students whose first language is a

language other than English need to complete the International English Language Testing System (IELTS 2016) and obtain a score of 7.5 or higher for speaking and listening.

The MSP course utilises a Problem Based Learning Curriculum (PBL) (Whitehill et al. 2014). This involves students convening in small groups of 7–9 students twice a week (3 h each) where under the guidance of a PBL facilitator (who is an experienced speech pathologist), students work through 30 clinical case scenarios over the first three semesters of their studies. In addition to these PBL tutorials, students attend whole-class specialist lectures and clinical skills tutorials where content covered is integrated with the PBL case they are working through at the time. Considering the relatively small cohort size, combined with the curriculum's reliance on group-based learning, student cohorts tend to get to know each other quite well during the program. The program has 4.8 full-time equivalent (FTE) academic staff members as well as a full-time clinical placement officer, whose role is administrative in nature. In addition, student learning is supported by PBL facilitators as well as clinical educators, some of whom are employed by the university on a short-term contract basis.

We begin with the voice of the clinical placement officer to provide context to support structures given during placement. In a short interview, the clinical placement officer was asked to discuss her role when working with international students. Marie, the clinical placement officer, shares her thoughts below. Much of her story focuses on the preparation for placements, showing the necessity to meet regulations as well as support students within the new cultural context.

Clinical Placement Officer

Marie has been a clinical placement officer for the Master of Speech Pathology program for 4 years. Marie previously worked in education program placement administration for 2 years before moving to speech pathology.

Each year she has around five to ten international students to place within the cohort. She also helps the students with the extra mandatory requirements such as vaccinations, police checks, and first aid certificates for example.

Marie suggests that the problem-based learning approach is important to helping international students integrate. She said that over the course of the program, the cohort works in smaller groups and really gets to know each other. Also when the students begin the placement, they are in small groups.

She says one of the biggest challenges as a placement officer is to ensure the mandatory requirements are being met by international students. For example, Marie guides the students in applying for a blue card to work with children before they arrive in Australia as the process for a blue card takes about 6 weeks. The students need the card by the second week of semester, meaning the process has to start usually before the students leave their home country. The students also need to ensure they have all of their vaccinations up

(continued)

to date and apply for a National Police Check, or similar, from their home country to bring with them.

Marie says that the students are also taken through a number of lectures and tutorials facilitated by academic staff to help them be prepared for clinical placement. These are for domestic as well as international students and cover a number of scenarios students may encounter on placement, before the placement begins.

Marie tries to make the students feel welcome when they first visit her. She will give them information about getting around the local city, including public transport options. The international students will usually drop into her office to say hello a week before the start of semester, and as often as the students like thereafter.

Marie also reflects on the extra services that could be given to international students through the MSP program. In particular, she mentions one international student who would have benefitted from access to accent modification to help them during their placement.

10.6 The Voices of Two International Students

Two international students (selected through convenience methods while ensuring differences between the students regarding their linguistic and cultural backgrounds) shared their experiences of being involved in the program in semi-structured interviews. The students were asked to reflect on the placements, their experience with the Australian culture and the transition to work. Their interviews were recorded, transcribed and re-storied for meaning. Both students were then given the opportunity to read the vignettes and provide comments to ensure accuracy of their stories. Both students were recent graduates from the program.

10.7 International Student: Josie

10.7.1 Background of Josie

Josie is originally from Malaysia. She had completed her undergraduate degree in Australia before undertaking a master's program in speech pathology. She has a background in neuroscience. Josie still has family in Malaysia and visits twice a year. She chose Australia as it was close to Malaysia and was also multicultural.

She has had previous experience with international learning contexts. Her father worked for a consulate so she has always been in an international space. She also attended an international school for 5 years. She describes herself as both

multinational and *multicultural*. Josie believes her prior experience helped her choose speech pathology. She comments:

> I realise I wanted to work with people. In my history of being in a multi-cultural environment, communication was always important. Every year I would have a bunch of new people starting in my class who don't speak English, and you just need to learn to interact with them. I've always enjoyed this aspect of communication and to find out I can actually do this work for a living- helping people communicate- sounds like me and it really is me.

Josie suggests that she has lived in a multicultural environment for most of her life and suggests that differences do exist and it is good to talk about differences. She suggests that it is uncomfortable to talk about it sometimes, but if you are going to be a health professional you need to talk about patients who have been born in other countries outside of Australia, born in Australia and grown up in Asian homes or migrated to Australia. She suggests:

> The way you speak to people matters and if you don't know, just ask and learn. And also just be kind. I think that is the best way to get along with everyone. So just be prepared to ask and also realise it is ok to talk about difference.

10.7.2 Being an International Student in a Speech Pathology Course

Josie believes that in coming from a different cultural background she is a lot more cued in to the subtleties of different cultures. For example, Josie had a Fijian patient who spoke multiple languages. She understood and was familiar with the patient's main language and figured out that some of the language outcome measures being used for assessment did not match his previous language skills. She realised the differences in vowel sounds and how English sounds with an accent may have implications for speech pathology assessments.

Josie also thinks she has learnt about different cultures from other students in the speech pathology course and they have learnt from her:

> I think I've been able to help the students with an Australian background in some way because they have to interact with me. I have a foot in both cultures so I understand the Australian culture but I am also very, very Asian.

She has noticed many challenges being an international student. The first was the use of reflection in the speech pathology course. She understands that self-reflection is important, however the actual process of sitting down and self-reflecting appeared foreign because of prior experiences with learning. She provides an example where for most of her life her learning has been based on other people judging her, not Josie judging herself. This was a challenge during clinical placement. Reflective practice was a foreign practice for Josie. When the supervisor asked "how do you think you did?", she felt strange to respond. Josie suggested that wouldn't happen in her culture. No one would ask how you think you went. You would complete the

action and then the other person would observe and provide feedback. Josie suggested that it made her feel uncomfortable.

She suggested that reflective practice perhaps needed to be a little more culturally sensitive to people from different backgrounds as well as other assessments in the course. This included developing an understanding that the clinical supervisor was both a mentor and an assessor. To Josie it was always stressful as she considered the supervisor as always the supervisor. In previous undergraduate studies in science, she completed some lab assessments. She said that the lab leader was also a teacher, making very clear the *student-teacher* relationship. Alternatively, in speech pathology, it is expected that you learn from the clinical educator as they are the professional in the workplace as well as the assessor:

> So trying to marry the thought in my head is difficult—they are there to support me as well as assess me which is really difficult to do.

Another difference was the notion of confidence during clinical placement. Josie said that many of her supervisors said that she did not look confident; however, to Josie that situation was more about respecting authority figures and cultural differences when working with supervisors. She commented that it was actually difficult to talk to her supervisor, who was an authority figure. Josie said that when the supervisor said "Why are you not confident?", the response you thought but did not say was "It is not that I am not confident, it is more that you are my supervisor and I can't just say certain things".

Josie reflected that many of her Australian friends in the course could chat freely with their supervisors and that the expectations were slightly different with the interaction. For Josie, however, talking to an authority figure, who is usually someone older than you and has more experience, has to be put on a different level of respect. She said that you ask them questions even though you know the answer just to double check. But during placement, multiple questions were seen as not being confident, even though Josie reported she often knew the answers.

The third challenge she highlights is the language barrier. She currently speaks three languages: Malay, Indonesian, and English. She says however that sometimes in certain situations when she is speaking English (additional language) she begins to stutter. This particularly occurred during clinical placement with added stress.

Cultural norms also entered the practice of Josie during the swallowing trial she was conducting on a patient in a hospital. She recounts that she would always go to the right side of people. Where she was from, you always eat with your right hand, no matter if you learn with a fork, spoon or finger, you always go to the right. But in Australia she discovered that people did not care. She recounts:

> So if you imagine a bed in a ward, you can go to the right or you can go to the left. But I always go to the right because that is what I culturally do and I always give them things for their right hand and use my right hand to put things in their mouth. Sometimes I feel weird standing next to the bed and I realise I am on the left side of the bed. When I spoon patient's food, I can't do it with my left hand, I've never eaten with my left hand.

10.7.3 Future

One suggestion from Josie is for a cultural liaison officer to help university teachers understand the multiple backgrounds that people come from. She said that while she understands that it is difficult to be culturally appropriate all of the time, sometimes it would be good if there was a little more understanding. Josie comments:

> It doesn't matter how encultured I am, there is always a bit of me that is always going to be, you know, Asian. But I think if you had someone who could help others understand a little better to teach students from different backgrounds. Because if they take the skills back home and they teach students there, they also need to know how to teach and cater for difference. I think this is a really good idea.

Josie is also keen to share advice with other international students. She suggests that other students should not be afraid to talk to lecturers. She wishes that she would have talked to her lecturers more about reflective practice and how to act in situations where you are being assessed. She suggests that open communication with the lecturers would be great. Group work can also be a challenge for some students, especially if you are quiet or afraid to speak out. A better understanding of cultural differences within health care is also important:

> People come from all over the place, I think people need to know what factors they need to think about with culture differences. For example, not everyone has an issue talking about themselves, or not everyone has an issue about going to the doctor or how they perceive health care. But there are the things that could be influenced by culture and just for people to be aware of the possible differences- it could change everything.

If she was to do the course again, she would also have some advice to herself. She suggests that:

> I would tell myself to be more confident and outwardly display that because my first clinical educator said to me I was very quiet but I was quietly confident. She knew that I knew things, even though I didn't actively know things. I didn't actively say "I am brilliant"- you know it is boastful in my culture. So it was actually really hard to talk about myself and reflect. So I would tell myself to be ok with reflection and it is ok to talk about myself, even in a positive way. That would have helped a lot.

Josie is now thinking about the future. She is currently undertaking research assistant work and has applied for doctorate studies at the university. She plans to continue living in Australia.

10.8 International Student: Amanda

10.8.1 Background of Amanda

According to her, Amanda has always had a sense of adventure. Aged in her 20s, she knew she wanted to study speech pathology overseas, especially because of a lack of jobs and opportunities where she was living in Canada. Amanda also had a strong ambition to travel while she was still young.

She applied to a number of universities across the United States and Australia with a specific intention to study a Master of Speech Pathology (MSP). She already had an undergraduate degree in speech and language sciences, completed in Canada. This meant Amanda had a good base of knowledge to start the MSP. After being accepted into the Australian program, she decided to move, aware that she did not know anyone in her new country. In her research about the MSP at the Australian university, Amanda was interested in the PBL environment. She had never experienced PBL and was interested to know more about it. After studying at the Australian university, Amanda thoroughly enjoyed the learning approach with smaller group sizes.

Amanda has always known she wanted to work with children. She didn't want to be a teacher but thought a speech pathologist could also still work with children. During high school she spent time as a volunteer with one of her Mum's friends who was a speech pathologist. During this time, she realised the importance of the position in supporting children and families and felt that this was the career for her.

After graduation, Amanda spent a year working in the public system at a central rural hospital in Queensland, Australia, as well as doing some private work. In the second year she moved with her Australian partner to Townsville to work in a private practice. She likes to have the freedom to see a client for a year and enjoys working with children. Amanda loves her job and says she wouldn't change a thing. She works with a case load of 98% paediatrics and 2% adults.

10.8.2 Being an International Student in a Speech Pathology Course

Understanding the cultural knowledge was also an important part of the workplace and placements. When Amanda first moved to Australia, she said the Australian slang was difficult. She said that certain words were problematic, and she had difficulty adjusting to the words Australians used in their conversations. Amanda started a book of words when she first moved to Australia and would Google the meaning. She also had an application on her phone to translate Australian slang.

During her first placement with young children in a long day care centre, Amanda didn't initially recognise children's Australian slang. She listened to a young boy and thought he was not pronouncing the "r" sound at the end of words (such as *car*). She listened to more of the children and realised they all had a problem with the "r" sound. Upon reflection, Amanda realised this was how the children spoke and this was common pronunciation within Australia. Vowels were also different with the Australian accent, making it sometimes difficult.

She suggests that the placement was also a new experience for her. In Canada she had not experienced placement in her undergraduate degree. During her MSP placements she was with a range of supervisors and in different contexts. In the hospital she was exposed to a team approach, working with a range of professionals. During

this time, she was able to learn about other professions. Amanda also found differences in the expectations between Australian and Canadian universities. She said that while the MSP was hard, there was more time given for assessment, including projects and assignments. In Canada she said the time was shorter and the structure was also stricter. Amanda believes the Australian approach of being a little more "laid back" helped with her integration and transition into the Australian university and culture. She appreciates the experience of having been an international student. Amanda enjoyed meeting new people, learning in a different environment and also found herself as a speech pathologist. She really enjoyed the close links between theory and practice in the MSP, allowing her to also grow in her professional knowledge and understanding.

Another positive experience was the closeness between students within the MSP. Amanda commented that the social programs were really important for helping build rapport and collegiality within the group. The students would organise Friday night drinks, dinner or weekend activities. She said the students would also ask questions about each other's context and compare and contrast experiences. For example, Amanda said the students would sometimes ask about the different types of money in different countries. Today she said the relationships between the students still continue, and she is in regular contact with some of them. As Amanda stated:

> I have nothing negative to say about studying in Australia. Nothing. Absolutely nothing. It was an amazing experience… Australians are just so laid back, it was a natural experience.

Cultural differences sometimes occurred in the actual activities when out. Amanda noted that the procedures for ordering and paying for food and drinks were different. There were some challenges that Amanda experienced based on different surroundings, procedures and rules. For example, she had never experienced a roundabout on a road. Street signs were also problematic as they were not on every corner like in Canada. Accommodation was also one of the biggest challenges. Amanda said she was not allowed to rent or sign a contract until she had seen the property. She said this accommodation aspect was really hard and stressful. The first place she rented was far away from the university with a difficult bus situation. Amanda signed the contract for a year, later realising she had rushed into the situation because of the stress of finding accommodation and the lack of support around her to help with the situation.

Amanda suggests she would have benefited from a mentor when she was at the university. She has previously mentored students during her undergraduate degree in Canada for international students. She suggested a mentor could help with housing, setting up a bank account, organising a mobile phone and other set-up tasks. Amanda reflects:

> I had to do all of these things on my own and it was really difficult and hard. It was stressful. I really would have appreciated just having another international student to speak to. I have even offered my skills to the university now, having gone through it as an international student. I would be happy to help other international students. I am really happy to help

> because it was really hard. I mean even talking to people about things such as a visa. Someone who has been through it would have been helpful. I literally had to figure it all out on my own. I did it but it would have been nice to have had support.

Amanda also felt that when she arrived no one really reached out to help with support. She realised that while she had personal responsibility for many of the tasks, the extra help with knowledge and support would have been helpful and reduced stress. The sharing of knowledge about everyday tasks also extended to shopping:

> I didn't know any of the shops. Where do I buy my groceries from? Where do I buy clothes from? Where do I buy my books from? Just a little knowledge would have been helpful.

If she had her time again, Amanda would go through the adventure again. She said the only thing she would have liked was more support. Amanda reflects however that she grew so much as person. Without the support she believes she has become more independent and mature. Amanda believes this personal growth would have only been achieved by moving to Australia.

Amanda suggests others should just embrace the opportunity to study in another country with a "just do it" attitude. She has lived in Australia for 3.5 years now and says that a good support system is vital. She says not knowing anyone and moving to the other side of the world was a huge deal. She says as an adult the move was difficult because you lose friends but also gain friends. Amanda also suggested that you learn a lot about your family as well as yourself. To Amanda, everything about moving to Australia to study has been positive:

> It is a life decision but just do it. Take a risk. I would do it all over again 100 times.

10.9 Considerations for the Future

The final section of this chapter reflects on two vignettes from the international students and a vignette from the placement officer, allowing the lived experiences to be linked with the current literature. Key trends emerged in the reflection and discussion around cultural and linguistic diversity. Reflective questions are also raised including: What is important to learn from the vignettes? How can the university support international students in speech pathology programs?

10.9.1 What Is Important to Learn from the Vignettes?

Although the vignettes clearly highlight the uniqueness of each international student's experience, some general themes emerge, including language barriers, practical/administrative issues, and cultural differences. In addition, we see evidence of student learning as a result of their workplace experiences, their engagement with their CE and by processes of observation and reflection.

Interestingly both students alluded to a potential language barrier, even though student Amanda spoke English as a first language. While previous research has highlighted the struggles students who speak English as an additional language may have in their speech pathology degree course (e.g. Andrade 2006; Attrill et al. 2012, 2015; Bolderston et al. 2008; Goldbart et al. 2005; Remedios and Webb 2005), Amanda's experience informs us that these linguistic differences may also impact learning in students who come from other English-speaking countries. This language difference is only superficially acknowledged on the university's *Welcome to International Students* webpage; it provides a list of 17 slang words commonly used in Australia and refers potential international students to complete a course in English language. At a program level, at no point are the linguistic differences (e.g. vowels) explicitly discussed with international students during their MSP studies.

Both students, as well as the clinical placement officer, emphasised the practical issues that arose for students commencing their speech pathology degree course. These difficulties included visa applications, finding suitable accommodation, and setting up a bank account. Other issues included learning how to navigate a new city and finding amenities such as groceries or organising a mobile phone plan. Difficulties with these practical aspects cannot be underestimated and can have a significant impact on student stress and emotional well-being, which, if not addressed, can have flow on effects to their success in the academic program and on clinical placement (Andrade 2006).

Not surprisingly, and consistent with the general literature on international students studying in Australia (e.g. see Attrill et al. 2012), cultural differences between Australia and the students' home country were identified as potential barriers to student learning in the workplace. Cultural differences reported by both students included those related to socialising and also related to the supervisor-student relationship or which "side" to approach patients on when they are lying in bed.

In the vignettes of the international students we also see the students' agency within the workplace (university and clinical practice) as they traverse the different cultures and contexts. Aligning with the work of Billett (2009), the students can be seen to continually make choices based on their own understanding of the workplace after also reflecting on their own cultural and contextual understandings. Within each of the vignettes, the students are able to complete tasks in the new culture, with new experiences adding to their strong sense of agency. Without understanding the cultural context of the Australian landscape, they would not have been able to understand the workplace and the cultural norms related to Australian society.

10.9.2 How Can Universities Support International Students in Speech Pathology Programs?

Both students and the clinical placement officer offered suggestions on how to better support international students in the speech pathology program. Support clearly needs to include practical assistance once the students have arrived in the country,

such as the provision of local transport timetables and maps. This could be done through a dedicated role, such as that of a cultural liaison officer, however, as student Amanda points out, a student mentor could be appointed prior to the international student leaving their home country to assist with these practicalities, which was a recommendation from Kennedy (1995) as cited in Ladyshewsky's (1996) work. Considering some of the unique challenges faced by students studying speech pathology, this student mentor could well be a recent international graduate from the speech pathology program. It is heartening to read that Amanda has already offered her services to mentor future international students in speech pathology. The role of a cultural liaison officer or similar could then be to work with university staff and placement CEs to assist in providing strategies for working with students from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Perhaps more relevant to speech pathology than other fields of study is the impact of a foreign accent for some international students. One suggestion is for students for whom English is an additional language to be offered accent modification sessions. Accent generally reflects the non-native speaker's linguistic and cultural background and may be a basis of self-identity (e.g. Sung 2013). However, foreign accent may lead to reduced speaker intelligibility and communication breakdowns and can result in negative stereotyping (Gluszek and Dovidio 2010; Hayes-Harb and Watzinger-Tharp 2012). Research shows that foreign accents may impact employment opportunities (Deprez-Sims and Morris 2010) and negatively influence interpersonal relationships (Jaber and Hussein 2011). Further, explicit discussion with students for whom English is not a first language or whose accents differ significantly to the Australian accent about communication differences (e.g. vowel production and slang) may also assist with analysing the speech of clients on clinical placements. It may be appropriate for university staff to be explicitly discussing these language and pronunciation differences with international students during an orientation to the program session or similar.

At the program level, there is a need to more explicitly address the cultural diversity of the student cohort and find ways to use this diversity to raise cultural awareness in all students. Considering the make-up of our current speech pathology student cohorts and the existing gap between the linguistic and cultural diversity of our Australian speech pathology workforce and the clients we service (McLeod 2011; Williams and McLeod 2012), this may be an excellent opportunity to prepare our speech pathology graduates to work with culturally and linguistically diverse populations.

In the field, CEs are in a unique position to further support the development of all students including international students on placement. It should not be assumed that CEs know how or are able to adapt their supervisory practices to a broad range of students. All CEs and students bring their own set of cultural and linguistic similarities and differences to the clinical placement, and it is the differences that "may interfere with clear communication and effective supervision" (Remedios and Webb 2005, p. 218). Therefore, CEs need to be responsive to the needs of diverse student populations by being able to adapt and apply strategies to support students in the workplace as the need arises (Attrill et al. 2016). Taken together, it is important for

CEs to be given access to appropriate training to be able to adapt their supervisory techniques and styles to foster the development of all students and perhaps international students in particular.

10.10 Conclusion

There is a clear need to more explicitly consider the value international students in speech pathology bring to the learning environment, in both the university workplace and the clinical education workplace. Although clinical placement can positively influence cultural awareness development, results from our recent small-scale study showed that students' own cultural backgrounds may influence this more (Howells et al. 2016). Having a proportion of international students complete their degree programs in Australia therefore presents universities with an excellent opportunity to enhance the cultural awareness and development of students and staff alike through their sharing of cultural practices and insights (Edgecombe et al. 2013).

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Chapter 11
Enhancing Workplace Learning for International Students in Psychology: Learning from Students' and Supervisors' Perspectives

Liz Jones, Erin O'Connor, and Christine Boag-Hodgson

11.1 Introduction

Placements are integral to training in postgraduate psychology programmes internationally, yet little is known about supporting international students through these experiences. In this chapter we report on findings from the Australian Office for Learning and Teaching Innovation and Development Program-funded project: *A cross-disciplinary approach to improving international work placements*. While the project was multidisciplinary, we focus on postgraduate psychology students. Psychology students have much in common with other students undertaking placements; however, aspects of their experience are (relatively) unique: they spend long hours on placement and in professional supervision, they work relatively autonomously as much of their placement activity is conducted in private (e.g. consultations with clients), and they require advanced communication skills.

11.1.1 General Background to Psychology in Australia

Psychology training internationally is typically a minimum of 6 years of undergraduate and postgraduate university study, including placements. Australia uniquely offers multiple pathways to full registration as a psychologist (see Fig. 11.1).

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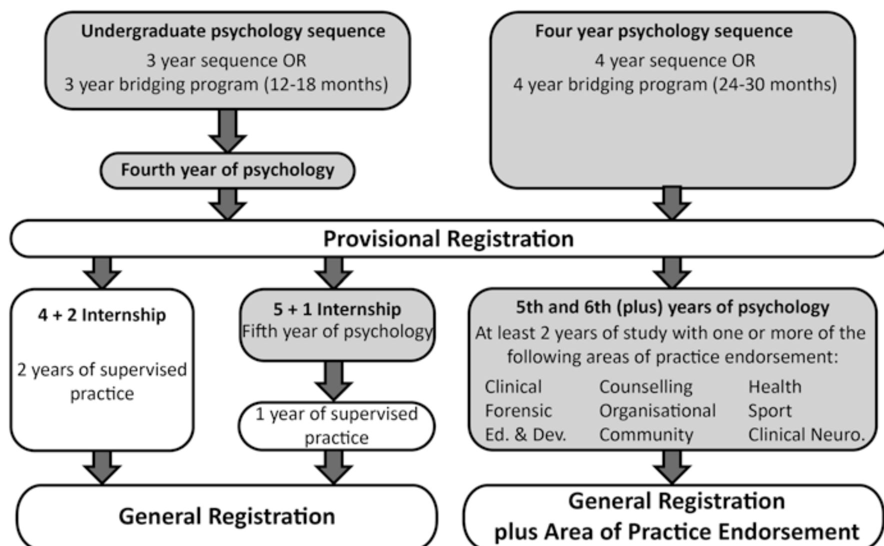

Fig. 11.1 Multiple pathways to full registration as a psychologist (APAC n.d.)

Students undertake an initial 4 years of bachelor level training (as a 4-year programme with built-in honours/equivalent or a 3-year bachelor programme with competitive entry into a separate honours/equivalent). The scientist-practitioner model is central to professional psychology learning, and thus the foundational years emphasise research design and methods, with fourth year including an original research project. Not all undergraduate courses offer placements and it is not required by the accrediting body (Australian Psychology Accreditation Council, APAC), who oversees the structure, content, and quality of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes within Australia.

Students may then qualify for a registration pathway including:

(a) A 2-year work-based internship programme (known as a 4 + 2)
(b) A fifth year of coursework and 1-year work-based internship (known as a 5 + 1)
(c) A postgraduate (masters or doctoral) programme involving coursework and thesis components

Our project focused on international students undertaking the third option, a postgraduate programme. Students who complete an approved postgraduate programme qualify to enter a registrar programme for endorsement within their area of specialty (e.g. clinical psychology, health psychology, organisational psychology), which is not available to those completing the 4 + 2 or 5 + 1 pathways. Entry into the postgraduate pathways is limited by quotas, with competitive minimum standards.

Students are required to register as a provisional psychologist while completing their postgraduate training. As provisionally registered psychologists, students carry significant responsibilities, comparable to fully registered professionals, which is in contrast to other health professions. Moreover, the Australia Psychological Society

Code of Ethics (APS 2013) governs psychology training and the conduct of provisional psychologists. Supervision of their placements focuses on the development of the provisional psychologist and ensuring safe, effective, and responsible practice by the registrant. Self-reflection is central to professional practice as a psychologist and is implemented as a tool for training and a continued professional development mechanism.

The proportion of postgraduate psychology students considered as international students is small (around 5% in Australia and 8.2% in the USA; see Forrest 2010), relative to other disciplines (e.g. business, IT, medicine, and nursing). This is likely the result of factors including psychological concepts and the profession of psychology being less well developed in many non-Western countries, the higher English skills required to study psychology, and the lengthy training programmes to obtain registration. The country of origin for international students in psychology is somewhat representative of international students in other programmes of study (DET 2014), with those studying psychology primarily from India, China, and South-East Asia (e.g. Korea, Vietnam, Thailand, and Malaysia).

While there has been extensive research on the experiences of international students studying abroad, little research has focused on psychology students, with most of the psychology-focused research conducted in the last 10 years in the USA. Indeed, Delgado-Romero and Wu (2010) argue there has been insufficient research into the training and supervision needs of international students studying psychology. Here we review key findings from research on psychology and counselling students. Counselling programmes overlap with psychology and oftentimes are taught both in psychology departments and by psychology academics. Students from psychology and counselling programmes (referred to from here as *psychology*) may undertake courses together.

International psychology students share many of the same experiences as other international students, including second language anxiety, adjusting to different educational systems, loneliness and isolation, culture shock, financial concerns, and prejudice and discrimination (Lau and Ng 2012; Ng 2006; Smith and Ng 2009). At the same time, psychology students experience stressors unique to or more pronounced due to their programme of study. Cultural and language barriers can be more significant for international students when interacting with clients (Lau and Ng 2012; Ng 2006; Smith and Ng 2009), and psychology requires well-developed sensitivity to the nuances and subtleties of language (Wedding et al. 2009) and nonverbal communication. Further, many psychological concepts have been primarily constructed in Western languages and cultures and may be less relevant or contradictory to the cultural context of the country of origin of the international student (Killian 2001; Lau and Ng 2012; Smith and Ng 2009). For example, counselling theories can be rooted in individualism, which may be difficult to apply in a more collectivist culture (Lau and Ng 2012). International psychology students may experience greater discomfort at the emphasis on self-disclosure and self-awareness that are central to training in Western psychology and may also be uncomfortable with the equality in Western supervisory relationships, preferring a teacher-centred, structured style (Killian 2001; Ng and Smith 2012). International students are less

likely to express their opinions in supervision, seek help, or advocate for themselves and may bring up important issues at the end of supervision due to more indirect forms of communication in some non-Western cultures (Delgado-Romero and Wu 2010). Nonetheless, each student's experience is different and difficulties with supervision interact with the individual's level of acculturation and self-efficacy and are reduced when supervisors facilitate cultural discussions (Ng and Smith 2012) and express acceptance of cultural differences (Ancis and Marshall 2010). Finally, despite the espoused focus on diversity in many psychology programmes, international students report difficulties integrating into their programmes and having a voice when diversity is discussed in the classroom (Lau and Ng 2012).

Some research suggests there may be positive aspects unique to international psychology students. For example, Ng (2006) describes how international students may bring different perspectives to counselling that highlight what has been overlooked. This may include awareness for local students and counsellors of cross-cultural differences in communication. However, the focus of the research is overwhelmingly on the difficulties experienced by international students.

Research has focused on students' overall experiences of their programmes, with limited consideration given to their specific experiences on placements and with their supervisors (in contrast to education, social work, and nursing). Moreover, the limited research to date has inconsistent findings. For example, in the USA, Goh et al. (2014) retrospective study of Asian psychologists who studied as doctoral students described their placements as mostly in a supportive environment, with well-run services, and they were satisfied with their clientele. In contrast, students in another study (Mittal and Wieling 2006), of a more diverse group of current psychology doctoral students, reported experiencing covert and overt racism and discrimination in their placements. While institutional differences and recall errors may explain some differences, without systematic research it is difficult to account for the diversity of reports.

The current project examined the experience of international students on placements within Australia. We focused on the perspective of international students and their supervisors and placement co-ordinators (referred to from here as *supervisors*). We used Billett's (2004) framework of workplace learning as the basis for mapping students' experiences. Billett's framework proposes that workplaces afford learners (international students) particular activities and interactions. Moreover, the way in which individuals participate in these activities and interactions is structured and regulated by the workplace's norms and practices, culture and climate, as well as workplace goals. We argue these workplace characteristics are in part determined by the broader sociocultural, legal, and political landscape of a country. However, individuals can elect how they participate in those activities and interactions. Thus, the individual is both agentic and has intentionalities. Billett (2004) argues that how individuals construe and participate in workplace activities and interactions is shaped by their life history. As individuals and workplaces intersect, each individual's way of engaging and learning will be, to some extent, unique, and both the workplace affordances and the individual's life history shape the changes in

understandings and capacities of the individual (and, we argue, potentially the organisation and its members).

11.2 Our Project

In-depth interviews were conducted by two interviewers (one the lead author) with international students and their supervisors. Our participants were 11 ($N = 10$ female, which is representative) psychology students (undertaking a master of clinical psychology, a master of organisational psychology, or a master of applied psychology programme) recruited from 2 universities in south-east Queensland and 8 supervisors (all female who had supervised international students). The students were either currently enrolled or had completed their degree in the last 6 months. Students were from a range of countries including Hong Kong (2), Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia (2), Brunei, West Tahiti, Thailand, Indonesia, and England. Nine spoke English as a second language and seven completed their undergraduate education in Australia. Their ages ranged from 23 to 28 years. The small number of international students who study postgraduate psychology means that to protect students' anonymity we cannot provide more specific information about the individuals nor link their country of origin to their interview comments.

The supervisors' specialties included Clinical, Organisational, and Counselling Psychology. They had been supervising students for 6–25 years and had supervised multiple international students. Two were born overseas (New Zealand and South Africa). Two supervisors were also placement co-ordinators.

Students were asked about their placements, including what went well and any problems experienced; their experience of supervision; any issues or advantages to being an international student; and whether the university could prepare them better for placements. Three students also participated in an interview prior to commencing their placement. Supervisors were asked about their supervision experience, including why they supervise students; how they encourage students on placement; how well universities prepare students for placement; whether international students have special needs, or bring advantageous skills/perspectives; and any changes they would recommend to supervising international students.

Thematic analysis was used to generate the key descriptive themes in the participants' responses, using Braun and Clarke's (2006) guidelines and checklist. Descriptive themes were generated inductively rather than imposed a priori or deductively. However, as acknowledged by Bazeley (2009), not all themes were truly *emergent*, as the analysis was guided by the research question and Billett's conceptual framework. The focus in our analysis was how being an *international* student influenced their experiences. We use pseudonyms for both students (identified as IS) and supervisors (SUP).

11.3 Key Findings

The model encapsulating our themes (Fig. 11.2) outlines how international students come to their placements with a particular life history. Key aspects of their life history engender particular identities to be salient, as well as particular subjectivities, that we term *potential strengths and vulnerabilities*. We use the word *potential* deliberately, as workplaces (overseen by the university) afford the international student particular activities and interactions, which intersect with the student's identities and strengths and vulnerabilities to shape the (both positive and negative) experiences and achievements for both the student and the workplace. Achievements refer to both the learnings of students and workplaces (changes to their understandings and capacities), as well as their performance. There is also a feedback loop to the university. Overall, international students share many similarities with local students in their achievements from their placements, in part because psychology programmes in Australia are highly regulated and competency-based (see APAC 2010). Here we describe how being specifically an international student shaped their experiences.

11.3.1 Workplaces and Supervision

Psychology placements take place in diverse workplaces, each with their own sociocultural practices, as well as sociocultural and political elements reflecting the broader Australian context. Each workplace affords the student particular activities and interactions, thus regulating the student's participation in that workplace. Clients

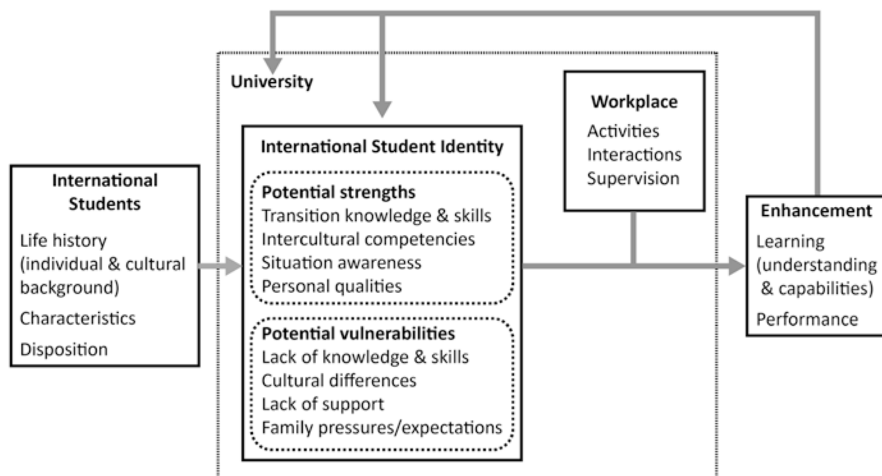

Fig. 11.2 Model of international psychology students' work placement experiences

vary across workplaces in key ways including their age, cultural background, education level, and socioeconomic status. Reflecting the different areas of specialisation within psychology, workplaces vary in the types of work activities students undertake from individual and group therapy with adults or children in a wide range of settings to addressing psychological disorders, coping with important life events (e.g. grief or bereavement), or promoting psychological well-being, through designing recruitment programmes, corporate coaching, change management, or training. Importantly for international students, placements vary in the extent to which students interact face-to-face with clients and peers, research, or write reports. The workplaces may be public or private, or not for profit, and vary in size.

Placements afford particular supervisors, who are integral to the students' experiences and achievements. APAC requires students to have 1 h of supervision for every 7.5 h of placement, which is significantly higher than professions such as social work (AASW 2014). While supervisors of psychology placements can be either an internal member of the workplace or an external person appointed by the university, we found no differences between internal and external supervisors nor for seniority, in their influence on international students' experiences. However, our findings indicated variability in supervisors along a number of key dimensions that influenced international students' experiences and learning.

First was their supervisory style, including how supportive and empathic the supervisor was, and the extent to which they encouraged and developed students' reflexivity. Some supervisors spoke about creating a workplace that is tolerant of risk and failure and that values mistakes as a part of the learning process, with Louise (SUP) describing how:

> …it's really important to create an environment where the individual is happy to tell me the good, the bad and the ugly of what's happened. That they don't feel criticised and that you encourage them to tell you about the fact that you only really learn when you don't do it well.

Supervisors also varied in the extent to which they saw supervision as task focused or as a personal development exercise. For example, Alison (SUP) saw it as important to discuss:

> what it is about themselves that has brought them into the profession and how they are going to use those qualities and…mix with the demands of the clinical work.

Second, there was much variability between supervisors' awareness of cultural differences, the importance placed on discussing cultural differences, and their awareness and discussion of the international students' strengths and vulnerabilities. Louise (SUP) said "there's sort of an assumption that they're different to an Australian student…the only difference I see … is that they happen to have a residence overseas". In contrast, Mary (SUP) spoke in-depth about how in Asian countries "the teacher is the hub of all knowledge and the student should just listen and do what they say", contrasting this with Australian students who in supervision talk about "what I tried is X and I've tried Y and this works well and this didn't work so …what do you think?".

11.3.2 International Students' Life History

International students come to placements with their specific life history, including both their individual background and their cultural background. Individual background incorporates characteristics of the individual student that could come from their particular life experiences or disposition. The individual characteristics our participants described as important in this context were:

1. Personal qualities prior to commencing placement (e.g. resilience, independence, confidence, self-efficacy, and reflection skills)
2. English language competence
3. Previous experiences of transition, including transitioning to Australia prior to commencing their placements (some students had previously moved countries prior to relocating to Australia, and one student had moved previously between her country of origin and Australia)
4. Educational background (home country and Australia)
5. Previous work experience (home country and Australia)

Key aspects of the students' cultural background (i.e. values, beliefs and practices of their culture) influencing their experience on placements were the language and communication style of their country of origin, their culture's orientation to power and status, and the endorsement of particular values in their culture, such as work ethics, individualism vs collectivism, and orientation to time. Also important were beliefs about mental health, and expectations about family or group communication and structures (e.g. parenting practices). Many of the students also came from cultures with quite different education systems to Australia.

It is important to note that the individual background of the international students was not independent of their cultural background but was in part produced and shaped by their particular cultural background. For example, most of the international students in our study (and indeed the majority of international students in Australia) were from a non-English speaking background; however, they varied in their English language competence as a result of both how long they had been in Australia and their background prior to coming to Australia (including language mediums at school and home and previous travel).

11.3.3 Identities, Strengths, and Vulnerabilities

The life history of the international students engendered particular complex and intersecting identities that they brought to their placements. International students came to placements as psychology students (and hence probationary psychologists), but also salient were their ethnic identity and their identity as an international student. The students interviewed all described being aware both prior to and throughout their placement that they were "international students" from a particular cultural

background. The tension for international students was their desire to belong and to be seen as similar, while knowing they were different:

> I wish people could see me as the same as everyone else …when they see you as a foreigner they don't really talk to you much because you're different and some people might look down on you because you don't speak English, and because you're [nationality]. So sometimes I want people to see me as Australian but it depends on the people. But there's always a problem in whether we're seen as a foreigner or whether we're seen as Australian or not, so it's kind of difficult. (Wendy IS)

Our findings highlighted how the individual life history of international students also engendered particular strengths and vulnerabilities that they brought to their placement. For example:

> …on the other flipside I had an international student from [country], and he navigated it all extremely well so I think the culture you come from impacts on how you navigate your placement. He was just gregarious, lovely and laid back and if I compare him to the first student I was talking about you've got two at the ends of the spectrum. (Janet SUP)

This supervisor went on to describe how the differences in the students' cultural backgrounds resulted in one student actively seeking feedback in their placement, whereas the other student, who was from a culture that emphasises face, would deny that there were problems.

The impact of these strengths and vulnerabilities was in part determined by the workplace and the supervisor, who intersected with the student to shape the (both positive and negative) experiences and achievements for the student and the workplace. Whether the student's strengths or vulnerabilities were relevant to the particular workplace's activities and interactions, as well as how the student's supervisor enabled the student to enact their strengths or overcome their vulnerabilities, influenced whether elements of the student's life history could be perceived as a strength or as a vulnerability.

11.3.4 Strengths

International students had a range of strengths they brought to their placements to enhance:

1. Their own socialisation and learning processes
2. Their task performance
3. Learnings or performance of the workplace

We identified four strengths most frequently described by students and/or supervisors:

1. Transition knowledge and skills
2. Intercultural competencies
3. Situation awareness
4. Personal qualities

11.3.4.1 Transition Skills

A salient aspect of all international students' life histories was that they had been through the transition process of coming to Australia, and some had previous transition experiences between other countries. These transitions afforded students transition knowledge and skills in their placements that helped them manage the uncertainty around starting placements, particularly the socialisation process.

> … being an international student I think that prepares you for [placement] 'cause when you first come here the way things are taught, the way things are done are quite different, so kind of adapting to that whilst juggling that uni stuff really does put a lot of pressure on you … that kind of helped with placements. (Debbie, IS)

11.3.4.2 Situation Awareness

International students also brought an enhanced situation awareness to their placements (relative to local students), particularly to interactions, but also more generally about organisational norms and practices. Situation awareness refers to "knowing what is going on around you" (Endsley 1995, p. 5) or more generally your understanding of your dynamic environment. According to Endsley, there are three inherent levels of awareness: perception, comprehension, and projection to the future. Perception is the direction of attention to the status of the attributes within the environment. Both supervisors and students talked about international students having an enhanced awareness at this level, aided by international students being more aware than local students "that they aren't experts" (Janet SUP). A number of comments demonstrated that international students were more attuned to their environment and more aware of what was occurring around them. This also filtered through to enhanced comprehension of the situation. Here the life history of the international students influenced how they understood the information they were perceiving from their environment.

> … I'm well aware of my accent and my English skill and everything, so if I can sense there's some kind of you know discomfort around it I can just bring it to the picture and then just like discuss it openly. (Julie IS)

Greater situation awareness assisted international students with the socialisation process on a placement, as well as allowing a greater depth of learning from their placement experiences. In addition, supervisors described how this situation awareness could enhance learning for other students and members of the workplace. However, greater attention being diverted to the development of situation awareness is potentially more fatiguing for these students.

11.3.4.3 Intercultural Competencies

International students brought to placements knowledge and skills from their particular country of origin (e.g. the language or cultural norms of that country), as well as knowledge and skills in interacting with people from different cultures.

International students used these skills to benefit their own learning and practice and those of their placement workplace.

Participants described how students could bring new ideas to the organisation and improve staff awareness through the student's previous experiences with organisations in their home country or through their diverse cultural background.

> …we learn more from the international multicultural students because they're giving you new information about your client base in context … I think the international student's greater awareness of things, because they immerse themselves in the Australian culture and they really shine a light on things that we take for granted. (Louise SUP)

Most students and all supervisors spoke about how international students, because of their own diversity, were more adept at working with clients who were culturally or linguistically diverse. This was not limited to working with people from their own ethnic background.

> I think you're aware, it's not that I'm saying that if you're native you're not culturally aware, but you understand that more, like the culture's diversity …you have more culture awareness, and there's a lot of people from different country living in Australia and they come across a lot of different challenges that you experience yourself, (Julie IS)

Students also described using their awareness of transitioning to a new culture when working with clients from diverse backgrounds on personal issues such as family systems or parenting. Debbie describes how in working with one family she couldn't say:

> Look you guys have been doing something wrong… 'cause I know that kind of parenting is what's considered normal

but instead she talked with them about trying out different ways of parenting:

> "acknowledging that some things you might not be willing to change but let's try and figure out what some things are that we could change, help them understand their kids are growing up in a different part of the world compared to them".

Supervisors spoke about actively encouraging students to recognise they could assist organisations in working with a diverse clientele and thus differentiate themselves:

> How you can differentiate yourself … many organisations are trying to work into or operating in the Asian market, and you're not going to get a local student who speaks Mandarin, that's a very difficult thing to find in your average Australian student but something that an international student can offer. (Mary SUP).

Relatedly, a small number of students and supervisors suggested international students could use their experience of being different to develop better rapport with "difficult clients":

> …he said like [Name] you're the only psychologist that I can work with because everyone's treating me like a patient and you're treating me like another human … I empathise with him and see where he's coming from and see him as another person that actually maybe just have some difficulties in certain area. (Julie IS)

> So there's that cultural sensitivity and also I guess extended understanding or additional empathy that they may be able to display. (Sarah SUP)

Their intercultural competencies also benefitted their own learning from placements, as students reflected on applying placement learnings to their home culture. These more complex reconstructions enabled deeper learning, including how to transfer their skills and knowledge to other contexts. Students commented that these reflections generated more questions, but they had a willingness to engage with their learning in this way as it helped them to deepen their understanding of their home culture more generally.

> it's just always that kind of little voice going oh this is a really different background or even sometimes I think about when I was working in [home country] and I kind of go, oh this would never work there … would this work the same way and I think often it wouldn't … yeah just gives you more ideas (Cathy IS)

11.3.4.4 Personal Qualities

There were a range of personal qualities students and supervisors described international students as possessing, from either their cultural background or other aspects of their life history, that were beneficial in placements. These included being resilient, hardworking, and independent.

> I think as international student here I think you just in the sense as a person I think you learn a lot of life skill that otherwise you won't learn in your country, like you're more independent, (Julie IS)

> …because they're away from home, they have to have greater levels of self-reliance … are already far more mature. (Louise SUP)

However, it was also acknowledged that a strength such as independence could be problematic when it prevented help-seeking. Moreover, being more driven could result in students being more outcome-focused, missing "some of the growth that takes a bit of stopping and thinking" (Louise SUP).

Recognising the transition skills they had developed contributed to international students' confidence, with Debbie (IS) describing how through the changes she had already made "I had to be really confident in knowing I know this is a new situation but I can deal with it".

11.4 Vulnerabilities

The life histories of the international students meant they all brought to their placements a range of potential vulnerabilities, which could create challenges for students and the workplaces but when well managed created opportunities for learnings and enhancing performance. We identified four key areas of vulnerability:

1. Lack of knowledge and skills in:
   (i) Communication, including English language skills

   (ii) Australian culture
   (iii) Australian workplaces
   (iv) Work experience

2. Managing cultural differences
3. Lack of support from family, friends, and student network
4. Family pressures/expectations

11.4.1 Lack of Knowledge and Skills

The international students in our project varied in their *English language competence and communication skills*. However, all described experiencing some difficulties. Their English language competence affected their confidence about going on placement, with Wendy (IS) saying "I feel I have no confidence mainly because I feel that I'm not an English speaker". Many also talked about their difficulties in speaking up, particularly in group situations:

> I do have my own opinions and I want to speak out, but I'll be like oh maybe they already talked about that and I just missed that so I just won't say it. (Gail IS)

For native English speakers and those who were fluent in English as a second language, this included difficulties with the Australian accent and Australian slang:

> And there are some occasions in the session where my English expression kind of you know a bit absurd 'cause I don't know the right term or something like that for example, in the beginning I said rather than family of origin I said original family. (Julie IS)

> I find it much easier to communicate with people in university because they're people who are similar to me but when I talk to people who are really disadvantaged, they're really like bogan, like their language is different…, and I find it really hard to catch what they're saying. (Wendy IS)

The impact of their language skills was, in part, determined by the type of activities required in the placement, such as report writing. Report writing is a required competency in psychological practice, involving highly prescriptive forms of writing, dense with technical terms and statistical information, behavioural observations, diagnostic reasoning, treatment plans, or recommendations. These reports may be used by a number of stakeholders including other health practitioners or professionals from other disciplines (e.g. lawyers, teachers). Both supervisors and students spoke about difficulties for international students with report writing.

> In [IS name]'s case his general English is excellent, but his written English…he struggles… So if he's trying to describe a behaviour, so there's things like he doesn't have any of the jargon. (Louise SUP)

Students described how supervisors in part determined the influence of this vulnerability on them. For example, Julie described the effect on her confidence of her supervisors.

> My first supervisor kind of just like furious and call me and just like "Julie this is distracting from the content, this is not my job to correct your grammar", but my other supervisor just tell me like "Julie your written skill is really good and with this service it's sufficient, however if you have to do like a proper formal letter of report let's say for coronial inquest… you have to pay attention, and maybe…meet someone to actually read over beforehand". So he actually gave me some constructive feedback rather than "Julie this is ridiculous". (Julie IS)

Many international students came from cultures that value a less assertive communication style than in Australia. Both students and supervisors described how this could lead to students being reluctant to speak up and get involved, to ask questions, or to seek feedback. While many international students may be "very open to feedback" from supervisors, and "trying to follow that almost to the letter kind of thing" (Mary SUP), their reluctance to ask for feedback or to raise problems they were experiencing inhibited opportunities for students to reflect on their practice and hence their learning. Many students described becoming more assertive with their supervisors and learning to manage upwards in workplaces as a key change for them across their placements.

> Yeah but that experience did really make me more assertive with my supervisors, that I learnt that also if there was something wrong I have to speak up (Debbie, IS)

Particularly relevant to psychology, supervisors also mentioned that some international students find difficulty expressing rapport as it is taught in Australia. Sarah describes how

> Some students come from backgrounds that culturally may be more, more standoffish in their personal approach and that's a cultural thing. So I've had to be mindful of that but also giving feedback to those students about how to manage that.

11.4.2 Lack of Knowledge of Australian Workplace Norms

A number of the international students experienced difficulties on placements due to their lack of knowledge and skills for working in an Australian organisational context. Many had limited work experience in Australia or in their home country. Particularly important for international students was their lack of knowledge about systems in Australia, including the legal and healthcare systems, and referral pathways, that are central to psychological practice.

> …to learn about the Australian systems, the healthcare system, something like Centrelink, Medicare because I know nothing about that. And housing system because … where do clients go, and where do they live, like with no jobs, and where do they get their money from. (Wendy IS)

Thus, the workplace socialisation process for international students was more extended and more complex than for local students. However, many students used their strengths to negotiate the socialisation process, for example, describing how they used their transition skills and situation awareness to learn.

11.4.3 Managing Cultural Differences

Other cultural differences that influenced the experiences of international students during their placements were often based on their particular cultural background and could range from issues as simple as dress codes ("so I had to change a lot of my dressing habits which was pretty different from my culture", Paula, IS), to conflicts between accepted ways of behaving in their home culture and the norms of the workplace or Australian culture generally.

> The time management thing is very culturally specific because back home there is no real concept of time. (Harry, IS)

Students grappled with the extent to which they adapted to Australian norms or not. In particular, parenting practices were mentioned frequently.

> even expectations of the parent's behaviour so …we promote a lot of positive parent child interaction and we say things like get down to the child's level and play with them … And over there it would be really hard for parents to accept that because it's almost like, that crosses the boundaries of having different ranks, I can't be the same level, I'm the parent… (laughs). (Cathy IS)

Our students experienced little prejudice and discrimination. However, students were concerned about how people would respond to them, with Cathy worrying "that my clients will not like that I'm of a different race, um and whether that limits any kind of openness or rapport". Some students experienced negative attitudes from clients due to their linguistic and cultural background.

> So there's one client that actually specifically discussed… he just said that, so this is the parent of a child client, and then so he just like "oh yeah I'm just a little bit worried how this child going to respond since you are not typical Australian" (Julie IS)

11.4.4 Lack of Support

Both international students and supervisors described how international students had less social, emotional, and practical support than local students. The support available to international students in our project varied, as some had extended family in Australia, which they noted as a source of support. Others had no family or friends and experienced multiple challenges in learning to live away from home "learning about chores…Australians don't have a maid" (Belinda IS). The lack of support was particularly important when students were experiencing challenges on their placements.

> And then in terms of support… I find that going through placement especially psychology placement you have to deal with a lot of different people and you come home from placement you [are] kind of emotionally drained, you feel really tired, you just want to cry sometimes, and then when you go back home to an empty house without family it's a bit hard as well. you have to you know, just [do] everything by yourself. (Cindy IS)

Most students described difficulties in forming friendships with Australians, including fellow students. Their friendships were more likely to be with people from their same cultural background or other international students. They also talked about Australians not understanding the difficulties they were experiencing on placements. International students perceived that language difficulties exacerbated the problem of developing relationships with Australians, although it is not clear to what extent this was the result of their self-consciousness rather than the behaviour of others. Students talked about it "taking longer to say what I want to say" and not wanting to "embarrass myself". Again, supervisors could be important here, with some supervisors actively helping international students build their support network.

11.4.5 Family Pressures/Expectations

Supervisors also spoke about the pressure on students from family to achieve/succeed, which was particularly problematic for students who did not wish to be studying psychology or a particular specialty in psychology. Students in our interviews did not mention this issue; however, a number of supervisors described conversations with international students about family pressures and expectations:

> Higher pressure on themselves to succeed, there's more at risk, greater cost to them, um and the people where families have put themselves out to send a child internationally they often place higher expectations on the outcomes of their education, the value. You're representing the family, the culture… (Louise SUP)

Supervisors also talked about the additional challenge for international students of meeting cultural expectations, whereby they would have to travel home for particular events, such as religious occasions or family demands.

11.5 Implications and Recommendations

Placements are integral to the process of becoming a psychologist. Our project identified strengths that international students bring to placements that can enhance their learning and capabilities, as well as contribute to the learning and capabilities of the host workplaces. At the same time international students also bring potential vulnerabilities, and they can face a range of challenges when undertaking placements, the extent of which varies by the life history of the student and the supervisory relationship. While some of these strengths and vulnerabilities would apply to any international students undertaking placements, others were particular to psychological practice.

We conclude with recommendations for universities, supervisors, and workplaces to improve the experiences of international students on placements (which may also benefit local students). This includes management of the dual socialisation

process international students undertake into psychological practice and Australian workplaces, and using reflection to enhance learning. A focus here is acknowledging and capitalising on their strengths while maintaining sensitivity to the unique vulnerabilities and challenges experienced by this cohort. We argue for a move away from the pervading discourse of international students as challenged. As many of these elements relate to cross-cultural and professional transitions that are not unique to the Australian context, our recommendations are applicable in other countries and professional contexts.

We recommend changes to how universities and supervisors prepare for and support international students on placements. First, universities should increase international students' awareness of the strengths they bring, particularly their transition skills and intercultural competencies. When used in conjunction with their heightened situation awareness, through reflective practice, these strengths can enhance their placement learnings and performance and overcome their vulnerabilities and challenges. At the same time, there needs to be recognition of the anxiety and apprehension that awareness of their vulnerabilities creates for international students.

We recommend universities and supervisors encourage international students to develop a critical mindset on the cross-cultural applicability and transferability of the knowledge, skills, and practices they acquire during placement, so they are better equipped to implement culturally respectful and relevant practice in their home countries. Such a mindset may also be useful for local students so they can be competent in providing cross-cultural services in the increasingly globalised society. Facilitated reflection during supervision could include questions such as:

- How will you use this in your home country?
- When can't you use this in your home country?

Supervisors may explore with their international students how they might design their training experience to prepare them in the best possible manner to meet work roles and expectations in their home country.

Second, universities should provide more information about the broader Australian (or other countries) sociocultural context, as well as workplaces specifically. Griffith University organisational psychology programmes have developed a range of multimedia online resources for students (and supervisors) that address the different stages of placements, from contracting to finishing a placement. Such resources benefit both international and local students. Students also need to be prepared for the technical writing skills needed for placements, which differ from academic writing, and for managing the supervisory relationship, including appropriate ways to seek feedback and raise concerns.

Third, where possible, universities should carefully choose early placements for international students that target their strengths and lessen the impact of their vulnerabilities. University staff and supervisors should seek to understand the backgrounds, strengths, and needs of their international students to develop appropriate programmes of study. This will enhance students' self-efficacy prior to undertaking more challenging placements. Matching international students with international organisations can benefit both the student and the workplace, further enhancing the

student's efficacy. Where this is not possible, universities need to raise the awareness of supervisors and workplaces about appropriate support for international students.

Fourth, universities need to intentionally build a student community to provide support for all students irrespective of their background and recognise that local students can benefit from having international students in their programme and on placement with them. Development in this area should empower international students as partners or co-designers (Bovill et al. 2015). In particular, using their cultural understandings and situation awareness to enhance the learnings of local students is a core competency in psychology training.

Supervisors are an important part of students' experiences, who can be beneficial or detrimental for students' experiences and learning. We recommend universities provide intercultural skills training for supervisors that outlines the strengths and vulnerabilities international students bring to placements and the critical role supervisors play in managing both. Such training needs to acknowledge the tension for supervisors of providing supervision that is person-centred while also being aware of more generalisable differences between local and international students. Supervisors need to ensure they acknowledge international students' cultural background in supervision. While this is particularly important in students' earlier placements, encouraging students to draw on their cultural backgrounds and experience in their home country will be useful throughout their placements. Supervisors need to understand that students from some countries will try to save face, and others will not think it appropriate to bring problems to supervisors or to challenge what supervisors say. Thus, supervisors need to elicit information from students about how their cultural background might impact on their behaviour and their understanding of differences in cultural norms between the home and host country.

We recommend universities raise the awareness of workplaces about the strengths that students from diverse backgrounds (of all forms) bring to placements and the benefits that these may provide to clients, colleagues, and workplaces. All can benefit from fresh eyes that "shine a light on what may be taken for granted".

11.6 Conclusions

Our findings concurred with previous research on international psychology and counselling students' experiences more generally (e.g. Mittal and Wieling 2006; Lau and Ng 2012; Smith and Ng 2009). We developed a more integrated model of their experiences, focusing on placements, where particular strengths and vulnerabilities became more salient and consequential. Our model identifies the role of students' individual life history and the role of supervisors, workplaces, and universities in shaping students' experiences. Our findings also identify the potential benefits that international students bring to clients, workplaces, and universities.

We still need, however, a better understanding of students' (both international and local) experiences of the *life cycle* of placements. We have limited understanding of which stages are most challenging and whether the challenges or vulnerabili-

ties vary across the life cycle. There needs to be more understanding of what types of interventions work for international students and how. This includes the role of pre-placement preparation, organisational and supervisor support during placement, and processes for reflecting on placements. Currently, different universities and programmes put in place different forms of support for students on placements, including international students, but there is little evidence of the efficacy of these interventions. We also found that while much has been written in psychology about effective supervision, little of this is specific to international students, and much has not taken students' perspectives as to the impact of the supervisory process. Finally, there is an increasing awareness in universities internationally about their role in contributing to student employability. Our findings can contribute to assisting students as they transition to graduate employment.

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Chapter 12
Functional and Cognitive Aspects of Employability: Implications for International Students

Dawn Bennett and Sonia Ferns

12.1 Introduction

The complexity of WIL reflects graduate outcomes that are inherently unpredictable, unique and socially dependent. In the contemporary higher education environment, graduate employability—and WIL, as a strategy to achieve this—emerges as a critical focus for all stakeholders including government and industry partners globally. According to the OECD (2015), the number of students enrolled in tertiary education outside their country of citizenship increased more than threefold over the two decades to 2011, at which time international students numbered almost 4.3 million. These students are known to experience challenges such as the loss of personal support structures and homesickness. They can also experience differences in culture, language, social environment, educational system and learning contexts.

While higher education students in general report problems in this regard, the differences between the expectations and realities of university life are particularly problematic for many international students. The identity uncertainty that results from different educational schemas is similarly confronting for those international students who do have the cultural capital that provides some sense of university life and the expectations of study. These issues highlight considerable challenges for all stakeholders and are exacerbated by the difficulties of securing WIL opportunities for international students.

Against this background, the chapter employs Krathwohl's 2002 revision of Bloom's taxonomy to explore the functional knowledge and cognitive process development of three international occupational therapy students. Interviews before, during and following the students' placements illustrate both their cognitive and functional development towards metacognitive knowledge and understanding. In

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line with the experiences of domestic students, the importance of reflection and supervisor relationship emerges as a key theme. The cases suggest that international students would benefit from pre-placement time in the workplace to orient themselves to a new workplace culture before their learning experience begins.

12.2 Rethinking Higher Education

Significant global shifts are challenging the traditional content-driven, delivery-focused model characteristic of universities (Ernst and Young 2012), with analogies such as avalanches and tsunamis used to describe the rate and impact of this change (Barber et al. 2013). Environmental, economic and social conditions will undergo further and substantial change over the next two decades, impacting significantly on the nature of the employment market (Hajkowicz et al. 2012).

It is imperative that the higher education sector reconceptualises how it does business, defines operations, and approaches both teaching and learning and research. Influences such as the widening participation agenda, cultural diversity, technological innovations, rapidly changing workforce requirements, and the demand for work-ready graduates who are socially responsive and skilled citizens, are challenging customary approaches. Enhanced regulatory and standards-based scrutiny adds an additional dimension of complexity.

It follows that engagement with external stakeholders is emerging as a key determinant of the progressive and inclusive higher education institution. Collaboration with community agencies, industry corporations and government bodies in all aspects of the business including education and research is integral to maintaining a competitive edge in a highly volatile and unpredictable market. Mutually beneficial partnerships enable universities to broaden perspectives and transcend from the philosophical and knowledge-driven focus to one of real-world applicability (van Rooijen 2011).

Many governments perceive education as a means to provide a suitably skilled workforce and as pivotal to a sustainable and productive economy. Moreover, global mobility requires graduates to have transferrable skills across diverse and multidisciplinary contexts. It is, thus, insufficient to acquire expertise in a single field of study; the future workforce demands quick-thinking, adaptable and innovative employees who possess the skills to navigate an increasingly competitive and constantly evolving workforce (Hagel et al. 2014).

The rapid rate of labour market change presents challenges and opportunities for educational institutions. The focus of this volume is international education, which is a growing trend across higher education globally; Australia is recorded as the fifth most popular destination for international students (Australian Government 2015). The benefits of cultural, economic and political diversity afforded by international education are recognised (Blackmore et al. 2014; Deloitte 2016), but with heightened competition in the global employment market, international students seek work-based practical learning experiences that complement the theory-based component of their studies (Gribble 2014).

12.3 Rethinking Employability

Views on graduate employability have shifted over time from an emphasis on individual job getting to one that distinguishes between gaining employment and having the requisite skills to obtain or create work over time. In line with this, Dacré-Pool and Sewell (2007, p. 280) define employability as "skills, knowledge, understanding and personal attributes that make a person more likely to choose and secure occupations in which they can be satisfied and successful".

Dacré-Poole and Sewell's focus on personal satisfaction and goal achievement acknowledges the need for workers to remain work ready throughout the career lifespan and in line with individual needs and interests. The corresponding need for life-long learning reflects growing acceptance that employability development is predicated not on ways of knowing—the epistemological or functional aspects of employability—but on "ways of being" (Barnett 2007): students' development along cognitive dimensions with respect to their disposition and capacity to engage as professionals.

As Bennett (2012) argues, self-belief and meaning making generates a corresponding increase in curiosity about self, career and learning; learner engagement; capacity for creativity and problem solving; active agency in the learning domain; and motivation to learn. Mindful of the functional and cognitive dimensions, this study adopted Bennett's (2016) definition of employability development, being "[t]he ability to find, create and sustain work and learning across lengthening working lives and multiple work settings".

Of particular concern to the current study was Yorke and Knight's (2004) contention that students need to be in a workplace setting in order to learn work-related skills and knowledge. This was later re-emphasised by Mason et al. (2009), who concluded that professional behaviours and skills are enhanced through industry placements and the involvement of industry in programme delivery. More recently still, an Australian national study of employability concluded, "degree programs are rarely sufficient in and of themselves to deliver a good employability outcome" (Bennett et al. 2015, p. 12). As such, work integrated learning emerges as a crucial consideration.

12.4 Work Integrated Learning and International Students

While WIL takes many forms, in essence it "encompasses a range of activities that integrate learning and practice" (Ferns et al. 2014, p. 1). Universities are reshaping curriculum to incorporate these activities, and international students are increasingly seeking degree programmes that encompass WIL and that explicitly develop employability capabilities.

In this regard, Australia's national WIL strategy is leading the way internationally (ACEN 2015; Edwards et al. 2015), and there is strong alignment between WIL

and meeting the needs of these international students. It follows that a consistent theme of recent Australian research is the positive impact of WIL pedagogy as a strategy for enhancing the employability of graduates (Ferns et al. 2014; Smith et al. 2014; KPA Phillips 2014; Australian Industry Group 2015; Edwards et al. 2015). Commentators also agree that industry and community engagement is fundamental to embedding WIL and to ensure the currency and authenticity of student learning.

To ensure a developmental approach to skill acquisition, WIL needs to be "scaffolded across the curriculum both vertically and horizontally" (Smith et al. 2014, p. 6). However, recent research has highlighted a number of distinct challenges facing international students when sourcing and succeeding in WIL placements (Blackmore et al. 2014). This chapter underlines some of these challenges and examines how students sought to overcome them.

12.5 Theoretical Framework and Approach

12.5.1 Theoretical Framework

Consistent with Australian higher education, international students were defined for this study as temporary residents (visa status) of Australia, permanent residents (visa status) of New Zealand, or residents or citizens of any other country. The research acknowledges the important relationship between university and work integrated learning. In particular, our thinking about student development during WIL was informed by Knight's (2004) competency approach to internationalisation.

With placements and competency in mind, we employed Krathwohl's 2002 revision of Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives. Krathwohl separated the noun and verb aspects of an educational objective to form two dimensions in which the noun relates to knowledge and the verb relates to the cognitive process. Summarised at Fig. 12.1, the addition of a fourth category within the knowledge dimension recognises metacognitive knowledge in which strategic, structural and self-cognition come together. In Krathwohl's revision, the cognitive process dimension reorders existing categories to bring them into line with current educational objectives and the language is updated.

12.5.2 Context

The Occupational Therapy Board of Australia (OTBA) regulates Australia's occupational therapy (OT) sector, including the registration of graduates. The OTBA requires students to complete a minimum of 1000 h "including at least one fieldwork placement of 1 weeks' duration" (Occupational Therapy Council 2012, p. 10). The graduate OT students who participated in this study undertook regular short placements during each year of study. These placements exposed them to multiple OT contexts and patients, with an eight-week placement undertaken in the final year of study.

	The cognitive process dimension						
The functional dimension	**The knowledge dimension**	*Remember*	*Understand*	*Apply*	*Analyse*	*Evaluate*	*Create*
	Factual knowledge						
	Conceptual knowledge						
	Procedural knowledge						
	Metacognitive knowledge						

Factual Knowledge
The basic elements that students must know to be acquainted with a discipline or to solve problems in it.
Conceptual Knowledge
The interrelationships among the basic elements within a larger structure (*for example, industry or workplace*) that enable them to function together.
Procedural Knowledge: How to do something; methods of inquiry, and criteria for using skills, algorithms, techniques, and methods.
Metacognitive Knowledge
Knowledge of cognition in general as well as awareness and knowledge of one's own cognition.
Remember
Retrieving relevant knowledge from long-term memory.
Understand
Determining the meaning of instructional messages, including oral, written, and graphic communication.
Apply
Carrying out or using a procedure in a given situation.
Analyse
Breaking material into its constituent parts and detecting how the parts relate to one another and to an overall structure or purpose.
Evaluate
Making (*learning or workplace*) judgments based on criteria and standards.
Create
Putting elements together to form a novel, coherent whole or make an original product.

Fig. 12.1 Krathwohl's revision of Bloom's taxonomy (2002, from p. 214)
Note: bracketed text added by authors

12.5.3 Process

Once ethical approvals were granted, the OT work placement coordinator was asked to help recruit international students. Invitations were sent to all international students via email and then followed up with a phone call. Nine OT students participated in individual interviews. These were held in person prior to, midway through, and following completion of the work placement or placements experienced over one 12-week semester. Interviews were conducted by a third person otherwise unknown to the students.

Demographic information was amassed during each interview. The first interview addressed previous work experience and identity and asked students to express their expectations of their work placement. Informed by Knight's (2004) approaches to internationalisation, the broad topic questions for the initial student interviews were as follows:

Previous Work Experience and Identity Previous work experience in full- or part-time jobs (socialisation, critical incidents, problem solving, learning)
- Workplace socialisation skills
- Reflective practice
- Self-identity

Work Placement Expectations Work placement history
- Understanding of what is involved
- Preparatory activities and their effectiveness
- Hopes and fears
- Possible challenges
- Reflecting forward on positive outcomes

The subsequent interviews addressed the same broad topics at mid-placement and post-placement. The interviewer also asked about changes in identity, self-perception, and thoughts about the future.

Interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim. Initial analysis employed inductive coding to identify potential themes. For this, five of the nine interview transcripts were dual coded and compared to ensure consistency. The researchers coded the remaining four cases independently, consulting together as necessary. At this stage, italicised text was added to Krathwohl's matrix as shown at Fig. 12.1. This ensured that the workplace dimensions of the study were recorded.

The second phase of analysis involved deductive content analysis using Krathwohl's framework elements, again with consultation as required. Finally, key statements were clustered into themes and meaningful units. Each new occurrence of the framework elements was recorded on a framework template as a shaded cell. Once analysis was complete, cells from each of the three interviews were overlaid to create a visual representation of the student's shifting cognition and understanding.

12.6 Findings

In this section we present and discuss three complete cases chosen at random from the sample of nine. The progression of students' thinking at the three interview points is highlighted: Time 1 at pre-placement, Time 2 at mid-placement, and Time 3 at post-placement. Each case begins with a unique figure in which each occurrence of the framework elements is shown at Times 1–3. Pseudonyms are used to protect the students' anonymity.

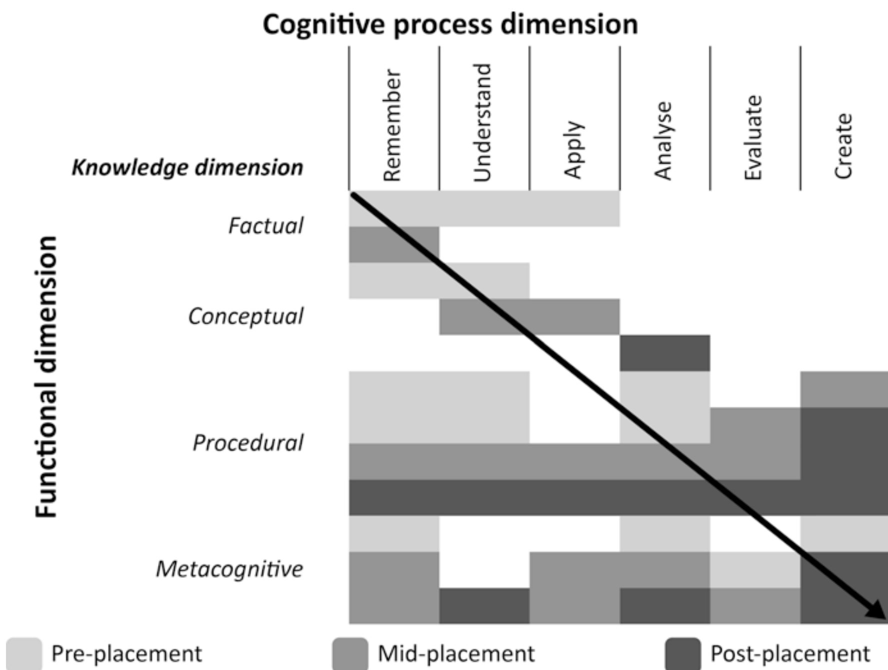

Fig. 12.2 Linley: functional and cognitive occurrences

12.6.1 Case 1: Linley Chan

Linley Chan is a 26-year-old student who qualified and worked for 18 months as a doctor in China before deciding to retrain. Her cognitive and functional development across the three interviews is shown at Fig. 12.2.

Time 1

At Time 1, Linley drew on her experience as a doctor and her part-time work in Australia to *remember* and *understand* factual and procedural knowledge as it related to her Australian work placements. Linley had already attended a one-day placement in Australia, and she made sense of differences in context, workplace culture and practice by relating these to her previous experience. Particularly important to her understanding of the Australian context was her part-time work in the health sector, where she was working with people with dementia.

Even at Time 1, Linley was drawing on her experience to *evaluate* her short placements in terms of developing self-knowledge. She *remembered* the very competitive environment she had encountered when working as a doctor. This impacted her thinking about other work experiences, which she described as "…a totally different experience". Using reflection, she analysed her experiences of working in a competitive environment, which was not always pleasant, and this enabled her to position her experience as a learning curve: "I need to learn more and maybe listen to the doctors more carefully and try to do my work better—so it's a positive thing".

Linley also realised the need to ask questions in order to move from cognitive knowledge to procedural knowledge: from theory to practice.

> The assistant job at [my part-time workplace] is practical and the course is theoretical so I need to link them … and actually the real situation is not in accordance with what you read in the books, so you have to ask the OTs.
>
> My previous experience taught me that I need to follow rigorously the instructions … working procedures in this country might be different in the other country … If I am stuck at some stage, I need to ask my supervisors.

Of interest, Linley had developed a reflective practice through which she monitored her progress and analysed challenges. For this *metacognitive self-knowledge*, she employed a written journal. This, she said, was to:

> … try to learn something and … avoid what is not so good in the future and to enhance what is good … if I don't write them down [my feelings] I will never learn … I will never try to analyse myself, that is very clear, and I can see from a diary … my progress and my changes.

Time 2

The OT students undertake multiple placements, some of these only a few days in length. As such, at Time 2 Linley was speaking after her first placement and was midway through a short hospital placement. Linley drew on her previous experiences to *remember* and understand *factual*, *conceptual*, *procedural* and *metacognitive* knowledge. She was also now able to *apply* and *analyse* some of these experiences to the extent that she could continue that thinking through to *evaluation* and, in one case, the *creation* of a coherent whole—an understanding in which multiple elements were brought together and consolidated.

Linley recalled that in advance of her second placement, she had held many concerns including workplace procedures and finding her way around a large hospital. To alleviate these concerns, she acted proactively. She gathered *factual knowledge* about the context of her placement by visiting the town and the hospital site, viewing the hospital map online, and reading "documents about the worksite of [the] hospital and several documents about where it is and where I can park". After this, she attended a two-part orientation organised by the hospital.

At Time 2, Linley talked far less about her experiences in China, and there was little *remembering* in her narrative. Rather, her focus turned to *conceptual knowledge* in which she linked theory and practice, to *procedural knowledge* in terms of conducting patient assessments and to her ability to learn from these experiences to create new understanding: her *metacognitive knowledge*. The following narrative excerpts are taken from Linley's Time 2 interview and illustrate both her growing confidence and the importance of the supervisor relationship in her learning:

> I observed my supervisor do her job. I tried several times to do the assessments or talk with the patients by myself, with supervision…
>
> Yesterday and today we had five new patients … and we conducted the initial assessment. … I really had opportunities to present an assessment...
>
> … my supervisor, she is pretty good and she can answer my questions carefully and in detail. … I can learn a lot…
>
> She gave me the documentation for the patient and I can learn from that, and she gave me the cognitive assessment and she let me read. Maybe tomorrow or Friday we will come back to maybe [the] cognitive preparation for the assessment. …

> … she showed me how to do that and she just encouraged me to do that in cooperation with her. … If she has enough confidence she will allow me to talk with the client by myself and she [will] just observe me.

At this point, Linley returned to the subject of her coursework. She talked in particular about the unit "principles and practice", which she had completed. Linley *remembered* that in her first placement, the number of abbreviations had been challenging. This made it difficult to negotiate the written documentation provided at the hospital, and so she had sought to *understand* them. Linley overcame her initial reluctance to ask questions and emailed her lecturer for help. The list of common abbreviations received from that lecturer enabled her to prepare carefully and to *apply* this knowledge in her placement. The difference this made was clear from her initial description of being "so confused" to her later description of becoming "really confident to read the documentation by myself … because I have prepared some of that".

At Time 2, Linley was less focused on her previous experience of a competitive workplace. Rather, she focused on the teamwork she was now encountering as an intern at the hospital. She commented:

> …the working process is totally different in Australian hospitals. So I need to get used to that. … I think the most significant thing is teamwork, you know the multiple disciplinary teamwork. … that is pretty good and I need to get used to it!

Of particular interest here, Linley *evaluated* the involvement of multiple disciplines and realised that this approach made a difference to patient care:

> …people can work for the patient in different points of view and people can cooperate with each other. So that is comprehensive for the patient. … It might be the most important thing in my day.

This is an example of *creating* new understanding by bringing together *conceptual knowledge*: the interrelationships among the basic elements within a larger structure.

Prompted by the interviewer to recall her experiences as a doctor, Linley appeared to be creating a more personal understanding of practice as an OT such that she was now highlighting the differences being a doctor and an OT:

> … [as a doctor] my previous experience really helped me a lot about understanding the terminology, the medical terminology. [However], I think it's not that useful because OT is really both the treatment and the diagnosis of a patient. … as an OT we need to find out what is the most important problem which [is] affecting their daily life.

From this she was able to *conceptualise* her knowledge and to "use the knowledge in a practical way" as an OT.

Time 3

At Time 3, at which point her placements were complete, Linley did not begin by *remembering* her presage knowledge in order to *understand* her new experiences. Rather, she reflected from the point of understanding. At Time 3, her narrative consistently concerned the creation of a coherent whole. Here, while she still voiced concerns and challenges, these were situated in the context of her studies and in relation to how they might be overcome.

Linley also began to think from a programme perspective, suggesting enhancements to the placement experience. For example, she suggested that international students might be permitted slightly longer placements so that they can familiarise with different workplace cultures prior to a focus on learning.

In summary, Linley came to the OT programme with relevant disciplinary skills and knowledge including her work as a doctor in China. As an international student, she encountered challenges relating to workplace culture, terminology and language and was initially reluctant to ask too many questions. Linley drew on her WIL experiences to make sense of her learning by documenting her reflections and challenging herself to critique achievements and challenges. From this she made informed decisions about how to advance her learning needs.

12.6.2 Case 2: Adinda Pane

Indonesian OT student Adinda moved from Indonesia to Australia for his final year of high school. His undergraduate degree was in sports science during which he undertook coaching placements with students. He described his previous placement role as *helping* rather than leadership. The three one-day placements included a children's soccer club, a women's hockey club and a hospital. As a graduate student undertaking an OT hospital placement, Adinda had been surprised to find, "we actually have to meet with the clients and show what we're doing".

Adinda worked part-time at a food mall for extra spending money. In this role, too, he described a passive role: "the boss just taught us what to do". The boss was also the answer when conflict arose with customers: "if they're getting a bit rude then just call the boss, sometimes the boss can get quite rude with the customer". Asked how he would overcome such challenges himself, Adinda responded that he would still ask his supervisor: "you have to call in the boss".

While he noted conceptual, procedural and cognitive knowledge at Time 1, Adinda's cognitive process was limited to *remembering* with just one occurrence of *understanding*. There was as yet no evidence of problem-solving skills. Adinda's functional and conceptual development is shown at Fig. 12.3.

Time 1

Adinda's forthcoming placement was located in a large city hospital, and he was looking forward to it. Asked what he might be doing during the placement, he had little idea of the workplace:

> I don't know, I was looking for it but I just couldn't find information—it just said like OT Department … probably just like going around the ward, or just clinic maybe.

Adinda possessed factual information about the appropriate OT practice model, and he was able to anticipate the role of this "with all the interviews and dealing with clients". Adinda also appreciated the opportunities he had to practise his skills in class: "we kind of practise with each other". Admitting that he was "maybe forgetting some of the stuff that I need to remember", he was concerned about applying his lab-based skills in the real-world environment.

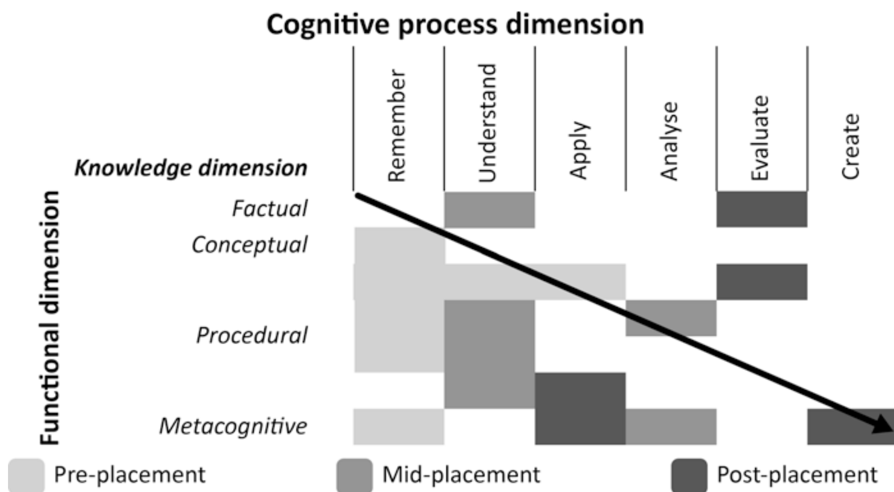

Fig. 12.3 Adinda: functional and cognitive occurrences

Adinda was asked whether he had any concerns about the placement. He was particularly concerned about communicating appropriately with people of different ages, which would be an experience unlike those in class:

> … 'cause when you're practising with each other, you kind of know the person, and when you go into a hospital on the placement you usually handle with all the generation, and you have different beliefs and values in the younger generation, so it's kind of difficult really because what they're saying might not be, you might not understand … I have to kind of look closely and just to show them the respect so they don't get angry at me.

He planned to overcome any angst by being friendly and respectful: "assure them that you're actually trying to help the person, so with all my powers and abilities I'll be helping them sort of thing, and just smile really so they don't actually show you any frustration or anything".

A second concern related to language: "English is not my first language so it could get difficult sometimes, but other international students, they speak English as their first language so it might not be as difficult for them compared to mine."

Adinda spoke about the importance of a good supervisor and linked this with being able to maximise his opportunities to learn. He also understood the need to ask questions as part of the learning process. Here, he was *remembering* his previous experiences and drawing these together to form *metacognitive knowledge* at a basic level. His intention to ask questions differed from the experiences he described in previous situations. This might relate to maturity since his undergraduate experiences, and also to commitment to his personal development as an OT professional.

> … if you get a good supervisor, that would be a positive because you can talk to them very easily and probably just ask a lot of questions … you actually have to ask them what it is so we can learn from it and get an understanding … as long as the supervisor is very approachable it makes it easier for me to ask questions.

Time 2

At Time 2, Adinda's responses ranged between *understand*, *apply* and *analyse* on the functional dimension; he presented factual, procedural and metacognitive knowledge. Adinda was midway through his OT placement at a large hospital. Asked about his preparation for the placement, he noted simply, "I was supposed to email the prac site". Later in the interview, when asked whether there was "anything you would do differently to prepare for your next placement?" he responded, "Oh, not really". This warns of a continued lack of pro-active or independent behaviours in advance of his placements.

Once in the placement, however, Adinda described a deeper engagement. He was, for example, preparing for client interviews the night before: seeking to *understand* the procedural aspects of the task at hand. He also recommended that other students take time to read employers' booklets on orientation and assessments. These were his first mentions of the need to prepare. Similarly, when he realised that the hospital used a different OT assessment model, he noted that he could "still reflect on what we have learned to use with the models the hospitals use". As such, he was making sense of the new model by drawing on his experience. This illustrates theoretical knowledge applied in a workplace setting alongside knowledge of his individual cognition (metacognitive knowledge).

When interviewing OT clients, Adinda found that they would often "talk about something else". His sensitivity about offending someone led him to be wary about interrupting, and he was relieved that his supervisor would help him stay on track if needed. He did not reflect on his experiences beyond the reporting phase, however, even when prompted. Although Adinda responded to several questions with comments about not remembering the details, he had not thought about ways to improve his practice. The supervisor relationship was dominant in Adinda's account of his placement.

Time 3

At time 3, Adinda was *understanding*, *applying* and *evaluating* his functional knowledge and also his cognitive process related to factual, procedural and metacognitive knowledge. An ongoing challenge was his ability to write client notes.

> [My mentor] helped me with the case studies … if I can remember, I think she was saying that my notes / report is a bit lacking so I need to improve more on that. … she just told me that I need to expand more on my explanations … at the end, she put it on the comments, the report card of the placement.

Asked what he might do differently in the next placement, he conceded that improvement was needed:

> I'll probably do the same thing again, probably try and expand a little bit on my note writing skills.

Adinda was also asked what he had done independently to improve his note writing skills, and he responded that he was not doing anything; rather, he was waiting for note writing to be covered within his course. He *understood* the need for improved skills, but he was not yet taking responsibility for their development:

> … we haven't really done anything practical this semester, not with the report writing so I haven't really been practising on this.

Although Adinda was still not reflecting on his practice and he was not yet illustrating learner autonomy, he was now more aware of the need to make sense of situations and to adjust accordingly. This demonstrates his application of metacognitive knowledge:

> … in some cases I had to call the client from the ward and then we actually do the sessions, and doing the sessions I was mostly, like, listening and observing, yeah. I guess you just have to learn on the spot as well: what sort of routines the supervisors are doing so, so you can actually just follow whatever's there for you to learn.

He also demonstrated more developed skills in managing communication difficulties. In this case, it was the language of the client that caused problems:

> … there was one [client], she spoke Mandarin and she hardly speak any English, so um, yeah, we had difficulty understanding what she was saying. …
>
> You just sort of have to break it down, you have to make it simple, and sometimes we have to like show pictures, so something like that.

This was the first time Adinda had described the use of problem-solving skills, and at Time 3 his practice of relying on someone more senior was giving way to more independent thinking. This was an example of Adinda evaluating *procedural* knowledge and then using his *metacognitive* understanding to *create* a new approach, albeit with his supervisor's assistance.

12.6.3 Case 3: Kiri Swift

Kiri came from Iowa in the United States of America. Her first language was English, but she studied Spanish for 4 years and considered herself to be moderately fluent. While Kiri encountered challenges related to cultural differences, language did not factor as a barrier, and being bilingual was reported as beneficial. Fig. 12.4 shows Kiri's development across the functional and cognitive domains at the three points of her work placement experience.

Time 1

Kiri had previously been employed in health-related roles and, at the time of her placement, was working at a fitness centre. Personal experiences had acted as intrinsic motivators for studying OT and, according to Kiri, "inspired me to help people like that". Kiri's previous work experience augured her well for working in an OT context as she had already encountered challenges when working with both clients and staff and had devised strategies for managing conflict. Kiri's ability to retain composure in a stressful work-based situation is evidenced by the following quote:

> I think I am good at just being calm, you know, like patients sometimes are really grumpy or just, like, "Get out of my room" or whatever. I'm just, like, "Okay!" I think I'm good at taking the heat sometimes … It doesn't really bother me anymore.

Kiri's continuum of development (Fig. 12.4) reveals her fairly rapid development from factual to procedural in the functional domain and application in the cognitive domain. Kiri's self-confidence and self-efficacy contributed to her ability to progress into more complex roles in the first phase of her placement. She also used

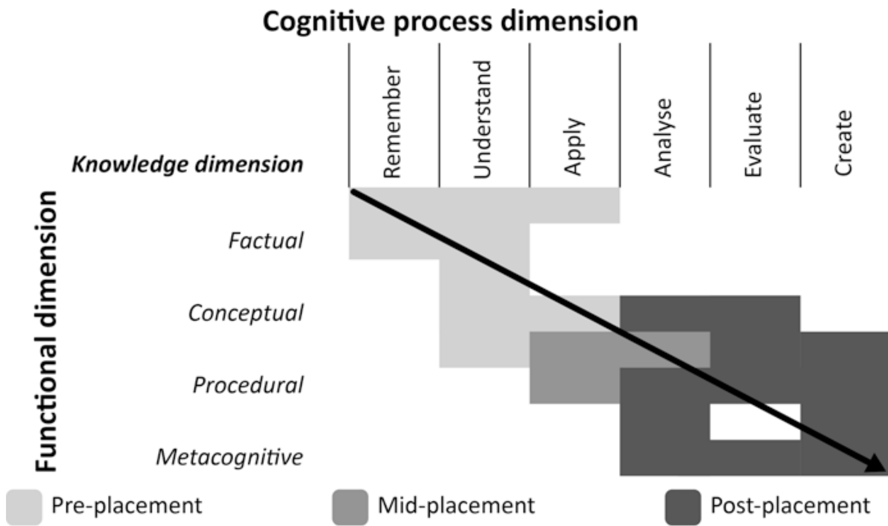

Fig. 12.4 Kiri: functional and cognitive occurrences

reflection early in the placement as a tool for recognising both her personal strengths and possible gaps in her learning. She referred specifically to Gibb's (1988) reflection cycle, noting that reflection "makes you think about the positives and the negatives".

Despite still being in the early stages of the placement, Kiri was already looking ahead and identifying herself as a future professional:

> I can't wait to graduate so I am not a student any more and may be seen as more of an adult professional than a student.

Kiri recognised the valuable support mechanisms essential for success in the workplace and development of professional skills. Furthermore, she connected the theoretical knowledge acquired in the university setting with the practice-based environment.

> … they set us up with a mentor, two mentors that are a year ahead of us, one of them is American so that's actually really handy. I ask a million questions. He's probably really sick of me!

While Kiri highlighted several challenges that emerged from working in an unfamiliar cultural setting, she was sufficiently astute to recognise the benefits of gaining experience in a situation dissimilar to her own.

> … just working with OTs in Australia and seeing like the differences, I'm really excited about that and just to experience new things that I haven't seen in OT.

Time 2

Kiri's foundational capabilities enabled substantial progress at Time 2; this prepared her to transition from conceptual to procedural in the functional dimension. Kiri traversed the application and analytical cognitive domains, whereby she applied theoretical knowledge in the practical setting and was cognisant of experiences that prepared her and optimised performance in the workplace environment. At this stage of the work placement, Kiri was mindful of the value of observation days and supervisors' feedback in equipping her with the skills and knowledge for success. She also commented on the value of theories and concepts covered in the university setting.

While Kiri demonstrated confidence during the work placement, as an international student, she raised concerns about the unfamiliar environment and challenges relating to practicalities such as travelling to and from work:

> I guess I expected to do an orientation on Perth and public transportation and stuff like that, so I kind of had to sort that out.

Kiri's motivation and resilience enabled her to manage multiple challenges and maximise the benefits of new experiences, which she enjoyed:

> I was very excited to work with kids, and I never worked at a school and stuff like that so, yeah, I was really excited about that.

Asked how she had managed challenges, she again demonstrated the ability to reflect on her experience and draw on the expertise of others.

> I think just being given the opportunity to do it with [placement site] has made it a success, because that's something that I really wanted to do—to be out in the community. Having a really good supervisor has helped make it successful. As an international student, I think I got really lucky because the OTs that I was working with, a lot of them, were from overseas … it was great to talk to them and get their advice.

Time 3

Figure 12.4 highlights Kiri's rapid development in engaging with the more complex cognitive processes and the metacognitive knowledge dimension. At the Time 3 interview, her ability to think analytically and create knowledge with reference to procedural knowledge is evidenced by the following quote:

> I wish I could have done more with the person I was with—[if she] would have like kind of pushed me to do more.

Kiri drew constantly on her background knowledge and experiences to extend her conceptual capabilities, thereby enabling her to transition into the realms of metacognitive thinking and behaviours. This is evidenced by her ability to evaluate her experience post-placement and to make comparisons across cultures and appreciate the value of intercultural collaborations.

When asked what she would do differently in relation to future placements, Kiri's growing confidence was evident: "I'd like to be hands on and do as much as I can … Just being able to do more practical stuff". Following the placement experience, Kiri was competent in evaluating her personal knowledge, growth and behaviours. She was also able to ascertain how she could address weaknesses in her performance. Further, she demonstrated the capacity to appreciate that there are

different ways to manage situations: "It was good to see how different OTs do things, like the same situation but they might do different activities."

When quizzed on her sense of identity, Kiri's professional identity had shifted post-placement from student to professional: "I might just say occupational therapist more now. I don't know why—I feel like since I'm done with that first semester, it feels, I don't know, real."

12.7 Discussion

Feedback and support from workplace supervisors featured as a key component of a quality experience for these international students, who particularly valued mentors who provided constructive feedback. The robust feedback provided on the process of learning and the enactment of skills enabled the students to conceptualise their learning and identify the strengths and gaps in development through facilitated reflection (Hodges et al. 2014). The dynamic interaction with the workplace supervisor ensured a developmental approach to skill development and instilled confidence in the students to self-assess workplace proficiency. They valued the input and support from role models with relevant industry expertise and perceived this as integral to a quality experience.

Each participant in this study was unique in his or her experience, cultural capital and personal strengths, all of which impacted on the manner in which the students engaged with the workplace experience and their attainment of employability capabilities. Despite this diversity, the progression through the functional and cognitive dimensions consistently shows advancement from foundational skills to the more complex skills of analysis and critical thinking (Figs. 12.1, 12.2 and 12.3). Evident in the interviewees' comments is the opportunity to scaffold learning and skill development in the workplace scenario. As proficiency advances, confidence grows along with the willingness to take on more complex tasks. The consistency evident in student progression highlights the personalised experience workplace learning affords (Hodges et al. 2014).

Students relayed the importance of clearly articulated learning outcomes with aligned assessments undertaken in a supportive environment. They also emphasised the developmental relevance of authentic, work-based experience. In addition, preparation prior to the placement was deemed crucial to mitigating potential challenges resulting from their lack of preparedness (McNamara 2013). Collectively, these curriculum components facilitate students to make meaning of their experiences and to connect their practice-based learning to theoretical concepts. We contend that a disconnected, *bolt on* WIL experience is potentially more destructive than constructive to learning as there is the potential to diminish confidence through threatening and intimidating experiences with inadequate preparation and poorly structured, incoherent curriculum (Billett 2011).

Seeking to evidence the impact of WIL on student work readiness, Smith et al.'s (2014) study of over 6000 student participants identified the following dimensions integral to a quality WIL curriculum:

- Authenticity of the placement
- Preparation and induction processes for students
- Debriefing sessions that enable reflection on the experience
- Quality supervision
- Alignment of the placement and assessments to WIL appropriate learning outcomes with scaffolded skill development and robust feedback

These quality dimensions were further explored and verified in a later study (Tan et al. 2016) which garnered input from an expert panel on quality dimensions for Australian students undertaking international placements. The findings from both studies are exemplified in the student interviews showcased in this chapter, in which interviewees' responses resonated strongly with the quality elements listed above.

While the challenges specific to international students are evident, the students in this study appeared motivated to succeed and to overcome adversity. Their motivation stemmed from a strong belief in the advantages of workplace learning in an unfamiliar cultural context, which they positioned as a mechanism for increasing the likelihood of long-term global mobility (Clements and Cord 2011). The experiences of international students affirm the quality dimensions of a WIL placement, all of which are relevant to domestic students. However, the "highly variable construct [of WIL] where student outcomes are dependent on the learning support provided" (Ferns et al. 2014, p.181) is especially challenging for students undertaking the experience while negotiating the challenges specific to international students.

12.8 Conclusion

We begin the conclusion by acknowledging that the sample reported here was small. The three cases were selected at random, and they varied in terms of background, learning mindset, gender and reflectivity. However, there remain questions such as whether students whose first language is English are better able to express their insights and reflections and the extent to which previous work, life and community experiences impact students' reflective practices. The learner development along both cognitive and functional dimensions was striking, but we do not presume to claim any generalisability. Rather, we present a framework with which further cases might be examined with specific reference to the WIL experiences of both domestic and international students and both native and non-native English language speakers.

From these cases, however, we hypothesise that both individual autonomy and reflective behaviour are critical indicators of learner development. In this we draw reference to seminal texts. In terms of reflection, for example, Billett (2010) has highlighted the impact of the mindful relationship between self and work and its impact on learners' self-identity, self-awareness and personal agency. Central to this development is the *process* of reflection, which in our study was established in Linley's practice and all but absent with Adinda. Far from being a retrospective act, reflection is a cyclical process of reflection on and in action that impacts future action (Schön 1983). Reflection also concerns "the individual's centrality to their

own learning", through which learners can "make intelligent decisions about how to move ahead with their learning needs" (Helyer 2015, p. 16). In light of this, Billett's emphasis on the *preparation for*, *scaffolding of* and *reflection on* work integrated learning cannot be overemphasised.

Against the backdrop of preceding investigations, this research sets the scene to explore the impact of curriculum design and the structure of discipline specific workplace practices on the outcomes of placements for international students. Given the emphasis of supervisory and mentor support from the international student participants in this study, there is further scope to investigate the role of the workplace supervisor and the academic supervisor, and how these roles might be shaped to maximise outcomes for international students.

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Part III
Improving Work Placements for International Students: Exploring the Higher Education Context

Chapter 13
The Study Abroad Programme: Experience and Benefits

Kay Hartwig

13.1 Introduction

Studying overseas is an exciting opportunity for Australian university students. Universities across Australia offer study abroad programmes where students have the opportunity to engage in short- and long-term study in an international location during the course of their programme of study. There are a variety of programmes available from full semester exchange programmes to short-term study programmes (2–3 weeks). For education students this can often include teaching in a local school in the new country.

Why go abroad to study? The top five reasons to go global have been listed as:

1. Participate in an exciting, life changing experience by immersing yourself in a new culture and community.
2. Make lasting personal and professional connections.
3. Gain a competitive edge for your career.
4. Learn a new language
5. Expand your cultural horizons. (Griffith University 2015)

The Australian Government (2016a) website, Study Overseas, encourages students to embark on an international study experience:

> So many amazing experiences await you when you take the plunge to study or train in another country. Not only do you enhance the value of your qualification you also embark on a life-changing and rewarding journey. Studying overseas allows you to immerse yourself in an entirely new cultural setting. Cultural differences are more than just differences in language, food, appearances, and personal habits. You experience first-hand that country's perceptions, beliefs and values. There is also no better and more effective way to learn a

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> language than living in a place that doesn't speak your first language. Being surrounded by the language everyday and hearing it used in context, not the artificial environment of a classroom, is great for your language skills. An international study experience gives you the opportunity to meet new people. You get to know the local people and also fellow international students, giving you a ready-made international friendship and professional network. It's also a great opportunity to travel to new places.

Paige et al. (2009) surveyed 6391 study abroad participants. The survey results revealed that study abroad has had an impact on five dimensions of global engagement (civic engagement, knowledge production, philanthropy, social entrepreneurship and voluntary simplicity) as well as on subsequent educational and career choices. According to Trede et al. (2013), international experiences provide an enormous potential to prepare students for an intercultural globalised world of work. They believe however that the potential is best realised with a purposeful pedagogy that enhances intercultural competence and active global citizenship in future graduates. This perspective is particularly important for students who study teacher education due to the fact that their future classrooms are likely to be culturally and linguistically diverse. Wilson (1993) believes that if we are serious about global education in schools, cross-cultural experiential learning should be a component of every teacher education programme.

Universities encourage students to undertake an international experience during the course of their studies with many offering credit for participation in recognised and accredited programmes. Some universities include this goal in both their strategic and international policies, whilst some are also setting targets for this goal. The Queensland University of Technology in Australia, for example, aims to have 20% of students engage in an international experience during their studies by 2019 (QUT 2016, p. 9). Another Australian University, Deakin University (2016), states that local students are given the opportunity to undertake global placements and study abroad experiences. Griffith University (2014, 2015) also promotes study abroad programmes (both long and short term) as well as international exchange programmes for students. Griffith University has set up a dedicated section *Global Mobility* which assists students and academics as well as partner universities to deliver such programmes. Where the programmes are recognised by the university and result in credit towards the student's programme of study, financial assistance is available. This financial assistance can be through university funds, for example, the International Experience Incentive Scheme (IEIS). The scheme at Griffith University (2015) is funded by the vice chancellor to assist with some of the costs of studying abroad. As well, the Australian government grant programmes such as the Australia Awards, the New Colombo Plan and the Endeavour Scholarships and Fellowships, Endeavour Mobility Grants and Short-Term Mobility Programme are avenues for funding assistance. In addition to these programmes where grants are available, students are also able to apply for loans through the OS-HELP Loan Scheme where funds are provided for these international experiences and can be paid back through the student loan scheme. The development of Australia's first *National Strategy for International Education 2025* (Australian Government 2016b) has highlighted the importance of international education in Australia. Goal 6 of the strategy is to enhance mobility through the actions of:

6.1 Supporting international mobility through practical visa settings and work arrangements
6.2 Expanding student, education and training professional and researcher mobility
6.3 Supporting graduates through qualifications recognition.

Action 6.2 aims at expanding mobility opportunities that allow students, professionals and researchers to take advantage of education, training, research and employment in other countries. This can enhance learning and experience as well as future career and collaboration opportunities. The strategy highlights Australia's investment in scholarships—such as those outlined above—to support student, education and training professional and researcher mobility (p. 24).

As the notion of global citizenry infiltrates the research literature (Freebody 2014; Tarrant et al. 2014), the chapter explores this idea in relation to Australian domestic students' experience in studying and undertaking work placements in other countries and details the identified benefits of such programmes.

13.2 Study Abroad Programmes: The Benefits

It is well acknowledged in the literature that participation in international experiences and exposure to a new culture can have transformative potential for students. Preservice teachers are encouraged to participate in study abroad programmes to expand their perspectives on teaching and their future classrooms. Wilson (1993) lists four benefits. These are:

1. Teaching itself is a cross-cultural encounter.
2. Cross-cultural experience aids self-development.
3. Cross-cultural effective persons have characteristics desirable for effective teachers.
4. Cross-cultural experience leads to global perspectives necessary for global education to happen in schools (p. 521).

Willard-Holt (2001) identifies with Merryfield (1995) in defining global education as education that develops the knowledge, skills and attitudes that are the basis for decision-making and participation in a world characterised by cultural pluralism, interconnectedness and international economic competition. Goals for such global education for preservice teachers include the ability to build cross-cultural knowledge, to be motivated to teach from a global perspective, to value cultural diversity, to become knowledgeable about cultures other than their own, to develop confidence and skills to communicate and be at ease in other cultural groups and to view peoples of other cultures without the distortions of stereotype and to consider themselves part of an international professional community (Willard-Holt 2001; Merryfield 1995; Smith et al. 1997; Bruce et al. 1991). As reported in Willard-Holt (2001), Wilson (1993) classified the benefits to be realised from intercultural experiences in four categories: *substantive knowledge* of other cultures, world issues and global dynamics; open-minded and empathetic *perceptual understanding* of people

of other cultures without stereotypes; *personal growth* in areas such as self-confidence and independence; and the propensity to make *interpersonal connections* with people of other cultures, both in the host country and after returning home.

A study by Sahin (2008) investigated the effects of international student teaching experience on the professional and personal development of preservice teachers. The programme involved 26 graduate students in a private university in Turkey completing a two-month internship in a Midwestern state in the United States of America. The findings of the research suggested that the international students' teaching experience contributed in a positive way to their professional and personal development and helped them increase their cultural awareness. Sahin (2008) also suggests that the presence of international students in US schools and society in general helped American students and people have a better idea of other countries and cultures. Similarly, the question addressed in a study by Pence and Macgillivray (2007) was: *What is the impact of an international field experience on preservice teachers?* In order to answer this question, fifteen teacher education students from the USA completed a 4-week international practicum working in the classroom with teachers and students at a school in Italy. The results overall indicated a number of benefits including both professional and personal changes, such as increased confidence, and a better appreciation and respect for differences of others and other cultures.

Using a qualitative approach, Willard-Holt (2001) investigated elementary teacher candidates' perceptions of the effects of a week-long international experience. Preservice teachers travelled to Mexico and taught in a bilingual school, as well as toured cultural and historical sites. The preservice teachers reported lasting effects of this experience upon their teaching as well as their personal lives. They identified they have more patience and empathy and will in the future expend more efforts in finding other ways to convey concepts to children who seem not to understand. Willard-Holt (2001) states that "this attitudinal change has the potential to positively affect all of their future students" (p. 515). She also identified that a second major result of the trip was the stated desire on the part of the preservice teachers to become more globally aware and to instil this attitude in their own students. This is of critical importance for all teacher education students.

Levine (2009) found through her study that going abroad dramatically influenced changes, including a depth of compassion, acceptance of differences, recognition of societal ills and a willingness to take risks to promote change. Nurses of the twenty-first century face global health-care issues and mass population movement among countries. This of course is also very relevant for teachers. Levine invited ten nurses to participate in an international immersion programme that lasted between 6 and 9 weeks in one or two countries. The findings of this study revealed that there were common themes that arose. These were categorised by Levine as *having blind trust*, *valuing others and transforming experiences*. *Having blind trust* includes the themes of acceptance and building rapport. *Valuing others* builds on relationships beyond language, being a human being and caring about and for others, whilst *transforming experiences* comes through taking risks, assuming advocacy roles, recognising prejudices and having life changes. She believed that at the end of each programme, students had a much clearer understanding of who they

were and that the exposure and awareness brought about change. The participants talked about the life-changing effects of the immersion programme in both their professional practice and personal lives.

Brown's (2009) findings from an ethnographic study of international postgraduate students' adjustment journey through life in England illustrate the transformative potential of the international student sojourn. She found that the removal from the familiar home environment gave students freedom from cultural and familial expectations and the opportunity for self-discovery, whilst exposure to a new culture offered them the chance to improve their cross-cultural communication skills. These students spent 1 year away from home. The outcomes of the study revealed that exposure to other cultures led to a growth in tolerance and acceptance of new practices and values. The students in the study commented extensively on the changes that had occurred in their personal attitudes to life as a result of the experience. Brown (2009) asserts that the "international sojourn has the power to effect a growth in intercultural competence, as well as a shift in self-understanding, with long-term implications for personal and professional life" (p. 517). She has developed a diagram (see Fig. 13.1) to show the transformative power of an international sojourn and believes that the sojourn has the capacity to produce life-enhancing

Fig. 13.1 One year later: altered selves (Brown 2009, p. 518)

change. The figure indicates clearly the benefits that study abroad programmes can have on its participants. Given that teachers of the future will have the responsibility of teaching future global citizens, this model promotes without question why such programmes should be part of teacher education training.

The literature examined in this chapter clearly promotes many benefits for students who undertake an international programme during their degree studies. All the reviewed programmes have reported positive transformations for the participants especially in their intercultural competence. These identified benefits formed the basis of this project that asked the question: *What do students perceive as the benefits of participating in an international study abroad programme during their teacher education studies?*

13.3 Method

This qualitative research project (Denzin and Lincoln 2000) aimed to hear the voices of the students and allow them to identify their perceived benefits of participating in international experiences. Quotations from user-research participants are a powerful form of qualitative data. They provide invaluable perspectives, in participants' own words, on the value and meaning of products and solutions (Weddle 2013).

In this project, there are three case studies. Stake (1995, 2013) refers to the study of more than one case as collective case studies, each of which is an instrumental study linked by coordination between individual studies. He asserts that collective case study design provides a structure to gain insight into the issue of interest across settings as it allows comparison within and between cases. Thus the use of collective case studies is useful for identifying and studying the perceptions of teacher education students and their international experiences.

The qualitative data being reported in this chapter is drawn from three study abroad programmes run by a School of Education in an Australian University. The three programmes included two to European destinations and one to an Asian city. The overarching goal of the programmes was for students to gain an understanding of another culture, other education systems and teaching in a school in an international city. Each of the programmes included intensive lectures at the university site. These lectures included the relevant country's education system, education philosophies and plans for the assessment tasks, as well as preparation for teaching in the school. The final week of each programme saw the students teaching in local schools. In some instances, the students were given the topics for their teaching, and preparation was able to be commenced before they left Australia.

Data collection included a variety of tools. Pre- and post surveys (Creswell 2009) were completed by all students. The pre-survey was handed out at one of the predeparture meetings, and the post survey was completed on the final night of the programme. Written reflections (Ryan and Ryan 2013) were completed during the experiences. Students were asked to write their reflections at the end of each week. They completed these and handed them to the accompanying academic each week.

Interviews (Mason 1998) of these domestic students who had completed the experiences were conducted at various times including during the programmes and at the completion of the programmes and some upon the return to Australia. Presentations on their experiences were also made by the students upon their return to Australia. At these presentations, to which staff students and family were invited, the students presented to the audience the topic of *What I gained from the Study Abroad Experience*. The 53 preservice students were all enrolled in a Bachelor of Education Programme training to be primary school teachers. All students had completed 2 years of their 3.5-year programme. They had also completed two placements in local schools in Australia. Participants were aged between 20 and 25 years of age. Six students reported they have never travelled overseas prior to their study abroad programme participation with five never having travelled on a plane before. Prior to the trips abroad, the preservice teachers met in their relevant group to discuss the programme and expectations of the programme. During these meetings, we discussed expectations as well as personal and professional requirements of students on such trips. It was impressed upon students that they would be representing their university and the educational faculty as well as their profession whilst overseas. Practical issues such as travel insurance, safe travelling procedures, medical issues, dress code required for school visits and the week of teaching were discussed. The university mobility team also gave a lecture on how best to prepare for an international experience, what would be expected, possible concerns and how to deal with these and strategies to assist with dealing with difficult situations. The data was firstly analysed through identifying themes that occurred in the various data sources (surveys, interviews, presentations). These themes were then refined through looking closely across the three programmes and with reference to the literature (Ryan and Russell-Bernard 2000).

13.4 Experiences from Three Cohorts of Australian Students

The three major themes identified from the student data included: *employability*, *value of the experience* and *open-mindedness*. Pseudonyms have been used for all students.

13.4.1 Employability

Students had a strong belief that their international experience would benefit them in finding employment after university. They were all seeking something that would help to set them apart from another applicant for employment. This was a major reason for completing the study abroad programme.

> This experience has made me a better teacher and I hope will give me a better chance at employment. Jasmine.

> I will be able to write this on my CV. Not every student will have been able to study and teach overseas. Jaymee.

> Principals, especially in the low areas [low socio economic areas] will be looking for teachers who have taught overseas. Joshua.

> I went on the trip as I wanted to travel and experience a different education system so I can teach in an international school in the future. Marie.

> I want to bring back to Australia everything I learnt. I will trust my students more and I have gained confidence to teach now and this will be good to get a job. Bill.

> I think it will open more doors and make me more flexible in getting teaching opportunities in Australia and overseas. Chris.

> I now have more opportunities for future teaching. Carol.

> It is so hard to get a job now. This will set me above others. Jane.

> I have confidence I can teach any student even if they come from somewhere else. I didn't think I could teach ESL kids. I am going to apply for those sort of jobs. Craig.

> I want to travel more. This was a great experience. I had never been on a plane before. Now I will get a job in an international school. Eva.

The students are supported in their beliefs re employability benefits following international experiences: *The experience you gain from overseas study can be fun and rewarding and can also help to open up new and different career opportunities* (Victorian Government 2016). As well as universities encouraging such participation, the Australian government also supports these experiences and what they can do for employability:

> Overseas study is also a great resume booster. Many employers recognise that people who have spent time overseas for study have international skills that are in increasing demand. Australian Government (2016a)

13.4.2 Value of the Experience

Students valued the unique experience offered to them through the opportunity to study in an international university and receive lectures and ideas from lecturers outside Australia. They valued the opportunity to have an international workplace component or practicum in the overseas schools. These opportunities guided them and prepared them well for their future teaching in their own classrooms.

> I believe the teaching experience I gained from teaching in the school has really helped me grow both personally and professionally. It has taught me to persevere and be resilient through teaching challenges and this in invaluable for the future. Jane.

> It was such an incredible experience. It was a roller coaster of emotions and definitely a huge leap out of my comfort zone, given I am quite a reserved person. I am so grateful I had this opportunity which has shaped me so much as both a person and future teacher. I will certainly be able to translate my experience into my future classroom. It has built my confidence and experience in behaviour management, communication and engaging students in

tasks. I also have a greater respect and understanding for ESL students and will be mindful of my teaching practice to accommodation them in my classroom. Mandy.

The trip was an experience that is irreplaceable. Through our degree we learn about many elements of the classroom context, about diversity and teaching strategies and the many theorists there are. However, none of this can prepare you for teaching in a completely unfamiliar context, wherein you must think on your feet and adapt your teaching to the student you have in front of you. Nothing can measure this valuable experience. Jacinta.

The whole experience seemed to go by so fast in hindsight, but drag out while we were there with lectures and planning and teaching. Nevertheless, I have learned more than I could have anticipated. I have developed my teaching style and am now a lot more comfortable entering a classroom being completely unsure of how the lesson will go. I can safely say I have made new friends from both my uni and here, and above all, strengthened my love of teaching. Julie.

Overall I feel that his experience has shaped me into the teacher I want to be. Teaching in another country has taught me to be thankful for everything I am but also to embrace the things that will make the students in my classroom different. It has inspired me to embrace all the things about myself that are going to make me a great teacher. I formed bonds with and grew as a person. Wendy.

I loved the experience to teach and observe in a variety of school systems. I have so much more confidence as a teacher. A light bulb moment and realised the teacher I want to be. Mary.

I will never be the same as before. Travel is wonderful. Seeing the world is wonderful. Seeing and learning from international people as really been of value to me as I start my career as a teacher. I realised there is lots to learn and I can learn more by travelling and appreciating different things. I had not been overseas before. Now I want to travel more. Tony.

My grandparents came from Europe and it was great to visit their home country. I now understand many things more clearly now. The experience of travelling in the group and being able to share with my peers was very rewarding. Lyn.

For many students the study abroad experience was valued and improved their confidence in their ability as a teacher. They now have new friends both within Australia and overseas. This is a valuable network for their future teaching career. The experience also gave them a chance to develop and learn new teaching strategies and styles that will ensure all the students in their future classrooms will be well catered for and achieve their potential.

13.4.3 Opening Minds

Only a small number of the students had travelled overseas before and six had never been on a plane. As well as the experience of studying and teaching in another country, the students were taken out of their comfort zone and had experiences they had never had before. Having had an international opportunity was seen to be of significance for these students and *opened their minds* to new cultures, new ideas for their teaching and new ideas for life and personal growth.

> Many refinements of my teaching styles needed to be made in order for the students to be engaged, enjoying and understanding their experiences. The language barrier was definitely the most challenging component when teaching, but I realised it was challenging for the students to understand me also. Once I refined my teaching style and used questioning techniques to constantly check for understanding and adapt the delivery of information, content and instruction, we made better progress. I guess this is relevant to my future classrooms as well. Ben.

> They cannot understand half of what you are saying and you need them to learn this content and produce a piece of work. So what are you going to do? This is the real, beneficial learning that you get when you go out of your comfort zone and explore the never-ending avenues of educations and its power across the world. This to me is more beneficial than any written subjects, as it has shaped my teaching so very much. Meg.

> I was surprised at how much I learnt. The lectures were great and I learnt different methodologies for my teaching. I did not realise there were other ways of teaching. The visits to the different types of school really made me think that there are many ways to present lessons. Craig.

> The kids were so well behaved. I was surprised as they were a different culture. I realised teaching is teaching no matter where you are. And kids are kids and I will always have to vary my teaching to suit the kids in my classroom and Australia has lots of cultures now. Mark.

> Through working with the students I felt that I learnt more about their culture and schooling lives, as the students were very interested in communicating with us and telling us about themselves. I had not been overseas before and this really opened my eyes to another country and its culture. Jenny.

> My expectations were exceeded. I did not ever believe my own teaching philosophy would ever be altered so much from such a short experience. This experience was so rewarding. John.

> Respect can go far. We should trust more in our students. They are capable of more than we think. I will never be the same teacher again. I will be more aware of difference for students. Kevin.

> I have enhanced my beliefs for ever. I have changed my philosophy. This was my first time overseas and I guess I was a little scared. I had never been out of Australia and I didn't know what it would be like. I have so much more respect for everyone now. Everyone has lots to offer. Anne.

> I gained ideas to bring back to my own classroom in Australia. The travel opportunity was great and I have better cultural understanding. Kerry.

> So happy to have experienced a different culture. Working with the children, seeing so much of the country and living like a local (eg public transport, grocery shopping) all made me realise we are all the same. June.

> We were a crazy mix of people getting the opportunity to open our eyes to a whole new world. Craig.

For these students the study abroad experience was profound and indeed resonates with Brown's (2009) model of transformation and altered self (see Fig. 13.1). They all indicated the large impact that this experience had on their personal and professional identities. Australian Government (2016a) also promotes that such experiences will:

> More than anything studying overseas is an opportunity to learn about yourself, discover new strengths and abilities, conquer new challenges, and solve new problems. You will encounter situations that are wholly unfamiliar to you and will learn to adapt and respond in effective ways.

13.5 Conclusion

Students did identify that they faced challenges during the programmes. These included language barriers and frustrations when they were not understood in the classroom and having to change their teaching style. However, these were not a focus in any of the data collected and the benefits of the experiences far outweighed any challenges the students came across.

> The challenges I faced made me a better teacher in more ways that I can express. It was a powerful reinforcement that this is what I am meant to do for the rest of my life. Lucas.

> Things were different and I was challenged but this experience has made me a better person and more equipped to start my life as a teacher. Amanda.

Willard-Holt (2001) in her study reported that the preservice teachers returned as changed people in a number of ways, including being thankful for the resources that are so plentiful in US schools and society at large, having a more tolerant outlook and increasing self-confidence. This was also the case for the students on the reported three study abroad programmes presented in this chapter. The students were positive about this change and believed they were better prepared to be teachers of the future after completing the international experience.

Using Wilson's (1993) classified benefits to be realised from cross-cultural experiences (as discussed earlier in the chapter), all benefits were realised across the 53 students who attended the study abroad programmes. The students gained *substantive knowledge* of other cultures, world issues and global dynamics. Their minds were opened and they gained *empathetic understanding* of people of other cultures without stereotypes. *Personal growth* in areas such as self-confidence and independence was reported by most of the students. Making *interpersonal connections* with people of other cultures was realised in the host country, and students reported wanting to continue upon their return to Australia. Whilst these benefits were identified by the students at the completion of the study abroad programme, it is hoped that these benefits are life-enhancing and continue to make a difference in both their personal and professional lives. Hopefully, the transformative power of the international sojourn (as identified previously in Fig. 13.1 (Brown 2009) has indeed transformed their lives, and they will be global educators and global citizens of the future.

Teachers of the future need to become globally competent with an awareness of cross-cultural issues. Stokhof and Frances (in Chap. 14 of this text) explore global teachers and global citizens, and they acknowledge that teachers play an important role in global citizenship education, being both a source of knowledge and a role model for global citizenship. Curran (2003) identifies global competence as the

ability to become familiar with an environment, negotiate the norms and reflect on tasks completed within a new culture. Curran writes that familiarity with a new environment means being aware of one's own personal characteristics, strengths and weaknesses, cultural biases and norms, motivations and concerns. These traits enable mindful consideration of a culture "on its own merit, without judgmental comparison to what one may already believe" (Curran 2003). What is needed then is an open mind, with respect for all and knowledge of all cultures and world issues. These characteristics are essential for the teacher of the future and will assist in bringing about global competence. Providing opportunities for preservice teachers to have a personal intercultural experience especially in international settings will assist in achieving this goal, and the teachers of the future will "understand others first and themselves second" (Hunter et al. 2015, p. 1).

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Chapter 14
"Let's Focus on Exploration": Developing Professional Identity of International Students as *Global Teachers* in a Question-Driven Practicum

Harry Stokhof and Peter Fransen

14.1 Introduction: Global Teachers and Global Citizenship

Society in the twentieth century can be characterised as a *global village* (McLuhan 1964). More than ever before in history, people from all over the world are inevitably connected with each other on every continent because of multiple developments in technology (Allen and Charles 2015). In distance and time, the world has become smaller and smaller and this has an enormous impact on people's daily lives. In almost every aspect of their daily lives, worldwide connections become apparent: economically, politically, socially, culturally and ecologically (Oxfam 2006). People are part of international relations and systems of regulation, they share the environments of our vulnerable planet, they trade and take care of transportation of resources and products, they travel and relocate for various reasons and they share media and telecommunications. Reports of news and global issues are broadcasted by various and multiple media 24 h a day. Aeroplanes, cars and motorised vessels make it possible to travel and transport all kind of products and resources all over the world in a fast and profitable way. Therefore, it can be concluded that people all over the world are profoundly interrelated in multiple aspects of their daily lives (Gaudelli 2016).

Confronted by global interrelatedness in daily life, people tend to react in various ways, ranging from acceptance and adaption to rejection and resistance (Gaudelli 2016). On the one hand, people are willing and expected to take an interest in major global issues, such as security, climate and energy, food, water security and global wealth distribution. The global village offers many opportunities for the exchange of ideas and can support creativity and productivity. On the other hand, some global changes undermine rights and customs that were taken for granted: jobs are lost, companies are taken over by foreign companies and migration puts pressure on the

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welfare state. Especially more vulnerable groups in society, who experience the drawbacks of the global village, may react more inward-looking or aggressive because of perceived loss of control (Carabain 2012). The intensity and repetition of the flow of information, coupled with the enormity of circumstances of global issues and happenings, can easily leave one feeling overwhelmed both by range and complexity of events (Gaudelli 2016).

Apparently, the experience of living in a global village does not necessarily make humans *global citizens*, whose behaviour does justice to principles of mutual dependency in the world, equality of human beings and shared responsibility for solving global issues (Carabain 2012). Because of our interconnectedness, we need to mutually help each other in tackling global issues and finding solutions for challenges in living and working together. In helping, equivalence and shared responsibility are important conditions. Using the metaphor of the world as a ship, we can no longer say, "I am sure glad the hole is not in our end". Therefore, our globalising world is in urgent need of showing respect and empathy for people from all parts of the world, whether they live here or elsewhere (Beneker et al. 2009). Even if we don't like it, it's wise to understand each other and to be tolerant. We have to learn how to deal with unavoidable differences in a diverse society and learn to take care of others and ourselves.

It seems to take a conscious effort for people to learn to become global citizens (Prior and Walraven 2009). Living together as global citizens seems to require that humans learn how to respect each other, show compassion and appreciation, stand up for each other, recognise and acknowledge each other's differences, play together and share their resources (Prior and Walraven 2009). Despite differences in culture, there is a general agreement on the underlying aims and content of global citizenship, but there are different views about how this should be achieved (Hanvey 1975). For a long time, the idea of the melting pot was predominant as a metaphor for a society, where people from various backgrounds and cultures blended together as one (Pedersen 2013). However, in recent decades, the intercultural approach seems to be gaining in importance. This approach assumes that representatives of various cultures should be able to live together as equals in society while retaining their cultural identity (Ting-Toomey and Chung 2012). In addition, a formal and a moral dimension in learning global citizenship can be distinguished. Formal citizenship, for example, becomes apparent when endorsing the universal human rights or being part of the United Nations. The moral dimension of global citizenship focuses on individual contributions to create a better world. People worldwide have rights and obligations towards each other, which should motivate their behaviour to each other, regardless of any political authority (Dower 2010). Carabain's (2012) model, as seen in Fig. 14.1, shares the interrelationship between issues related to globalisation.

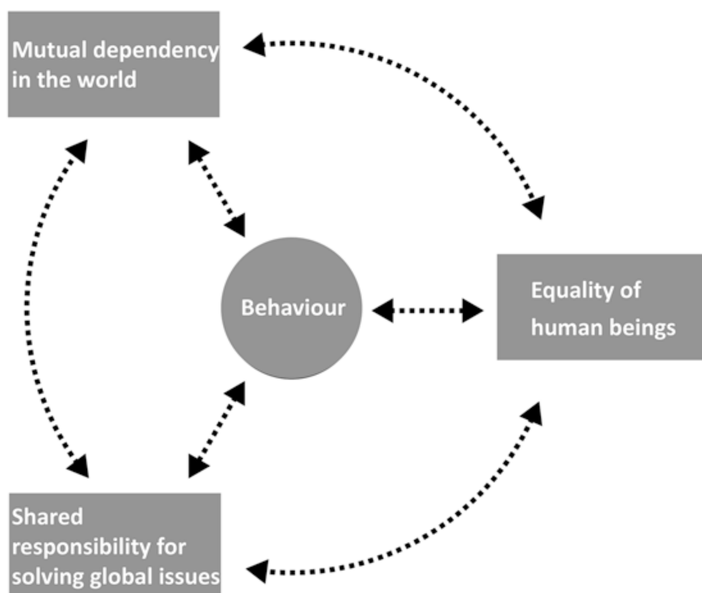

Fig. 14.1 Definition of global citizenship (Carabain 2012)

14.2 The Primary School as a Training Area

Schools can be considered ideal training grounds for developing global citizenship, because education prepares children for present and future society (Allen and Charles 2015). Therefore, many countries have made *global citizenship education* (GCE) part of their national curricula. However, implementing GCE within existing national curricula appears to be quite a challenge for teachers (Davies et al. 2005). A flexible approach in teaching, which allows for the students' voice, seems a prerequisite for teaching GCE. Schools should open up their "windows on the world" as a pedagogical approach and encourage pupils to develop the necessary knowledge, skills and attitude to behave as global citizens (Carabain 2012). Schools that use the windows to the world approach can be characterised as challenging training areas, in which children are given the opportunity to ask and research (their own) questions and learn to solve authentic problems (e.g. Stokhof et al. 2016). Gaudelli (2016) emphasises possibilities schools with open windows have for training global citizenship. Children are apt to embrace global citizenship, especially when teachers connect explicitly children's everyday experiences to worldwide developments.

Several curricular frameworks are available to support GCE in schools, such as those from Oxfam, UNESCO and national organisations (Beneker et al. 2009). For example, in the Netherlands, the National Committee for International Cooperation

and Sustainable Development (NCDO) developed a *canon for global citizenship education* to support the windows on the world approach. The canon is now part of the national curriculum in both primary and secondary education in the Netherlands. The canon consists of eight themes: diversity, identity, human rights, sustainable development, globalisation, distribution, peace and conflict and global engagement. Each theme can be considered as a perspective to explore and learn about aspects of global citizenship. However, for primary school pupils, these themes might be too abstract. Global citizenship should be explained to them in terms of "the connection between you and others, both near and far" (Prior and Walraven 2009, p. 26). Similarly, themes of the canon can be introduced to pupils by questions such as:

- Who am I and what makes me so special? (identity)
- How to deal with differences in race, faith, culture and politics? (diversity)
- How to make friends and don't fight? (peace and conflict)
- Which rights do children have? (human rights)

From the perspective of global citizenship, an intercultural approach is essential for teaching. The focus in this approach should then be acquiring knowledge of the other, collaboration and dialogue and preventing prejudice, racism and discrimination. The comparison with a salad bowl seems appropriate: A salad contains many different ingredients which retain their own identity but in combination with others contribute to enrich the flavour of the dish as a whole (De Bas 2013). Recognising the mutual differences between pupils gives teachers various opportunities to use the different cultural flavours in teaching global citizenship (Van der Zant 2012).

14.3 What Is Needed to Teach Global Citizenship?

Teachers play an important role in global citizenship education, being both a source of knowledge and a role model for global citizenship. Many teachers acknowledge the importance of teaching global citizenship education (Holden and Hicks 2007). Common to many teachers is the view that education should be aimed at widening horizons for children and preparing them for the challenges in life in an increasingly global society (Davies et al. 2005). However, on the other hand, many teachers find it hard to implement global citizenship education in their classrooms (Davies et al. 2005). Often teachers feel obstructed by curricular restrictions, which limit opportunity to allow for the students' voice. Another challenge for teachers is to address complex and sensitive issues such as *war* or *terrorism*. Many teachers lack confidence and feel insufficiently prepared for teaching global citizenship education. Therefore, is it essential to prepare future teachers thoroughly in order to help them to become *global teachers*, who incorporate a global dimension as integral part of their teaching (O'Toole 2006).

14.4 How Do We Prepare Student Teachers to Teach Global Citizenship?

Learning how to teach global citizenship education requires both acquiring the basic pedagogical-didactical skills to support the learning process of pupils and developing attitude, skills and knowledge related to global citizenship. First, and foremost, student teachers should develop awareness of their own role as global teachers (O'Toole 2006). From this awareness, student teachers will be able to model characteristics of global citizenship such as an open, inquisitive and respectful attitude, display their care for everyone and foster responsibility and equality (Prior and Walraven 2009). Second, student teachers should develop skills to use divergent and convergent learning methods to help pupils to look at the world and to really see relevant information. Student teachers should be able to observe the world and its phenomena with a broad open view and be able to focus on one specific element. When guiding pupils in researching their world, the conceptual skill of "zooming in and out" to explore a certain environment can be very effective (De Bas 2013). Student teachers should be equipped with multiple didactical tools to be able to guide pupils to become aware of preconceptions and to elaborate and restructure their conceptual framework. Necessary didactical tools are, for example, various types of questions; a range of visual tools such as mind maps, images, charts and timelines for visualising information; several methods to stimulate peer interaction and dialogue; and techniques to support reasoning and reflection. Finally, it is essential for student teachers to become knowledgeable themselves about global interconnectedness and involvement in the world, for teacher's self-confidence seems to strongly correlate with his personal domain knowledge (e.g. Davies et al. 2005).

To prepare students for global citizenship education at Teachers College, both faculty and curriculum should be well prepared and organised. First, teacher trainers at Teacher Colleges should be globally competent themselves (Merryfield 2000). If teacher trainers do not present themselves as global teachers, their students may be unlikely to adopt a similar perspective. Second, not only faculty but also curricula should support global citizenship education. Research shows that global citizenship education in teacher education is typically viewed as a pleasant addition and is therefore often at the margins of teacher education instead of being integrated into the curricula (Gaudelli 2016). However, global citizenship education can be integrated into the curriculum of teacher education. One of the most effective ways of promoting global citizenship education is to organise international (exchange) projects in which student teachers learn to teach in another culture. Holden and Hicks (2007) found that student teachers who had experienced the difference of teaching in another country were more committed to introducing global perspectives in their teaching at home.

Participation in an international workplace setting offers opportunity for student teachers to develop both personally and professionally. The confrontation with living in another culture makes students aware of one's personal cultural heritage, beliefs and convictions. This experience allows students to reflect on previous held

cultural values and helps them to develop their personal identity in an international perspective (Killick 2012). The assignment at the international workplace might support the development of students' professional identity but only under certain conditions. A teacher's professional identity is a complex and dynamic equilibrium shaped by the various roles teachers feel they have to play and awareness of their own beliefs about teaching (Beijaard et al. 2004). To support student teachers in developing their professional identity in an international setting, it is necessary to bring them into a situation in which they are made aware about their own beliefs about teaching, observe and experience alternative forms of teaching and learn to articulate what this means for themselves as teachers. Therefore, when designing a workplace assignment for international student teachers, faculty should consider how it would affect students both personally and professionally.

14.5 Designing an Assignment for Workplace Learning

At HAN University of Applied Sciences in the Netherlands, a winter course is available for international student teachers. Two main principles were leading when designing the workplace assignment for the winter course. For the first principle, we aimed to support the development of international students both as *global citizens* and as *global teachers*. This meant the workplace assignment was intended to encourage students to step out of their comfort zones both as *persons* and as *practitioners*. A common advantage of international exchange programmes is the development of personal identity, because students become very aware of themselves and their cultural values (Severino et al. 2010). These experiences support students to become aware of their behaviour as global citizens (Killick 2012). However, the winter course was designed not only to support personal awareness of global citizenship but also to support professional identity as global teachers. The teaching role for pre-service teachers in an international context is often not fundamentally different from the common practice in the workplace at home: the teacher often being in charge and transmitting his or her knowledge to the pupils (Walters et al. 2009). To support students in developing a professional identity as a global teacher, the winter course aimed to provide a fundamentally different teaching experience at the workplace. Question-driven learning, in which pupils' questions *are central to teaching and learning*, was selected to offer the students a zone of proximal development for their professional identity. By submerging international students in a pupil-centred approach to teaching, it was expected these pre-service teachers would reconsider and develop their perspectives on teacher-student relations and teacher roles.

The second principle for designing the workplace assignment was that it should be mutually beneficial for both international students and primary school pupils. Intended learning outcomes for international students should mirror intended outcomes for primary school pupils (Table 14.1). Both groups were expected to develop a more open minded, curious and inquisitive stance. Both groups were encouraged to develop skills such as questioning, researching and organising prior and new

Table 14.1 Intended learning outcomes for pupils and international students

	Pupils' development	Students' personal development	Students' professional development
Attitude	Open minded	Open minded	Allow for student's voice
	Curiosity	Curiosity	Teacher as coach
	Inquiry as stance	Inquiry as stance	Gradual release of teacher control
Skills	Questioning	Questioning	Didactics—more specific
	Mind mapping	Mind mapping	Select resources and prepare materials
	Researching	Researching	Organising question-driven learning
Knowledge	Of various global perspectives	Of various global perspectives	Profound content knowledge to guide student questions
	Recognising and acknowledging cultural similarities and differences	Recognising and acknowledging cultural similarities and differences	How to adapt instruction and guidance to acknowledge diversity in the classroom

knowledge in mind maps. Finally, both groups should develop knowledge about each other's global perspectives and learn to recognise and acknowledge cultural similarities and differences. Of course, in international students being pre-service teachers, additional goals were set to develop their professional identity as teachers, as shown in Table 14.1.

To be able to integrate both principles into the winter course workplace assignment, a primary school was needed which could meet specific requirements. First of all, a school was needed which afforded windows on the world approach to teaching, acknowledging and embracing new cultural perspectives which would support the intercultural exchange between students and pupils (Beneker et al. 2009). The second requirement was integration of global citizenship education into the social science curriculum, which would offer opportunity to explore identity and diversity. As a third requirement, the school should afford an inquiry-based pedagogical setting to show international students how a question-driven curriculum supports an open and collective learning atmosphere in which teachers and pupils learn together. Finally, the school or schools should be large enough to accommodate about 20 international students to teach in dyads or triads in the upper grades of primary school, because in these grades most Dutch pupils learn English.

The primary school *the Lantern* in Nijmegen met all requirements. The Lantern is a Jenaplan school, an educational concept developed by Peter Petersen in Jena, Germany, in the 1930s. Petersen set out to develop education which has a primary goal to support students to explore the world and foster their sense of wonder. In Jenaplan education, children's curiosity needs to be cherished and nurtured:

> A child's world is fresh and new and beautiful, full of wonder and excitement. It is our misfortune that for most of us that clear-eyed vision, that true instinct for what is beautiful and awe-inspiring, is dimmed and even lost before we reach adulthood. (Carson 1956)

The *open window* approach is therefore central to every social science project. Experiencing, exploring and discovering characterise the learning behaviour of pupils. Second, the social science curriculum at the Lantern aims to develop global citizenship, with a focus on *identity* and *diversity*, and allows pupils to explore foreign cultures from different perspectives. Third, teachers at the Lantern have developed a question-driven approach to teaching, in which pupils are not only invited to raise their questions, but pupils' questions are the building blocks for developing collective knowledge in the social science projects. Teachers organise therefore their teaching according to the following six steps:

1. Inspiring
2. Student questioning
3. Planning
4. Researching
5. Presenting
6. Evaluating

Finally, the Lantern accommodates eight classes of Grades 4, 5 and 6, so a group of 20 international students could participate in a workplace assignment at the same school.

14.6 Winter Course 2016: Living Like an Artist

Seventeen Australian students joined the winter course at College of Education for Primary School Teachers at HAN University of Applied Science in January 2016. During their 3-week visit in the Netherlands, the workplace assignment at the Lantern was a central focus of the programme. Teachers at the Lantern had chosen *Living like an Artist* as theme for a 6-week social science project in which the Australian students would join in for 1 week. As usual, teachers at the Lantern first designed an *expert mind map*, which contained the core curriculum students should learn about this theme (Fig. 14.2). By visualising a core curriculum in an expert mind map, teachers can decide which conceptual focus the project should have, as well as offer sufficient opportunity for students to generate questions and explore their own interest within these boundaries (Stokhof et al. 2016). In preparation for their workplace assignment, the international students were asked to suggest an Australian artist or work of art as a topic of study, so the Dutch pupils could prepare questions about them.

Having prepared an expert mind map about *Living like an Artist*, the next step for teachers at the Lantern was to introduce the theme to their pupils. The aim of the introduction was to raise both pupils' interest and wonderment. As an introduction, teachers chose to focus on Dutch artists such as Rembrandt or Van Gogh. Teachers used these famous artists to explain and explore important key concepts on head branches in the mind map with their pupils. Whenever new information was provided, this was added to branches in the classroom mind map, thus visualising

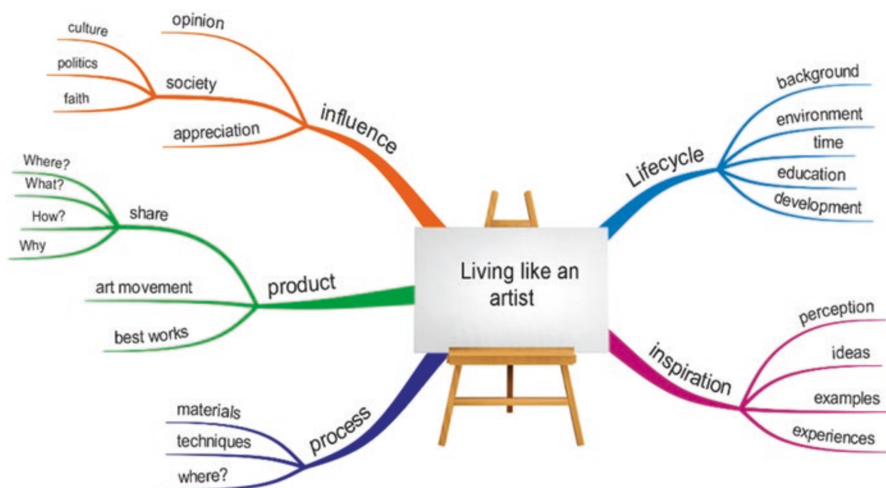

Fig. 14.2 Expert mind map about *Living like an Artist*

collective knowledge development. This introduction supported pupils in becoming acquainted with key concepts in the classroom mind map and activated their prior knowledge about various perspectives of being an artist. Having explored Van Gogh or Rembrandt for about one and a half week, pupils were asked to select another artist they were interested in. Suggestions for famous artists from various disciplines and art styles were given to the pupils to choose from. Pupils then explored in dyads an artist of their choice using key concepts such as *inspiration* or *product* (Fig. 14.2). These key concepts helped teachers to facilitate the exchange of findings among pupils by discussing similarities and differences between artists.

The international students prepared for the workplace assignment both at Teachers College and at the Lantern. At Teachers College, students were introduced to a scenario for guiding question-driven learning. This scenario was introduced in an interactive workshop, in which students learned how to explore, structure and record their own prior knowledge about an example topic (chocolate) in a mind map (Fig. 14.3). The aim of this introduction was to provide students with a practical experience of how to activate prior knowledge and how to collectively construct a classroom mind map.

Meanwhile, at the Lantern, teachers introduced the suggested Australian artists or artwork to their classes. Each class was provided with one Australian artist or artwork. Pupils were invited to raise questions about these Australian artists in a small group and the whole class brainstorms, visually supported by the classroom mind map about *Living like an Artist*. Pupils’ questions were recorded, translated and sent to the Australian students. Faculty at Teachers College discussed pupils’ questions with the student teachers and suggested activities and resources which might support pupils to find answers to their questions.

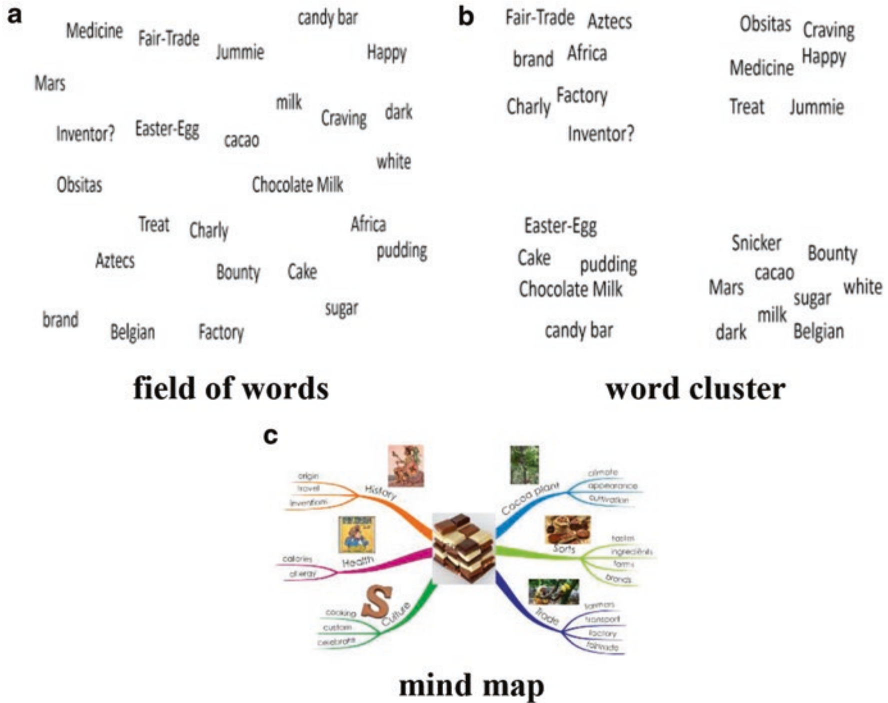

Fig. 14.3 Example how to structure prior knowledge into a mind map

After all these preparations, students could finally visit the Lantern to introduce themselves to the class and subsequently were able to work with pupils for three consecutive days. Students worked in dyads under the supervision of the regular teachers. Students first introduced their Australian artist or artwork to the class in a short presentation and subsequently discussed how previously raised pupils' questions were related to the key concepts in the classroom mind map. Then students organised activities and provided resources to help pupils address their questions. New-found answers were discussed in class and integrated into the classroom mind maps. Additionally, students organised activities for pupils to make art themselves in the style of the chosen artist. The week ended with a closing ceremony, in which each class presented some of their findings and makings to all other classes. During the project, faculty from Teachers College together with teachers from the Lantern supported students in their learning process by coaching during preparation, by observing during execution and by collectively reflecting at the end of each day on progress made.

14.7 Method of Evaluating Workplace Learning

To assess the quality of the winter course and to evaluate if its intended learning outcomes were attained for pupils and students, several methods of data collection were applied. First, all 17 participating international students were asked to reflect daily on their progress during the workplace assignment and at final reflection presented their experiences by means of a poster presentation to their peers and faculty. Faculty made field notes of these sessions and collected the posters for further analysis. Second, students were required to write a paper about their experiences during the workplace assignment, which was the summative assessment of the course. Finally, students evaluated the winter course by completing anonymously a questionnaire containing both four-point Likert scale questions and open questions. Although the anonymous nature of the questionnaire made it more difficult to relate data to individuals, it was expected students would feel more free to criticise the course when appropriate.

About 20% of the qualitative data, field notes, posters, papers and open questions were coded by both authors independently according to the categories and indicators as shown in Table 14.1. This leads to an interrater agreement of .85. Having discussed the differences in coding, the remainder of the data was coded by the second author. Because part of the data was anonymous, the decision was made not to report on specific students but on patterns, trends and salient findings. Quantitative results from the questionnaire were processed using descriptive statistics in SPSS. To triangulate findings, teachers and pupils from the Lantern also evaluated the contribution of the international students to the project during classroom discussions and a teacher meeting. No significant differences were observed when comparing the findings from the students with those from the Lantern.

14.8 Results

14.8.1 Evaluating the Quality of the Winter Course

Students highly appreciated the quality of lessons and activities in the winter course, as shown in Table 14.2. Scoring an average mean of 4.54, on a five-point Likert scale for $N = 17$, was beyond the expectations of faculty. In their explanatory remarks, many students emphasised that the lesson introducing mind mapping opened up new perspectives on its use as a visual tool for collecting, sharing and structuring knowledge. One student commented: "Engaging way of learning, incorporating mind mapping in future classrooms will facilitate student-centred learning. This has given me a greater understanding of how to do this". Similarly, lessons on didactics and on the concept of windows on the world opened up students' thinking. For example, one student wrote: "It opened up my thought about my own teaching and made me more aware of pupils being number one". As expected, students highly

valued their visits to the workplace at the Lantern. During the first visit, students were introduced to the pupils and learned about Jenaplan educational concept, as explained by one of teachers of the Lantern. In the next week, they had the actual teaching experience in the workplace during three consecutive days. Students enjoyed watching pupils engage in their tasks, although the language barrier was a challenge for their teaching which they all had to overcome. With the help of the teachers and some of the abler pupils, they found ways to communicate effectively. A critical note on the programme, however, expressed by most students, was the limited time with the pupils. Especially on day 3, students felt rushed, because the morning ended with a closing ceremony in which each class would present some of their results to all other classes. Many students felt the time spent in class was too short to prepare these final presentations properly.

14.8.2 Pupil Learning Outcomes

We first analysed all data for student perception on pupils' learning outcomes, as might be visible in pupils' attitude, skills and knowledge. As regards attitude, students observed an unusual high level of pupil engagement, visible in willingness to ask their own questions and eagerness to learn. Students noticed that the opportunity to ask authentic learning questions validated the pupils and supported their feelings of competence. "Pupils were genuinely interested in information because it was connected to their own interests". Moreover, students observed pupils not only being curious but also able to learn quickly because they wanted to learn and able to reflect on the meaning of new-found answers.

As for skills, students observed how pupils learned how to question, to mind map and to research. Students found pupils able to formulate a wide variety of questions on the topic. One student wrote: "Pupils learn to ask important questions, questions that give access to deeper learning by questioning the status quo". Another student noticed: "It felt like that students were learning more, because questioning helps

Table 14.2 Results on perceived quality of winter course

Lesson/activity	Mean	SD
Mind mapping	4.88	.33
Windows on the world	4.76	.44
Didactics	4.76	.44
Introduction Jenaplan	4.59	.62
Teaching day 1	4.41	.72
Teaching day 2	4.47	.87
Teaching day 3	4.29	.77
Reflection on teaching	4.47	.72
Average all variables	4.54	.43

them to become better critical thinkers and this helps developing learning outcomes". However, it was also observed that "Good questions take time to formulate". Another skill pupils were practising was mind mapping. Mind mapping was applied in class as a visual resource, which was continuously displayed and referred to. Students observed how pupils could use mind mapping as a collaborative platform to share knowledge and to explain what was being learned. One student wrote: "Mind mapping affords pupils to become potential peer teachers in their groups". As for developing research skills, pupils were found to be able to use their questions to build up their prior knowledge, although it was necessary to supply them with a rich learning environment with suitable resources.

Finally, only a few students recorded their observations as regards pupil knowledge development, for example, "It was beneficial for everyone". Generally, there was consensus that pupils had gained new knowledge and insight on various areas of the topic, as visible in the mind maps, but if this was up to expectations was not further clarified. As to recognising similarities and differences among local and Australian cultures, most pupils were found to be very interested in the Australian artist under study: "Pupils' willingness to embrace the customs and history of indigenous Australians was encouraging". However, only a few pupils spontaneously referred to similarities with other (European) artists under study.

14.8.3 Personal Learning Outcomes

We also analysed the data to discern to which degree students developed their personal attitude, skills and knowledge as global citizens. We found out that the focus in our data collection had not been specific enough, for most of our findings were about students' professional development. Still, some interesting findings on some of the aspects of Table 14.1 can be reported.

First, pupils' curiosity fuelled in most students a personal sense of wonder. For example, "Pupils came up with some interesting questions I never had thought of". The very act of questioning also opened up perspectives for students. One student observed: "To keep questioning allows change". Another student wrote: "Questioning supports an open mind and allows switching perspectives". However, some students were also aware that question-driven learning could be personally challenging and might require reconsidering own learning styles: "It takes a while to get used to", or "For me it is a long road ahead, I first need to change own learning patterns".

Second, students' personal attitudes towards mind mapping became evident in their writings and reflections. Many students were surprised and became enthusiastic. Some examples include "Love it, spread out information and easy to look back to what you've learned"; "I will use it!"; "[Mind maps] are useful in their simplicity"; "Easy to use when done correctly"; "Gives you a quick overview on the topic"; "Mind maps allow to structure what you need to find out"; Tells you everything you've been learning"; "Stores in long-term memory, because it links to prior knowledge"; "Let's you see the missing link"; or even "Pushes you to think more in

depth and push past mental boundaries". However, some students had reservations: "Good skill to learn, but needs an alternative for might not be suitable for everyone"; "It is hard sometimes to make a good mind map"; or even "I don't enjoy mind maps, I like lists, I find mind maps chaotic". Remarkably, this last student gradually changed her mind during the course. In her final reflection, she wrote: "I didn't like mind mapping, but now see the merit they have".

14.8.4 Professional Learning Outcomes

Finally, the data was analysed to find information for the professional development of the international pre-service teachers. Findings presented here are structured in attitude, skills and knowledge, according to the framework of Table 14.1.

An important feature of the workplace experience was that question-driven learning is pupil-centred and seeks the pupils' voice. This was for many students a new experience: "This was an interesting way of teaching I hadn't thought of before, we usually tell students what to learn". Most students, however, perceived benefits in this approach: "It helps teacher to understand pupils' prior knowledge"; "It offers opportunity to see gaps in their knowledge"; "The teacher can discover pupil interests". Some students truly grasped the concept: "Makes sense, seems for me the right way to teach based on pupils' interests"; "I have come to see how pupil-centred teaching allows pupils to feel valued and deepens the meaning of their learning"; "It opens up for me multiple pathways for teaching and learning"; "This experience changed my idea on how to take many ideas for one task"; "It gives direction for me to future lessons". Other students noticed possible drawbacks: "Good for pupils, but makes the task more difficult for teachers".

Another distinctive feature of the workplace experience was that student teachers were coaches rather than instructors. Without being told students quickly recognised this shift in role: "This experience dramatically changed my vision on my role as a teacher, I was a facilitator and guide to knowledge and tools"; "You as teacher can choose the topic, the students choose their questions". Students saw multiple benefits in this change of role: "The sought after information is more valuable than given for pupils"; "Pupils are guided, but are learning for themselves. They were all engaged and wanted to learn"; "This change in role helps to build a closer relationship with pupils"; "Being a coach, I felt more engaged as student teacher"; "It felt like paired learning between teacher and pupils".

The change of role meant for some students they had to release some of their teacher control. For some students this was a challenge: "For me it was difficult because you have to go with the flow". For other students this was an "eye-opener": "I was less in charge and students lead their own learning"; "I learned to be flexible"; "It allowed me as teacher to take a step back and share responsibility"; "It is possible to organise shared control of learning in which children and their interest are more involved". Several benefits were recognised in releasing teacher control: "It allows me to see gaps in their knowledge building without standardised tests";

“Because of flexibility lessons are exciting due to the unknown”; “To teach in the direction of the child is more fulfilling”; “I felt proud to facilitate their learning experience, not spooning knowledge”; “I felt confident when pupils were engaged in their tasks”; “In this way, children are more prepared for life”.

Concerning general pedagogical-didactical skills, students made various remarks about what they had learned. Several students mentioned the importance of using visual resources to communicate with pupils, for many struggled the first days with the language barrier. Other students emphasised the importance of creating and sustaining a positive learning environment and supportive partnership. Collective circle time and engaging students in classroom discussions were also recognised as important. Finally, many students discovered that it is possible to integrate all areas of the curriculum into world-orientation projects.

When considering the use of mind mapping as a tool for teaching, students identified three purposes: preparation, guidance and evaluation. First, mind mapping supported students in preparing for teaching: “The structure of the mind map helped to prepare valuable lessons”; “The mind map was a good base to design activities and plan to suit interests”; “To me mind mapping was a planning tool”. Furthermore, mind maps were also perceived to support guidance: “It maps out pupils’ ideas and where they and the teacher are heading for”; “It helps to organise collaboration between students and collective responsibility for results”. Finally, mind maps supported evaluation: “I can see progress when comparing mind maps”; “The elaboration of classroom mind maps shows development of student learning”.

Students also described what they learned about guiding student questioning: “Pupils’ learning questions showed me how to structure lessons”; “Pupils’ learning questions contributed to attaining learning goals”. They noticed a rich learning environment is a necessary prerequisite: “You need a range of materials and resources to create many learning experiences”. Students also noticed that research can take many forms: “Use model of research whichever pupils are comfortable with”. Some students expressed the benefits they saw in guiding pupils’ questioning: “Allowing pupils to research their questions made it easier for me as a teacher, less work”.

Many students noticed new perspectives towards the role of pedagogical-content knowledge in their teaching. On the one hand, they experienced they had to be well prepared to guide student questioning. On the other hand, they found out that teachers do not need to be all-knowing: “This experience changed my idea of teaching from need to know all the answers, to co-inquire and co-construct knowledge with pupils”; “I don’t have to supply all the answers”. Students became also more aware of opportunities to recognise and acknowledge similarities and differences: “Question-driven learning requires knowing what pupils’ interests are”; “Pupils’ questions reflect pupils’ personal interest”; “Question-driven learning allows to separate learning goals and spread activities”.

14.8.5 Student Reflection on Question-Driven Learning

In their papers and during the general reflection, students described how they had experienced question-driven learning: “We have learned about this [inquiry-based learning], but it is different seeing it used in classrooms”; “Happy to have the chance to have had a hands-on experience with reform education”; “Nice to see how education can be”; “Valuable to experience a different learning style”; “Overall I enjoyed and loved experiencing the whole different sense of learning”. Students also indicated what this experience meant for them as future teachers: “I gained the tools to change my opinions on teaching and learning”; “I am going back to Australia with a new perspective of education”. Some students felt empowered to implement this in their future teaching: “It worked very well and this inspires me to use this in my future teaching”; “I would like to implement this in the future”; “The experience gave me confidence to implement inquiry-based learning more frequently in Australian schools”. Others recognised this might be a challenge at home: “Although I feel inspired, it might be difficult in Australia to implement every element”; “I feel challenged to adapt this and take the step back [as a teacher] to allow for the pupils' voice”.

14.9 Conclusions

The goal of the workplace assignment in the winter course was to encourage international pre-service students to become *global teachers*, who are able to foster global citizenship in their classrooms. Furthermore, the assignment aimed to be mutually beneficial for both international students and participating primary school pupils. Intended learning outcomes for both groups focused on development of knowledge, skills, and attitudes which support the development of global citizenship. To develop students' professional identity, the workplace assignment introduced them to a practical experience of a pupil-centred, question-driven teaching approach, such as suggested by Stokhof et al. (2016).

The evidence suggests that the winter course had a profound impact on students' professional identity. Both Holden and Hicks (2007) and Killick (2012) suggested students should both live and teach in another culture to develop a professional identity as global teachers. This workplace assignment took this even a step further by providing a teaching experience in non-familiar professional setting. Many students expressed that teaching in a predominant pupil-centred pedagogical context was a life-changing experience, especially because the students were made aware of their own beliefs about teaching and learned to articulate what this means for themselves as teachers. These reflections are important prerequisites for developing a professional identity, according to Beijaard et al. (2004). The assignment opened up new perspectives to teaching, gave opportunity to build confidence for guiding pupil-centred teaching and inspired to teach more inquiry-based in the future.

Moreover, the assignment was also beneficial for students on a personal level. Students experienced on a personal level differences and similarities between Dutch and Australian culture in styles of personal communication, values and expectations. Dealing with a language barrier and finding ways to overcome it was a challenging experience for most students.

The workplace assignment was also beneficial for pupils at the Lantern. Their teachers confirmed that integrating the assignment into an existing school project deepened the learning experience for pupils. Students' introduction and guidance made exploration of Australian art and culture more interesting and meaningful for pupils, because the international students were living representatives of this foreign culture to be explored. Furthermore, it provided pupils with a practical experience to learn to communicate in English.

Although reported outcomes are well beyond the expectations of faculty, students pointed out the workplace assignment had also flaws in its design. The assignment was rather limited in time and scope. Students could work with pupils at the Lantern for three periods of 90 min during three consecutive days. Students suggested that a more extended period might have deepened their experience. Many students would have liked more teaching time, with a minimum of at least 5 days. Students also indicated they would have liked some opportunity to observe how experienced teachers handle the class and guide pupils' questioning at the Lantern. Students felt they might have learned even more by seeing their example. Faculty identified another potential limitation: all students were Australian, thus forming a homogeneous group. Although this might also have been an advantage in preparing the assignment, having hardly any language or cultural barriers among themselves, a more mixed group with students from other countries might have made them even more aware of their cultural heritage and professional values.

When considering how the merits of this particular workplace assignment might be transferred to other countries and other exchange programmes, faculty identified some success factors. First, a workplace assignment should bring students in their zone of proximal development both personally and professionally. We chose to submerge students in an inquiry-based setting, for it was expected this would have a profound impact on students' professional identity and it did. However, in other contexts and programmes, perhaps other teaching experiences should be provided to trigger this awareness of professional identity. Second, our aim was to encourage students to become agile, self-conscious and confident teachers. When workplace assignments open up new perspectives to teaching as well as support pre-service teachers to develop their professional knowledge and skills, they contribute to educating global teachers. Third, close collaboration between faculty and teachers and staff at the Lantern was a vital prerequisite to align the workplace assignment to both students' and pupils' needs. Fourth, careful selection of the workplace and thorough preparation of assignment itself might have been major factors for success.

We would like to end here with some reflections on the long-term effects of this workplace assignment. To what extent will students be able to transfer newly discovered knowledge and skills in traditional educational settings at home? Will stu-

dents be able to co-inquire with their pupils into various global perspectives? Will participants of the winter course develop into the global teachers of the future? We do not yet know, but we feel confident we sparked students' imaginations and they will share this experience at home. As one student wrote in her final reflection: "I feel I have learnt so many valuable lessons and gained the tools to change my opinions on teaching and learning. I will share this with all my student friends at home…".

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Chapter 15
"Practical Experience Is Really Important": Perceptions of Chinese International Students About the Benefits of Work Integrated Learning in Their Australian Tourism and Hospitality Degrees

Katrine Sonnenschein, Michelle Barker, Raymond Hibbins, and Melissa Cain

15.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from a qualitative study involving Chinese undergraduate and postgraduate students in an Australian university in South-East Queensland. It is part of a broader study that sought to uncover Chinese international students' perceptions of attributes they regarded as necessary for the Chinese hotel industry and their reflections on how they developed the university's graduate attributes through their enrolment in business degree courses. The chapter focuses particularly on Chinese international students' perceptions of the usefulness of Work Integrated Learning (WIL) for their own careers and for their transition to the Chinese hotel industry. Recommendations for universities in relation to WIL will be discussed.

A large number of Chinese students choose to study overseas in countries such as Australia and the USA (Davis and Mackintosh 2011). In 2014–2015, 25% of all international students in Australia were from China (Department of Education and Training 2015b), and Chinese students constituted 36.1% of all higher education enrolments in 2014 (Department of Education and Training 2015a), making them the largest group of international students in Australia (Department of Education and Training 2016). There are many reasons for Chinese students wanting to study in Australia, for example, the perception that Australian education is of high quality (Yang 2007), the difficulty of entering a university in China, and a perception of improved career opportunities after graduation (Davidson and King 2008). From 2012 to 2014, the bachelor of business in international tourism and hotel management and the master of business (including the award major in international tourism and

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hospitality management) were among the programmes with the largest enrolments of Chinese international students (Department of Education and Training 2015b).

The number of Chinese graduates returning to China after overseas studies has accelerated in recent years because of the country's economic growth and employment prospects (The Economist 2015). The Chinese hotel industry represents a booming job market in China because of the rising tourism sector in the country. As Saurine (2013) has asserted, "China is experiencing a hotel boom, with countless new accommodation options as the country opens up and business travels rise" (Saurine 2013, p. 17). McKinnon (2013) argues that universities need to consider what skills are important for the future careers of their international students and how universities can help these students in their efforts to gain employment. Thus, it is important to explore the extent to which students' qualifications and graduate attributes are valued upon their return to China.

WIL is increasingly important in Australian universities as a strategy to meet industry requirements for work-ready graduates (Mackaway et al. 2014). In particular, employers in the hospitality industry claim that it is crucial for students to undertake practical work experience during their studies because it enables them to develop motivation and commitment towards working in the industry and thus increase their employability (Connolly and McGing 2006; Whitelaw et al. 2009). The high number of Chinese international students enrolled in tourism and hospitality management degrees at the Australian university examined in this chapter and the increasing number of graduates returning to work in the growing Chinese hotel industry underscore why it is important to explore Chinese students' perceptions of how their WIL experiences might benefit them in their future careers.

The literature has tended to focus on managers' perceptions of skills needed in the hospitality industry, rather than on students' perceptions (Wilkins and Raybould 2006). Earlier, Amaral and Magalhaes (2002) observed an increasing loss of influence of internal stakeholders, such as students and academics, in higher education. External stakeholders, such as managers and employers, may be exerting more influence due to the need for universities to be responsive to industry. Suh et al. (2012) argue for the need to listen to both internal and external stakeholder groups in order to better understand and reflect on the skills required by graduates at a time of increased competition in the hospitality. To counterbalance the focus on managers' perceptions, the chapter focuses on students' perceptions.

15.2 Literature Review

15.2.1 WIL in Australian Universities

WIL comprises those activities that are implemented to bridge the knowledge gap in the curriculum between theory and practice. It includes initiatives such as internships, practicums, fieldwork, cooperative projects operated through industry and/or

community connections, and workplace simulations (Smith 2012; Wardle 2014) (see also Chap. 1 in this book). According to Billett (2015), practice-based learning is an opportunity for students to explore their selected occupation and in so doing discover what parts of their future career best suit them. Increasingly, universities are placing importance on preparing students for professional practice because, ideally, students need to experience a smooth transition from student life to career and to develop competence in their future positions. There is also a growing expectation from government, industry, and professional associations that students learn through practice and develop attributes that are needed in the industry. Henderson and Alexander (2011) claim that without higher education's teaching of concepts and theories, students may face difficulties in understanding and engaging with their experiences in the workplace. At the same time, these concepts and theories should be associated with practice in order to be relevant to the students. In addition, workplaces structure and provide continuous learning for their employees.

Universities, students, community, and industry partners involved in WIL curricula all benefit greatly from WIL (Smith 2012). For example, WIL enables universities to attract students and to fulfil university goals, such as providing education that responds to future needs. Furthermore, it allows universities to connect with their communities through partnerships with industries and community organisations (Smith 2012). The benefit for the students undertaking WIL is increased employability through gaining generic and specific attributes required for the job market. In the context of the increasing competition for graduate positions, work experience in general provides these students with a competitive edge in their future job search (Wardle 2014).

The industry also benefits from WIL. Relevant work experience reduces training time and costs associated with the employment of new employees (Ricks and Williams 2005). Furthermore, small-to-medium enterprises benefit from staff resources that would otherwise have been unattainable due to limited budgets. Finally, through WIL, industry has the opportunity to influence curricula and thus enhance industry relevance and ensure that information and knowledge are current (Wardle 2014).

There is a perception among hotel employers that graduates holding a university degree are inadequately prepared for employment in the industry (Kim 2008). Employers seem to prefer to recruit staff with work experience (Kim 2008). For example, the industry acknowledges the practical and operational focus of technical and further education (TAFE) institutions and hotel schools, which include simulated hospitality facilities, practical skill courses (bar courses, restaurant operations), and industry work experience as part of their curriculum (Wardle 2014). Wardle (2014) has argued that even though there is an increasing awareness of the importance of WIL in Australian university education, there is a lack of an effective framework to incorporate it into the curriculum so that it benefits a maximum number of students.

Universities tend to struggle with the strategies needed to incorporate WIL into curricula. For example, because of conflicting cultures and structures at faculty and institutional and government levels, it is a challenge to advance the WIL agenda.

Furthermore, the WIL agenda faces obstacles such as limited budgets, large cohorts, and difficulty placing students with disabilities, learning difficulties, poor communication skills, and international students. Because of an increased competition from other educational institutions, the ability for industry to provide supervised, meaningful work is a concern that has been raised by both students and industry (Wardle 2014). In particular, international students usually need extra support when looking for internships. They often have difficulties finding companies in their host country because of low confidence and lack of connections (Mackaway et al. 2014).

In the internationalisation strategy 2014–2017 of Griffith University (2014b) in this study, WIL is recommended as part of the curriculum to enable students to gain work experience particularly in overseas contexts. The university's career development and employability framework (Griffith University 2014a) promotes *professional field awareness* through WIL, community internships, and volunteering as essential to building employability and for students to deepen their ability to transfer knowledge and skills to the workplace. The university also purports a strong commitment to internationalisation of the curriculum (with a focus on the Asia-Pacific region) as part of its strategic plan and its vision and mission. It acknowledges that all students of the university value skills that will "develop their language and intercultural skills but also ensure they enhance the future employability" (Griffith University 2014b) and that increasingly students seek WIL opportunities in order to become work-ready graduates. With *global citizenship* as a graduate attribute (Lilley et al. 2015), this should include opportunities for all students to "broaden their intercultural perspectives, appreciate socio-cultural variability in professional practice, and improve their intercultural awareness and interpersonal skills" (Barker and Mak 2013, p. 2). The university's internationalisation strategy 2014–2017 (Griffith University 2014b) allows the development of the students' *global citizenship* by promoting overseas WIL programmes.

Until semester 2 (2013), the bachelor of business degree programme (hotel, tourism, event, real estate and property, and sport) had a mandatory WIL programme (Griffith University 2014b). Furthermore, the master of business in international tourism and hospitality management (ITHM) has incorporated two WIL electives *business internship* and *global mobility internship* since 2013 (Blackman, personal communication, December 2, 2015).

The *global mobility internship* is an example of a WIL opportunity that provides mobility grants for students to take up internships overseas. Students are also given the opportunity of an overseas internship is The New Colombo Plan (DFAT 2017), funded by the Australian government, which provides students with grants for WIL programmes is in the Asia-Pacific region (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade 2017).

15.2.2 Students', Graduates', and Managers' Perceptions of the Importance of Internship in Tourism and Hospitality Degrees

Only a few studies have been identified that focus on skills needed in the hotel industry in Mainland China (Hai-yan and Baum 2006; Huang and Lin 2010). Some studies have been identified from Hong Kong and Taiwan which focus on students', graduates', and managers' perceptions of the importance of having internships included in the tourism and hospitality programmes (Chang and Tse 2015; King et al. 2003; Wang and Tsai 2014).

A comparative study conducted by King et al. (2003) of tourism and hospitality graduates from Australia and Hong Kong evaluated the career experiences and perceptions of graduates from tourism and hospitality degrees at two universities in those countries. Respondents from both universities claimed that internships were more important for being selected in their first job than specialist tourism, hotel management, and food service subjects (King et al. 2003). Similarly, a study by Chang and Tse (2015) based on surveys and interviews of graduates from a tourism and hospitality programme in Hong Kong demonstrated the critical importance of internships in preparing students for the hospitality industry. A study by Wang and Tsai (2014) undertaken among hospitality managers and students in Taiwan also showed the importance that the students placed on internship programmes for employability. According to the authors, students develop their values and beliefs during internships "based on what they learn and observe in the workplace" (Wang and Tsai 2014, p. 133). Their study suggested that hospitality education should not only focus on learning skills for the industry but also help the students develop a positive work attitude (Wang and Tsai 2014).

Chan and Kuok (2011) conducted a survey among 135 hiring managers in Macau's tourism and hospitality industry. Interestingly the authors claimed that technical work experience was not perceived as important. Instead, they could foresee the need to hire less qualified candidates due to labour shortage and provide on-the-job training for employees without sufficient education (Chan and Kuok 2011). Similarly, the hotel industry in Mainland China is growing and so is the demand for qualified employees (Li 2012). Hotel managers in China have reported that hospitality graduates are lacking in practical experience (Zhang and Wu 2004). Li and Li (2013) added that structured internships in the Chinese tourism and hospitality degrees are key to greater success in hospitality education. The authors suggest that internships have a strong influence on students' desire to stay in the hospitality industry. Through internships, students can explore their future careers.

Adler and Leng (2014) highlighted the high turnover rate in hotels due to nature of the hotel industry that requires intense work and long hours. A labour shortage combined with long and irregular working hours puts pressure on employees who risk burning out (Wong and Ko 2009). Because of the high turnover rate, many hotels are not willing to invest in the training and development of their graduate employees. Consequently, many of these people feel the pressure of not being well

trained and are more likely to resign (Zhang and Wu 2004). Gu et al. (2006)recommended that the hotel industry develop their training methods as a way to maximise employee productivity and avoid high staff turnover. Training motivates employees to perform better and to build a sense of loyalty to the hotel, since the company is seen to be investing in the employee's future.

15.3 Methodology

This study used a qualitative interpretative methodology. Researchers using an interpretive paradigm tend to rely on respondents' views of the phenomenon being studied (Mackenzie and Knipe 2006). The essence of the interpretive paradigm is "to understand the subjective world of human experience" (Cohen and Manion 1994, p. 36). This research relies on the perceptions of the interviewees in relation to their experiences with WIL in the hotel industry in Australia and China and its usefulness for their future career. A social constructionist epistemology has been applied. Social constructionism refers to the mode of meaning generation, where our culture teaches us how to view phenomena. Social constructionism emphasises that culture has an influence on the way we perceive the world (Crotty 1998). According to Billett (1995), "knowledge is sourced through individuals' interaction with a socially determined world in the forms of its culture, communities, and practices" (p. 2). The content of the hidden curriculum is a social construction that characterises the non-explicit rules of a profession that students must learn if they want to achieve success—a kind of rulebook in which the rules are written between the lines (Snyder 1973).

An identified weakness of the research on graduate employment is the lack of published qualitative data. In particular, data are limited regarding job tasks, job requirements, and knowledge acquired during studies, whereas there is a large amount of quantitative information on graduate jobs and income (Teichler 2000). A large number of quantitative studies are available on graduate income. Johnston (2003) claims that quantitative approaches seem to be limited in addressing questions related to complex processes and human perceptions. She suggests that researchers use a qualitative methodology with an interpretive paradigm in order to focus on the data in more depth. In the current study, the use of a qualitative methodology made it possible to investigate the factors associated with perceptions and reflections of the students.

The overall sampling strategy of the research was a combination of purposive and snowball sampling. The study included an analysis of 19 semi-structured interviews with Chinese international students all enrolled in one university in South-East Queensland. They were second-year ($N = 9$) and third-year ($N = 6$) students enrolled in the bachelor of business (international tourism and hotel management and hotel management) as well as postgraduates ($N = 4$) enrolled in the master of business (international tourism and hospitality management). The interviews were

conducted on campus in English and audio-recorded. All interviews were transcribed verbatim.

Coding was used as a method of data reduction. Properties and dimensions indicating variation in the data were developed through the method of constant comparison. For example, the researchers looked for consistencies within each transcript and across transcripts (Glaser and Strauss 1967). Subsequently, axial coding was used, allowing the categories to be related to each other by elaborating them (Corbin and Strauss 2008). After both open and axial codes were grouped and labelled, the categories were integrated into a core category through selective coding. Selective codes use the same principles as axial coding, but the integration of categories is made at a higher level of abstraction (Strauss and Corbin 1998). The coding process was undertaken with Nvivo10 software. This programme enables the importation of transcriptions and coding of selected quotes.

A thematic analysis of the interview data was undertaken, and through it repeated "patterns of meaning" in the data were examined (Braun and Clarke 2006, p. 86). The researchers identified themes in an inductive way, which means that the "themes identified were strongly linked to the data themselves" and not coloured by theory (Braun and Clarke 2006, p. 83). The thematic analysis was undertaken when all data had been coded. The various codes were analysed and collated into an overarching theme at a higher level of abstraction. A theme is a statement linking selective codes.

In order to confirm the validity of the qualitative methodology, triangulation was applied, including data triangulation. For example, the researchers compared the interview data with various documents, such as the university's policies and strategies, mission and value statement, course profiles, internal statistics, and governmental statistics. Another type of triangulation that occurred in the research was analytical triangulation; for example, when data were unclear, the interviewees were asked to review the findings and answer questions on the researchers' interpretation of their interviews (Patton 2002). Furthermore, Creswell (2013) argues that it is important to build trust with respondents, learn their culture, and check for misunderstandings between the researcher and respondents. This strategy was important to consider in this study because all respondents were Chinese and had a distinctively different culture from that of the researchers. Therefore, language and cultural barriers were likely to occur before and during the interviews. Ensuring that the respondents received general information on the research was important for the research validity. Finally, according to Creswell (2013), clarifying the researcher's bias is important in order for the reader to understand their value position and any biases or assumptions that influence the research (Creswell 2013).

Anonymity has been preserved by referring to each interviewee by a letter for the group (S) and their actual initial or another random letter, for example, SCO.

Table 15.1 Summary of axial, selective codes, and central theme

Central theme: WIL	
Axial codes	Selective code
Lack of internships	*Importance of work experience*
Practice versus theory	
Development of specific attributes through internships	
Internship in China	
Assistance from university to find internships	*Implications for universities*
Collaboration between university and the hotel industry in other countries	

15.4 Findings

The central theme *WIL* that emerged from analysis of the interview data was developed from the selective codes, *importance of work experience* and *implications to university*, which had been developed inductively from several axial codes (see Table 15.1).

15.4.1 Importance of Work Experience

The selective code of *importance of work experience* emerged inductively from the following four axial codes: *lack of internships*; *practice* versus *theory*; *development of specific attributes through internships*; and *internship in China*. Further, the selective code i*mplications for universities* was categorised from the two axial codes: *assistance from university to find internships* and *collaboration between university and the hotel industry in other countries*. The findings are discussed below in relation to each axial code:

15.4.1.1 Lack of Internships

All except one undergraduate student thought it was important during their studies to gain work experience in order to develop the skills required in the hotel industry. Some students expressed their disappointment that the programme no longer contained a compulsory internship component. SKE, SJC, and SMA explained:

> …before I come here, the [University] has some contract with some main hotel like we will send the student to the hotel for the internship…But when I come here, they just cancelled that policy. (SKE)

> I would like them to at least offer us more opportunities such as, you know, internship in five-star hotels because I think [University] is the best in Australia for hotel management

> course that's why I came here. But now I found it a little bit disappointing as they, you know, do not look after us as what they, you know, said on the website. (SJC)

> As I mentioned, maybe internship opportunity because what I heard when I was not arrived yet is the professor or this department has a good relation with some hotels, maybe Hilton or whatever, and they can give you internship opportunity. But nobody mentioned anything to me. (SMA)

At the time of the interviews (2013), postgraduates were able to select WIL as an elective, although some might have been unaware of this opportunity or students might not have been able to find suitable internships. Students reported they were not assisted in searching for and securing WIL placements despite the university's acknowledgement of the importance of employability. It can also be assumed that they were not able to find suitable internships, possibly because employers perceived the students lacked competent English language skills. Finally, academics might not have supported the idea of undertaking an internship, if they did not see the usefulness of having it in the programme.

15.4.1.2 Practice Versus Theory

SKI claimed that the practical component of learning is more important than theory:

> When you are working, the theory is just part of your working but the practical experience is really important. (SKI)

SCO and SMI explained that graduates who have obtained practical work experience through internships have a competitive advantage over other Chinese graduates in gaining future work in the hotel industry. SMI explained:

> Well, if university here can offer internship, that means students really can train themselves during internship and really get some exact working experience in hospitality. And then when you go back to China you can say, "I really did something in Australia." So it will help you. (SMI)

SCO and SKE both thought that an internship programme should be a part of the Australian degree:

> Yeah, I would say the most important thing is to have an internship with Australian hotels, work within the Australian hotels to really test my skills and all sorts of stuff to give me advantage over others … (SCO)

SJC likened studying hotel management to other degrees where practical experience is considered crucial:

> … hotel management, it's like medicine…if you don't see a patient or do a diagnosis for a patient, you're not qualified for a general practice or any, you know, title of doctor. It's the same thing, yeah. (SJC)

Only one student claimed that undertaking work experience during studies was not important, because once graduates start working in a hotel, they are required to learn the skills from the beginning.

> When we just finish school, just go into the work, you have to start again from zero. So it's different. You have to learn everything from beginning where you're working. (SJE)

15.4.1.3 Development of Specific Attributes Through Internships

SSH added that an internship experience would help students develop a passion for the industry:

> One of my colleagues told me, if you want to get back to China to work, it's better for you to have some experience to get back. And then it will make you feel more valuable. And also, I think the servicing is like passion. (SSH)

Five students (SSH, SKE, SJO, SMI, SHE) mentioned the importance of passion and having a love for the industry while working in a hotel. It was considered important to demonstrate to the customers that they loved the industry. SKE explained:

> You need to love what you do. If I love, really love, my job, like I really enjoy that, so when I see the customer, of course I smile. I deliver the kind of attitude to them like I'm very happy that they stay here and I'm really happy to service you. (SKE)

According to one student (SMI), having passion for the industry will help employees focus on their work and remain in employment. Staying loyal to the employer will make them satisfied as well:

> If you are a passionate person, you will like the job and try your best to finish your job. And you won't easily get tired of it. You can focus on it and you can really enjoy it and you won't change your job very often. And also, the hotel will be happy about that. (SMI)

Two students (SJ, SR) felt that an internship experience would help develop their communication skills. SJ explained:

> … maybe the university should pay more attention about the communication … to let the student get more real working experience not only for the theories from the textbooks. (SJ)

Students considered communication skills among the most important skills required for their future career. Communication was considered important for the hotel industry by 14 of the 19 respondents (SHE, SJE, SJ, SKI, SAL, SC, SJA, SKE, SSH, SKA, SMI, SEL, SJO, SR). Specifically, students commented on the importance of communication in relation to customers, colleagues, managers, and other stakeholders.

15.4.1.4 Internships in China

Interestingly, students highlighted the benefits of taking up internships in the Chinese hotel industry as part of their WIL experience.

SJO mentioned that she planned to do an internship in a hotel in China during her studies in Australia. She thought it would be easier for her to find an internship in China because there were more hotels there than in Australia and her English lan-

guage skills competitive advantage. Furthermore, it was considered very hard for students to gain relevant work experience in hotels in Australia. SJO reported:

> Because here it’s really hard…In some company, they will open internship program for like some location or something. But I searched to Google and I saw the website of the hotel. Not really any hotel has the program of internship. So they only have one or two position available for not like internship, like casual, part-time but it’s harder to apply because hundreds, thousands people to apply. It’s really hard. (SJO)

15.4.2 Implications for Universities

The selective code of *implications for universities* emerged from the interview data. This code developed from the following two axial codes: *assistance from university to find internships* and *collaboration between university and the Chinese hotel industry*.

15.4.2.1 Assistance from University to Find Internships

Seven students (SJO, SAL, SHE, SCO, SJC, SEL, SSH) mentioned that it would be an advantage for students if the university assisted them in obtaining internships. The students concurred that it was difficult for Chinese international students to find internships, as they have limited capability in speaking and writing in English. SAL, SCO, and SHE explained:

> I would like to get help from university because we are not Australian. English is not our first language so sometimes what happens, “Oh, you’re not local and you don’t speak English as well as local people.” So sometimes it’s harder for us to get internships or jobs. But if the university helps us like we have some connections with hotels or like recommend us to hotels and maybe the chance is maybe higher to get the internships. (SAL)

Similarly to SAL, SCO emphasised the importance of internships being a requirement of the degree programme:

> I would—the one thing I would probably say the most important is to have a compulsory training internship and this will really help students to get idea about hotel operation. (SCO)

Additionally, the need for universities to take an active role in arranging internships as part of students’ experiential learning was echoed by participant SHE:

> Give more information or the chance for them, deliver to them to get a job and, like I said, keep doing the experience subject as a compulsory subject… (SHE)

15.4.3 Collaboration Between University and the Hotel Industry in Other Countries

Three students (SJA, SHE, SC) recommended that the university initiate collaborations with certain hotels in China. Due to the rate of growth of China's hotel industry, there is an increasing need for more trained staff. Thus, providing internships for students could facilitate graduates' entry into the job market as well as supporting capacity building in the industry:

> I do think because China have a very potential market and they require labourers working in the hospitality…So if they can open more like pathways to introduce to students to…or even take the internship back to China, I think. (SJA)

Finally, participant SC stated:

> I think Griffith should build some relationship with some five-star hotel or something, hotel in China that we can as Griffith students go to internship with some or we don't need to like look for ourselves or something. The uni can provide this opportunity for us. (SC)

15.5 Discussion

The vast majority of students mentioned that it was crucial to gain work experience during their studies in order to achieve the attributes required to work in the Chinese hotel industry and thereby give them a competitive advantage in their job search. The findings are consistent with previous studies from Mainland China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan in which students, graduates, and managers considered it crucial to have internships embedded in the tourism and hospitality programmes (Chang and Tse 2015; King et al. 2003; Li and Li 2013; Wang and Tsai 2014).

According to the students, internships helped them obtain essential attributes such as communication skills. It was also mentioned that passion would be developed through internships, which is important in the hotel industry where employees need to be enthusiastic about providing good customer service and be loyal to the employer. These findings are in line with Wang and Tsai's (2014) study that suggested hospitality education should help students develop a positive work attitude.

About half of the students considered it a challenge to find an internship in Australia because of their limited English skills and because competition for internships is intense. The university states that it places great importance on opportunities for WIL and intercultural growth for all students, regardless of their cultural backgrounds (Griffith University 2014a, b). Student responses suggest some disconnect between student expectations about the WIL component of their study programme and the reality of their experiences.

Because of the hardship of finding and completing an internship in the Australian hotel industry, some students had undertaken an internship in the Chinese hotel industry. An internship in the Chinese hotel industry was considered beneficial for

their future career, as they gained insights into the different hotel operational systems in China as compared with Australia.

Only one student mentioned that previous work experience was not required for the first job in the Chinese hotel industry because when graduates start working in a hotel, they are required to learn the skills from the beginning. This statement was consistent with the Chan and Kuok's (2011) study which reported that work experience was not perceived as important by managers who stated they could provide on-the-job training for new employees. It would be relevant for future research to investigate the perceptions of Chinese international hotel managers on this particular point.

15.6 Recommendations

15.6.1 Internships in Local Companies

The large majority of interviewees considered it an advantage to have an internship programme embedded in the degree to allow students to develop relevant attributes for their future career and to give them a competitive advantage in recruitment. This accords with Billett's (2015) recommendation that practice-based experiences such as WIL assist students in discovering what parts of their future career best suit their interests. The WIL agenda, however, is difficult to advance because of a lack of resources at university and government level and engagement and support to provide more opportunities for WIL to students (Wardle 2014). More staff resources are needed to make it possible for universities to assist students locate internships and supervise them while on placement.

15.6.2 Partnership Agreements with Overseas Hotels

In the context of the current study, it is recommended that Australian universities develop partnerships with Chinese hotels to facilitate international students undertaking internships in these hotels. Encouraging students to take up internships in the Chinese hotel industry as well as in other countries will help students learn the attributes required in the hotel industry. Furthermore, it will allow them to build connections for their future careers. As WIL is recommended as part of the curriculum in the university's internationalisation strategy (Griffith University 2014b), allowing students to gain work experience overseas and the development of partnerships with overseas hotels would facilitate students undertaking internships abroad. The New Colombo Plan (DFAT 2017) funded by the Australian government is an example of a WIL opportunity that provides mobility grants for students to engage in internships in the Asia-Pacific region. Potentially, this programme can benefit students and industry (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade 2017).

15.7 Conclusions

This chapter has explored the Chinese international tourism and hospitality students' perceptions of the usefulness of WIL and workplace training for their own career and for the Chinese hotel industry. It was discovered that the majority of the students found it crucial to have internships embedded in their degree, aligning strongly with the aims of the university's policies which emphasise the importance of authentic practice-based experiences to deepen student's ability to connect theory and practice, to provide enhanced employability, and to prepare work-ready graduates (Griffith University 2014a, b). The perception among the participants in the study was that an internship in Australia would provide them with a competitive advantage in their job search in China. It was recommended that internships be embedded in the Australian tourism and hospitality degrees. Furthermore, students recommended that the university assist them in obtaining an internship either in Australia or China through partnership agreements between the university and hotels. There is a need for highly qualified staff in the Chinese hotel industry, so internships were recommended to improve students' and graduates' attributes and increase their motivation to work in the industry. Practical experience is really important—whether it is in Australia or China.

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Chapter 16
University Strategic Directions, International Education and WIL: From Policy to Practice

Nan Bahr, Donna Pendergast, and Christopher Klopper

16.1 Global Trends in International Education

Recent reports (United Nations 2015; Australian Government 2016a) indicate that since 2014, approximately five million tertiary students study outside of their home country annually, more than double the numbers reported in 2000. Research undertaken by the British Council (2013) suggests that an increasing number of students are travelling to India, China, Brazil, Indonesia and Nigeria to engage in international study. Further, it is anticipated that there will soon be an increase in international travel for study by students to countries which are experiencing both a growing gross domestic product (GDP) and youth population. This includes emerging opportunities in Pakistan, Nigeria and Kenya. There are inherent challenges with a number of these. For example, there has been visa and credential fraud and concerns around travel safety.

According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2016), the top five destinations (the USA, the UK, Germany, France and Australia) still account for nearly half of the globally mobile student population. Many of these countries have traditionally been a source for inbound international students; however, universities are attempting to reverse the flow and attract international students in their own right. As mobility patterns change and more countries enter the international education market, the number of students choosing the USA has started to decline, a trend that has coincided with significant income and budget cuts in a number of higher education institutions. Higher education institutions, many of which are now looking at attracting international student tuition fee income, have welcomed a focus in 2014 on the US immigration reform (United States of America Congress 2014). Initiatives in this area, including the permanent residency offer for graduate students in science, tech-

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nology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) disciplines, are likely to increase the number of foreign graduates who remain in the USA on completion of their qualifications, with explicit recognition of the contribution that international students and their families make to the US economy. Such moves come at the same time as increasing numbers of US education institutions are revising their stance against the use of recruitment agents and the payment of commissions (Raimo 2014).

In contrast to the relatively unstructured approach adopted in the past by the USA to student recruitment, the past decade has seen nontraditional destinations, mainly in Asia, develop explicit strategies and devote considerable resources to becoming educational hubs. That investment comes with ambitious targets, with both China and Japan setting out to attract 300,000 students each by 2020 (International Consultants for Education and Fairs 2015, 2016). Japan's share of the international education market was showing signs of decline prior to the 2011 earthquake and tsunami, and the ongoing concern around the stability of nuclear power facilities since then has done little to help reassure potential students, and international partners, particularly in the West. However, the Japanese government hopes that the recently announced Super Global Universities project (Maruko 2014), which will subsidise 37 universities' efforts to internationalise for the next 10 years, will go some way to reversing this trend. China, followed by South Korea, accounts for the largest numbers studying in Japan. South Korea's own move to reverse student flows comes at a time when the domestic birth rate is falling and capacity in higher education institutions is higher than the natural demand. Korean universities are also putting more focus on internationalisation and that, together with the growth in branch campuses in the Incheon Free Economic Zone, is encouraging more students to stay home.

The UK now boasts (Higher Education Statistics Agency 2016) more international students studying offshore than in the UK itself, with a strong physical presence for many of its higher education institutions across Asia. Closer to home, New Zealand universities have recently revised their offerings at postgraduate masters level and are introducing a suite of shorter (1 year) postgraduate coursework programmes, explicitly designed to attract increased international student numbers. International education is a key pillar in the national economic development platform (Education New Zealand 2016), with the generic marketing body (Education New Zealand 2016) having recently been given crown agency status and a significantly increased budget. This move also is designed to ensure that policy settings across a range of key areas (e.g. immigration) are informed by the needs of international students and education providers.

16.2 Australian Trends in International Education

Higher education in Australia consistently ranks at around the country's fourth highest export earner (Hall and Hooper 2008). Over the past 15 years, there has been a rapidly expanding global marketplace for higher education to service a

burgeoning demand for desirable forms of work (Klopper and Drew 2013). In such a competitive climate, an imperative exists for education products and services to differentiate to market needs globally, regionally and locally (Jones and Oleksiyenko 2011; Marginson 2011) and to ensure that they are of an outstanding quality in terms of access (Morley 2012; Rizvi and Lingard 2011), processes and outcomes (Wong 2012). It is critical that Australia maintains its competitive advantage through innovative, high-quality offerings, particularly given endemic barriers, such as the nation's stringent visa regulations and high cost of living. Australia's place in international education is centred on:

- The value of international education to Australia
- The value to states, territories and regions
- The importance of partnerships
- International competition
- The importance of quality
- Capacity for growth (Australian Government 2016a)

In 2015, the Australian Government Department of Education and Training commissioned the Deloitte Access Economics to assess the value of international education to the Australian community (Deloitte Access Economics 2016). This assessment, *the value of international education to Australia*, encompasses the sector's contribution to the Australian economy and its broader economic and social impact on regional communities, tourism and the calibre and productivity of Australia's workforce. As such, the facts and figures hereafter referred to in this section have been sourced from this report (Deloitte Access Economics 2016). International student numbers in Australia hit their peak in 2009 with more than 600,000 international students enrolled across all sectors (schools, ELICOS, VET, higher ed and non-award). In September 2014, international enrolments in all sectors in Australia were just above 562,000. Higher education accounted for more than a third of these enrolments in 2009 and reached its highest level in 2014 with close to 250,000 enrolments, or 44% of the total.

However, 2010–2012 saw a decline in all sectors in Australia for a combination of reasons including the high Australian dollar, a dramatic drop in Indian student numbers following a series of violent incidents in Victoria and very poor press in India, changes to visa processes with particular respect to migration opportunities and increasing competition from other markets. The decline was most marked in the VET sector at −30%, followed by the ELICOS sector at −17% (which didn't reflect the full decline, which included students undertaking ELICOS on non-student visas and not reflected in AEI statistics). This had a flow-on effect on university enrolments.

In 2013 and 2014, international student numbers in Australia started to show signs of recovery. The ELICOS sector experienced particularly strong growth, while the VET and higher education sectors declined in 2013 before improving in 2014. International student commencements in higher education were up 5.7% in 2013 and 13.6% in 2014, and 2014 marked the first increase in international student commencements in Australian higher education since the peak of 2009.

NSW and Victoria—read Sydney and Melbourne—have by far the largest proportion of international higher education enrolments, with 34% and 32%, respectively, in 2014, while Queensland has the third largest proportion, but a long way behind with just 15% of the total. Anecdotal evidence suggests that Sydney and Melbourne are more attractive than ever for international students due to perceptions that they will provide the best opportunities for part-time work while studying, work integrated learning (WIL) opportunities, internship placements and post-study work opportunities.

While the Department of Immigration and Border Protection is sometimes accused of working at cross-purposes with international education in Australia, it made two significant changes during 2011 and 2012 that have had a positive impact in the higher education sector (Deloitte Access Economics 2016). The first was the introduction of a streamlined visa-processing (SVP) regime designed to streamline the visa application process in a number of key markets. The second was the introduction in late 2012 of a post-study work visa for international students with a minimum of 2 years of study in Australia. This has coincided with the UK rescinding a similar visa programme, helping to attract students to Australia from a number of markets, including India, where the post-study work visa has led to a marked resurgence in applications. However, some markets—Nepal, India, Pakistan and Vietnam among them—have exhibited serious issues with student visa fraud under the SVP, and higher education institutions face significant administrative burden as a result of the streamlined visa system, which requires continual monitoring and adjusting admission processes to address visa fraud. The coalition government has indicated a strong commitment to international education and undertakes visa reform that will support the industry but there is continued uncertainty regarding the impact of changes to the domestic funding environment on international students. Strong support has also been indicated for a higher level of engagement in the Asia-Pacific region, and the *New Colombo Plan* signals an intention to support collaboration by educational institutions as a key part of this. The New Colombo Plan is a signature initiative of the Australian Government that aims to lift knowledge of the Indo-Pacific in Australia by supporting Australian undergraduates to study and undertake internships in the region (Australian Government 2016c). There are considerable opportunities for growth in the Australian international education sector: new markets, new partnerships, new areas of teaching and research, new technology and new modes of delivery.

The National Strategy for International Education 2025, The National Strategy for International Education 2025 (Australian Government 2016a) sets out a 10-year plan for developing Australia's role as a global leader in education, training and research. It provides a framework of priorities for the Australian international education community to strengthen and grow the sector. It provides aspirational direction for Australian international education as contributing to Australia's economic prosperity, social advancement and international standing. The key focus areas of the National Strategy are described through three pillars: strengthening the fundamentals, transformative partnerships and competing globally.

The intent of the strategy is to build on the current success of the system and to grasp new opportunities. The National Strategy aligns with the National Innovation and Science Agenda (Australian Government 2016b), which will further enhance Australia's global reputation as a leader in research and education into the future. Nine goals are proposed which are arranged around three pillars:

Pillar 1—Strengthening the Fundamentals

- Goal 1: Building on a world-class education, training and research system
- Goal 2: Delivering the best possible student experience
- Goal 3: Providing effective quality assurance and regulation

Pillar 2—Making Transformative Partnerships

- Goal 4: Strengthening partnerships at home
- Goal 5: Strengthening partnerships abroad
- Goal 6: Enhancing mobility
- Goal 7: Building lasting connections with alumni

Pillar 3—Competing Globally

- Goal 8: Promoting our excellence
- Goal 9: Embracing opportunities to grow international education

The strategy also acknowledges Australia's requisite to "expand the potential, scale and breadth of relevant work integrated learning opportunities for international students and graduates" (p. 42). International students, in particular Chinese students (Sharma 2014), seek to gain work experience in their host country as part of their studies overseas in order to increase their employability upon graduation (International Education Association of Australia [IEAA] 2012). However, growing evidence indicates that participation in WIL by international students is not comparable to their domestic counterparts (Gribble 2014) and is a concern for many international students. It is often the case that many international students are unable to find a placement despite their willingness to succeed and employers' intent on placing diligent, capable WIL students. This is frequently ascribed to perceptions of poor language capabilities and cultural incongruences. There is also the perception that international students are resource arduous, as they require extra preparation, mentoring and constant support (IEAA 2012). Other obstacles for international students to navigate when securing work experience in Australia include limited access to networks, poor labour market awareness, visa restrictions and relatively weak communication skills (Blackmore et al. 2014; IEAA 2012). Blackmore et al. (2012) describe how in Australian institutions securing suitable placements for international students is increasingly difficult due to inadequately resourced WIL coordinators. The limited number of WIL opportunities for international students is unfavourable for a number of reasons:

- First, equity, inclusivity and widening participation are critical to WIL initiatives, policies and practices, making the recent drive for increased WIL offerings important to all students, not just the domestic market.

- Second, maintaining and strengthening current links with international markets, particularly China and other Southeast Asian countries, are critical to the wellbeing and future of the economy (Jackson and Greenwood 2015).

Engaging international students in WIL has the potential to assist employers in conducting business offshore, as it provides access to a valuable resource in the form of linguistic expertise, knowledge of local culture and working practices. Leveraging these distinctive opportunities allows industry to overcome communication and cultural barriers and to strengthen partnerships, which contribute to a national competitive advantage.

16.3 International Students and the Demand for Work Experience

Work experience is considered by international students in Australia to be critical to enhancing their employment prospects in both their host country and country of origin (Blackmore et al. 2014). However, the reality is somewhat bleak for the graduate labour market with the unemployment rate of new graduates reaching record highs (Graduate Careers Australia [GCA] 2014). The employment rates of international students in full-time graduate-level positions in Australia are low (AUIDF 2013). With underemployment also a problem among new graduates (GCA 2014), students are seeking ways to enhance their portfolio of skills and experiences during their university years. Prospective employers still appear to value work experience in the relevant discipline. Such work experiences make for a smoother transition from university to a professional environment as they afford the student the opportunity to use disciplinary and nonacademic skills and knowledge in non-orchestrated environments. This has been particularly evident outside the traditional areas of nursing and education, for example, where WIL is already embedded in the study programmes. More recently, accounting and engineering have been cited as areas where international students are particularly keen to gain exposure to a professional environment (Blackmore et al. 2014).

The strategic discourse of universities may provide some insight into the intent of the institution with respect to internationalisation and within this agenda the potential and place for WIL. On this basis and armed with the three pillars as a framework, we reflected at a metanarrative level on several Australian universities' strategic alignment with the direction set out by this initiative (Australian Government 2016a).

16.4 Operationalising International Education: Cross-Institutional Comparison

Three Australian institutions were purposively selected for a desktop cross-institutional comparison. The university strategic plans were appraised, analysed and distilled to align with the three pillars of the National Strategy for International Education: strengthening the fundamentals, transformative partnerships and competing globally. It is important to note that the strategic plans of these universities precede the recently released *National Strategy for International Education 2025* (Australian Government 2016a), so there is no intention to use this process as a measure of quality but rather as a reflection on the current context.

Figures 16.1, 16.2 and 16.3 provide a visualisation of the respective university strategic goals framed within the three pillars: strengthening the fundamentals, making transformative partnerships and competing globally.

While these three pillars were to some extent contained within the institutional strategic plans, Griffith University and University of Western Sydney have breakaway strategic plans explicit to internationalisation. A closer look at the breakaway *Griffith University Internationalisation Strategy 2014–2017* (Griffith University

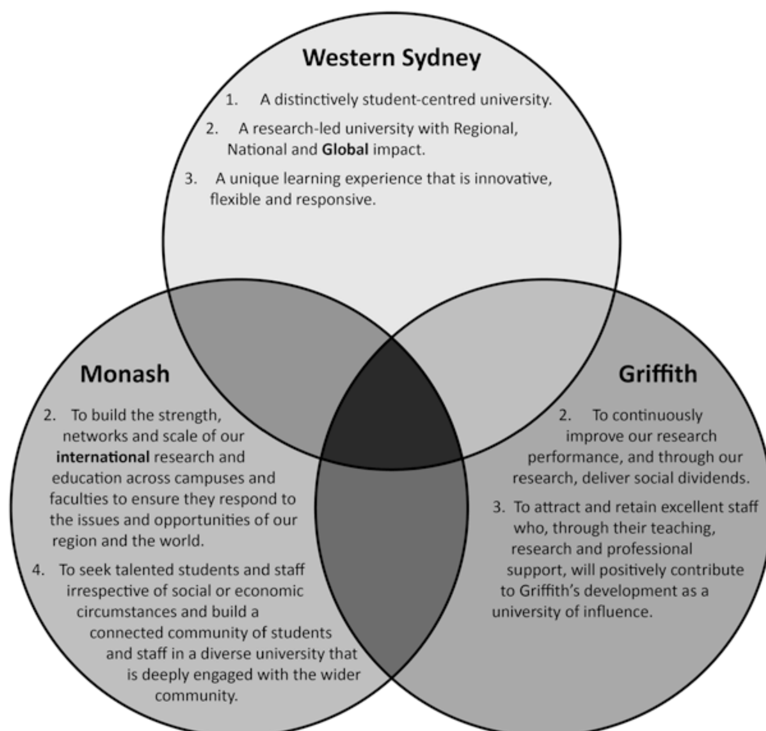

Fig. 16.1 Strengthening the fundamentals

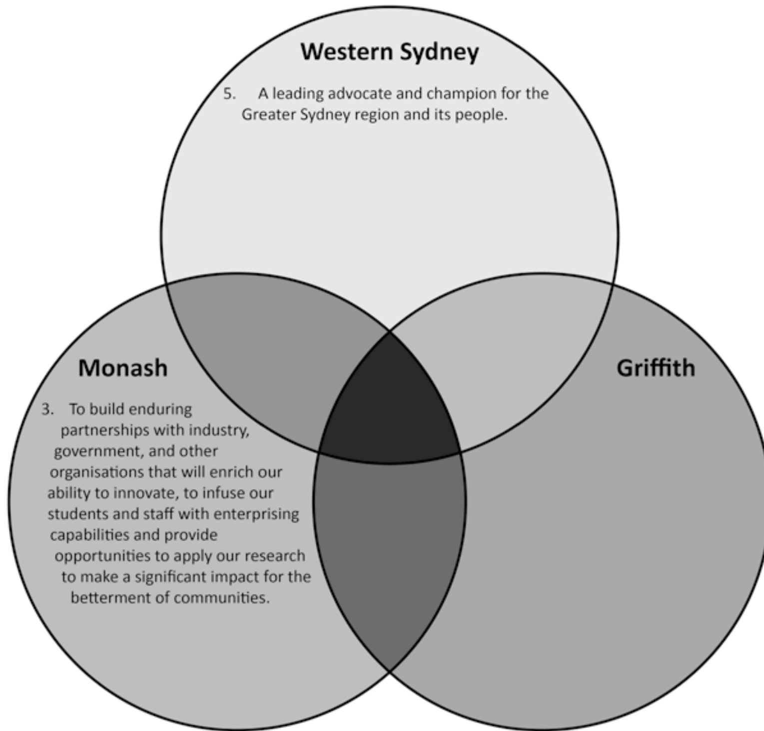

Fig. 16.2 Transformative partnerships

2014), for example, reveals a clear commitment to Pillar 2 focussing on partnerships, with this identified as the first of the primary goals of the internationalisation strategy. The plan also highlights the importance of WIL, with a focus on students having an international experience during their studies, hence an outbound focus. Monash maintains an international presence and global outlook in preparing graduates for the demands of work and citizenship; inspires excellence, impact and relevance in research through international partnerships; and serves communities by working on global problems and bringing the best ideas from around the world to address local challenges.

There were two goals that were not categorised into the pillars: Griffith University *Goal 4, to be a sustainable university*, and University of Western Sydney *Goal 6, a dynamic and innovative culture that secures success*. It could be deduced that these respective goals provide a point of unique distinction for the institutions.

It is apparent from this audit that Australian universities are likely to have a strategic intent that aligns with the pillars for enhancing international education and hence shaping priorities for the Australian international education community to strengthen and grow the sector. This becomes more evident at the operational level of universities, where the implementation of strategic goals becomes a reality. The implementation and operationalisation of these strategic goals are framed by policy

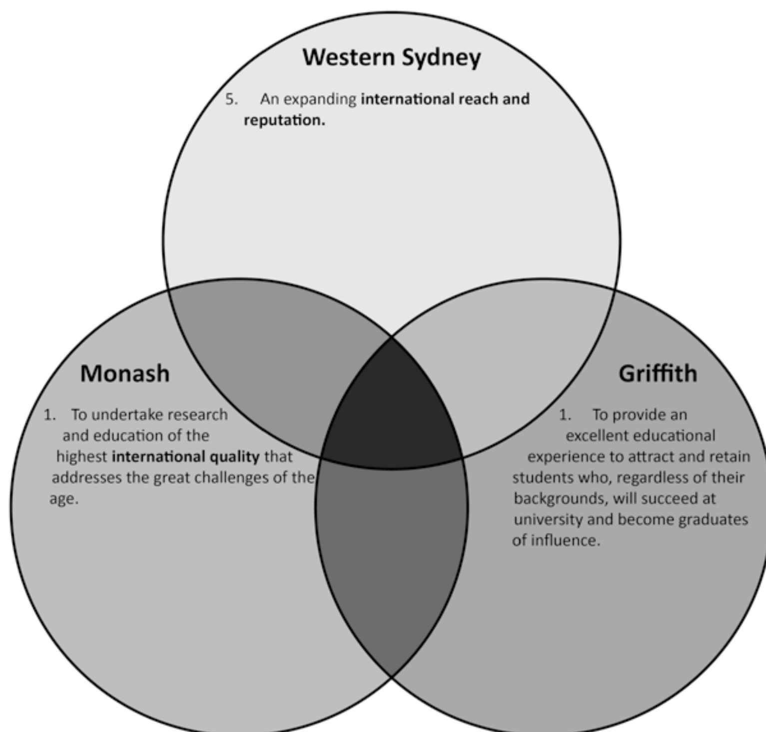

Fig. 16.3 Competing globally

and regulatory contexts. As an example, in the area of initial teacher education (ITE), this is a complex scene. It is to that space we now turn.

16.5 Policy and Practices Impacting Upon International WIL in ITE

There is a complex interplay between policy guidelines and impact with respect to international WIL in initial teacher education (ITE). Figure 16.4 refers to two categories of WIL. The first is with respect to policy for ITE students from overseas completing their WIL in Australia. The second is with respect to policy for Australian domestic students or international students enrolled in an Australian domestic ITE programme engaging in their WIL overseas. Figure 16.4 illustrates the four circumstances for which there are specific policy and practice implications for WIL.

With reference to Fig. 16.4, the four circumstances are indicated with the numerals 1 to 4. Circumstance 1 is where an overseas student engages in a domestic WIL experience. Circumstance 2 is where an international student enrols in a domestic ITE programme and engages in domestic WIL. Circumstance 3 is where an interna-

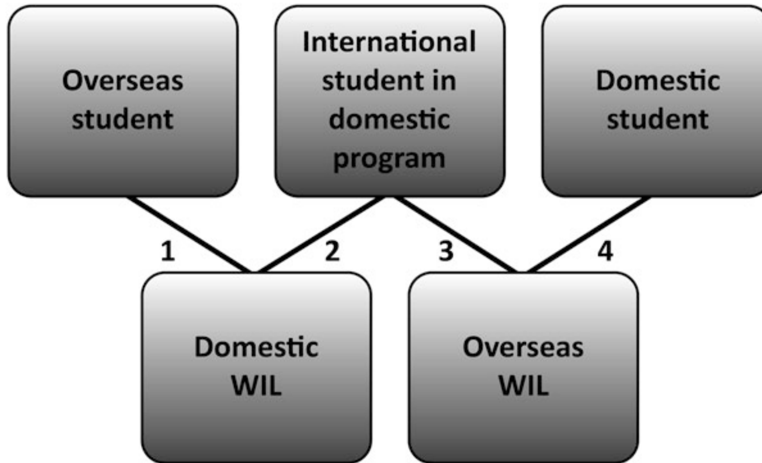

Fig. 16.4 Four circumstances with specific policy and practice implications for ITE WIL

tional student enrols in a domestic ITE programme but engages in an overseas WIL placement. Circumstance 4 is where a domestic ITE student engages in an overseas WIL placement. The applicable policy and practice considerations are different for each of these circumstances. There is of course a circumstance 5, not illustrated, where a domestic student engages in a domestic WIL placement. This is the typical arrangement for WIL in ITE and serves as the benchmark for comparison of the other four circumstances.

The WIL report (Patrick et al. 2008) details the range of equity and access issues that surround WIL for international students in Australian higher education generally. These are consistent with the experience of the authors. There are persistent issues that have emerged around the opportunity, nature, conduct, equitable assessment and cultural aspects which emerge for international WIL for both students of domestic ITE programmes with professional placement overseas and for international students engaging in professional experience in Australian settings (circumstances 2, 3 and 4). There are also some unintended impact issues that emerge where an overseas student pursues a domestic WIL placement (circumstance 1). We explore each of these in turn.

16.6 Circumstance 1: Overseas Students Pursuing Domestic WIL

Intuitively it would seem that a student of an overseas institution who engages in an Australian WIL placement would have no impact on the conduct and experience of WIL for any of the domestic programmes. Unfortunately, busy schools, supervisors

and students find it difficult to differentiate between international students of domestic programmes (circumstance 2) and overseas students of overseas programmes in domestic placement (circumstance 1). The result is often a level of confusion regarding the expectations for pre-service teacher performance during placement. There is a limited number of domestic placements available, and these students can interfere with the capacity of domestic programmes to find placements.

16.7 Circumstance 2: International Students Enrolled in Australian ITE and WIL

There are some important considerations when an international student enrols in an Australian ITE programme. Most commonly, overseas students enrol in the whole domestic ITE programme but wish to return overseas when they have graduated. As such there are no direct and unique policies for WIL for them. These students are considered just as if they were domestic students for the purposes of their studies and professional experience requirements. However, there are some important domestic preliminary regulatory requirements that these students must meet. The first is the Working with Children Check and verification blue card (Queensland) issued by the Children's Commission.

16.7.1 Working with Children Check

Every ITE student requires clearance through a Working with Children Check. In Queensland successful applicants for clearance are issued a blue card, which basically verifies that they have no history of criminal activity that would suggest that children might be at risk in their care (Queensland Government 2016). This system is extant in every state and territory of Australia. Domestic students are checked out administratively with a turnaround time of about 6 weeks from initial application. This usually means that they are certified with plenty of time to spare ahead of their first professional experience placement. This is not true for international students. The protocol for assessment of people who have spent significant time on foreign soil is quite elaborate. The international security and policing authorities are contacted, and they must complete a criminal history check for the student. This can take some time, and international students in ITE programmes often experience late certification, which interferes with their clearance for practicum placement.

16.7.2 English Language Proficiency (ELP)

International students who wish to enter domestic ITE programmes must demonstrate an advanced capability in spoken and written English. A barrier assessment using a high stakes English Proficiency Test (EPT) occurs prior to enrolment. There are three alternatives of testing systems that international students are directed to for rating of their relative English language skills. These are International English Language Testing System (IELTS 2016), International Second Language Proficiency Rating (ISLPR) or Professional English Assessment for Teachers (PEAT). With students being required to meet the following standards within 2 years of application:

- An IELTS (academic) assessment with an average band score of 7.5 across all four skill areas of listening, speaking, reading and writing—with no score below 7 in any of the four skills areas and a score of no less than 8 in speaking and listening
- An ISLPR assessment with a score of level 4 in all four areas of listening, speaking, reading and writing, such assessments to be deemed valid only if provided by approved testing sites where the assessment is teacher focussed
- A PEAT assessment of A in all four areas of listening, speaking, reading and writing (Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership 2016)

This is a very high standard of requirement for English language proficiency. Using the IELTS as the benchmark, it is important to note that a score of 9 is the highest possible rating for any of the skill areas (IELTS 2016). By comparison, aspiring higher degree students for all programmes other than ITE applying to study at Griffith University are required to attain an overall band score of 6.5 on the IELTS with no band score less than 6.0.

Domestic students, or students who have a qualification from an English-speaking country that required at least 2 years volume of learning, are exempt from the ELP testing requirements. In addition, AITSL have recommended that from 2015, all teacher education students must pass a standardised Literacy and Numeracy Test that places them in the top 30% of the domestic population. This test is in addition to the ELP requirement and addresses understandings of language and grammar beyond written and spoken communicative proficiency.

Therefore, international students enrolled in a domestic ITE programme will have already met stringent and high standards for English language prior to any WIL placement. Yet WIL still presents as a unique difficulty for international students. Personal experience at three local institutions, the University of Queensland, Queensland University of Technology and Griffith University, by the authors is that agreement to host a student for a practicum is extremely hard to broker if the student has an international name. Further, having found a placement, school students often have difficulty and lack tolerance for pre-service teachers who have thick accents, even when the ELP is extremely high. So, in practice, international students enrolled in domestic ITE programmes and pursuing domestic practicum placements are often at a disadvantage.

16.8 Circumstances 3 and 4: International and Domestic Students in Domestic ITE Pursuing Overseas WIL

International students enrolled in an Australian award programme need to engage in WIL just as domestic students would. That is, no more than half of their required professional placement days can be overseas. Australian schools that have been established at international destinations do not count as *Australian* for the purposes of the first 50% of days. This is because all of the domestic days for professional experience must be completed in schools on Australian soil. A further element is the requirement that these domestic placements are to occur only where the experience will require using the Australian curriculum.

The international placements for the allowable half of required WIL days should ideally happen before the final practicum block in the degree programme. This is to ensure that the students demonstrate their mastery competence against the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (graduate level) in an Australian setting. A further recommendation, note not policy, is that a student's first professional experience should be in an Australian setting. This is to ensure their orientation to the content of their programme is appropriately oriented to recent experience in authentic teaching contexts. Therefore, an ITE programme, which has 80 days of WIL broken up into 4 by 2 week placements of professional experience, would present a student with opportunity for overseas WIL only for their second and third placements.

16.9 Overseas Placement Requirements

There are strict policy requirements to guide the selection of an appropriate ITE context for WIL in an overseas placement. First, the student's supervisor must be a registered teacher with the local jurisdiction. This means that the placement can only occur where such jurisdictional requirements exist. Next, the supervisor must have qualifications at least equivalent to that required for teaching in Australia. Also, the placement context must be a regular school registered as such with the local education system administration, that is, not home schooling. The school must be contacted prior to the placement and formally accept the nominated student and verify that they meet the conditions of the policy.

During the placement there needs to be careful and regular communication between the teacher education academics and the school-based supervisor/s. Of course this is true of all placements, but there are added levels of complexity when the student is engaging in an overseas placement. At the policy level, the supervising teachers cannot be expected to have familiarity with the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (graduate level), which can mean inconsistency in evaluation of student performance compared with students on domestic placement. At the practical level, it is impossible for the teacher educators for the ITE programme to

make site visits to discuss the student's progress. Additionally, the student will miss out on knowledge consolidation and development of Australian Curriculum content and related pedagogies.

16.10 Policy into Practice: A Case in Point

Much is known about the participation rates, benefits, barriers and challenges international students experience while engaged in WIL (Jackson and Greenwood 2015). An in-depth study conducted by Jackson and Greenwood (2015) helpfully revealed a series of strategies that can be adopted to enhance WIL outcomes among international students. These are divided into two domains: increasing international student's participation in WIL and improving the international student WIL experience. We now turn to these strategies as a means to reflect on one operational setting in one university that has a commitment to enhancing the WIL experiences of international students and thereby contribute to the university and broader Australian Government strategic goals in this domain.

The operational setting selected for this reflection is the School of Education and Professional Studies (hereafter the School), Griffith University. The School is located on three campuses—Mt Gravatt, Logan and Gold Coast—and has an institutional history reaching back to 1969. For the purposes of this reflection, there will be a focus on initial teacher education programmes in the school, which therefore includes specific issues related to professional experience in school settings.

16.10.1 The School Context

The School is ranked in the QS World University Subject Rankings top 100 education schools worldwide and has been for the last 4 years and has the highest graduate success rate (85.3%) among education competitors in Australia. More than 1 in 5 teachers in Queensland has graduated from a former or present teacher education institution of Griffith University. The School has close ties with government and industry and regularly provides guidance and advice on educational best practice and policy with leadership roles at state and national policy-making levels. School programmes prepare students for work by linking theory with practice, with teaching placements built into degrees and opportunities available in Australia and overseas. Study choices include early childhood education and care; primary, secondary, special education, adult and vocational education; contemporary and applied theatre; and autism studies.

Over the last 5 years, the School's internationalisation strategic priorities have centred on the Asian market in line with the Griffith University international strategy. Two particular challenges have impacted on the inclusion of international students in initial teacher education programmes: rising fees and policy shifts, especially the demanding English language requirements for teacher education pro-

grammes. Rising fees and policy changes have led to a significant decline in overall numbers with a dramatic drop in recent years of students, especially from the Canadian marketplace. This market was historically a strong load for the School which has an alumnus of more than 2500 Canadian graduates with a Griffith teacher education degree over the last decade. Despite this change, there remains a demand-by and focus-on international students enrolling in initial teacher education programmes. The experience of previous years has ensured the School has developed strategies to optimise the participation and experience of international students undertaking WIL.

Like many organisational sites in universities, there is a dedicated leadership role in the school to enable achievement of specific goals related to internationalisation; see Box 16.1.

Box 16.1: School Coordinator: Internationalisation

The coordinator is responsible for the development and implementation of school-wide strategies and processes and the achievement of operational targets in the area of internationalisation.

The coordinator works with the deputy head of school academic along with the group pro-vice-chancellor, deans, heads of element, programme directors, Griffith International and other relevant group or university personnel. The coordinator is responsible for:

- Developing strategies and policies for recruitment of international students into the school, including via articulation and executive education programmes
- Developing strategies and policies to internationalise the curriculum
- Assessing the feasibility of potential offshore programme initiatives and developing strategies and policies for the delivery of offshore programmes by elements in the school
- Developing programmes that facilitate positive experiences for international students in the school
- Promoting an international focus for all students in the school including by exchanges, study abroad and/or overseas internship programmes
- Developing strategic links with institutions overseas in collaboration with elements in the school with a view to fostering research and staff interchanges and student exchanges and encouraging staff to internationalise their experience
- Overseeing scholarships available for international students
- Conducting relevant teleconferences with overseas partners/agents
- Developing and supporting international alumni initiatives and events
- Chairing the School of Education and Professional Studies internationalisation working party
- Other duties as assigned by the arts, education and law group pro-vice-chancellor and the head of school/dean of education

16.11 Strategies for Increasing International Student Participation in WIL

According to Jackson and Greenwood (2015), there are six clear strategies that can be employed to increase international student participation in WIL. Table 16.1 presents these strategies with specific actions, and we add comments regarding our insights and actions in the context of the School.

16.12 Strategies for Improving the International Student WIL Experience

Jackson and Greenwood (2015) also propose five strategies that can be employed to improve the international student WIL experience. Table 16.2 presents these strategies with specific actions, and we add comments regarding our insights and actions in the context of the School.

Overall, the School has a strong commitment to the agendas of the university and the broader Australian Government to enhance the engagement of international students in high-quality WIL experiences. Resource commitments, especially the allocation of a leadership role in the School to work directly with this domain, reflect a clear investment which translates policy into practice.

16.13 Summary and Thoughts for Improving WIL

This chapter has provided insights about the global context and then focussed on the Australian setting. We have considered some of the challenges and opportunities afforded by WIL for international education framed by the three pillars from the 10-year plan for developing international education in Australia. A glimpse into the way three Australian universities align with the three pillars has provided some insight into the strategic direction of these institutions, and we have then looked more closely at one organisational unit in a university, in this instance, in an initial teacher education context, to consider how that school enacts broader policy in order to enhance WIL outcomes for international students in regard to increasing participation and in improving the experience.

Table 16.1 Strategies for increasing international student participation in WIL

Strategies for increasing international student participation in WIL[a]	Reflection on the School scenario for initial teacher education
Assisting students to build professional networks while at university through:	The School collaborates closely with the full range of university services and especially with Griffith International
Collaborative efforts of student societies and support services such as careers, alumni and international offices	Selected global employers and a defined region, including targeted universities for partnerships, have been identified, guide decision-making and are supported by Griffith Mobility
Partnerships between universities and global employers operating in, for example, the Asia-Pacific rim	
Managing international student expectations on available WIL opportunities through education on employer expectations and trends in the local economy and labour market	Regular information session including weekly drop-in sessions with the designated school coordinator of international strategies is a feature
Broadening the scope of potential WIL opportunities for international students by:	All of these actions are addressed regularly and through communications from the professional experience offices, the coordinator international, the school coordinator of initial teacher education and relevant programme directors
Allowing the completion of WIL abroad and in their home country	
Encouraging WIL in regional areas	
Educating employers on post-study education rights and visa regulations	
Encouraging more international students to participate in elective WIL programmes by:	WIL is compulsory for all initial teacher education students; hence the elective nature of the experience is additional to substantial compulsory experiences
Reviewing the cost of elective WIL units	
More extensively advertising WIL opportunities on campus and through other means	Initiatives in the form of in-country experiences are designed and implemented annually and typically receive funding support from the university
	Opportunities are widely communicated to students, and long lead times enable effective marketing of opportunities
Expanding WIL delivery options, including:	The WIL component related to initial teacher education is not conducive to virtual or online delivery as it typically includes an evaluative component related to practise
Virtual or online delivery	Experiences of a social nature are encouraged, for example, visits to tourist and other attractions that build a connection to the wider community

(continued)

Table 16.1 (continued)

Strategies for increasing international student participation in WIL[a]	Reflection on the School scenario for initial teacher education
Connecting with industry through on-campus industry-based projects, role-plays and simulations	International students are inducted into the university with common language, experience and expectations part of the initiation to the university and the School
Placing students in groups	
Introducing service learning options with a particular emphasis on developing communication skills and providing exposure to Australian culture	
Managing employer preferences and perceptions through:	Close consideration is given to WIL professional experience placements. Relationships have been built up over many years with schools and industry partners who engage with international students positively and supportively
Close consideration of cultural differences when matching students to particular work settings	Sharing of capabilities is a cornerstone of communications and in particular benefits related to language experience are highlighted
Educating employers on the strengths associated with international students, such as strong work ethic and drive	

[a]*Source*: Jackson, D. and Greenwood, K. (2015). Enhancing work integrated learning outcomes for international students in Australia. Perth: Edith Cowan University

Table 16.2 Strategies for improving the international student WIL experience

Strategies for improving the international student WIL experience[a]	Reflection on the School scenario for initial teacher education
More effective management of cultural differences by:	International students are part of a community in the School facilitated by the coordinator internationalisation. A focus on regular meetings, conversations, sharing of experiences and setting expectations is enacted through regular individual and group meetings
Better preparing international students on what to expect in the Australian workplace and how to respond when certain scenarios arise	
Providing international students with a broad insight into the different industry sectors	International students have the opportunity to develop experiences across a range of setting and sectors, and indeed this is an expectation related to WIL
Ensuring hosts are aware of any cultural differences which require the implementation of certain arrangements during the WIL experience	Hosts are briefed as part of the allocation of students to contexts for WIL
Closer attention to matching students to appropriate placements with due consideration of their cultural needs and the expectations of employers, particularly in regard to language capabilities	Language and other considerations are used to inform placement decisions at all times

(continued)

Table 16.2 (continued)

Strategies for improving the international student WIL experience[a]	Reflection on the School scenario for initial teacher education
Provision of language support prior to and during the WIL experience	Griffith University provides comprehensive language support for international students
	Language requirements for entry into all initial teacher education programmes minimise the challenge of language proficiency
Better clarification of and attention to assessment requirements prior to and during the WIL experience	Students discuss assessment with the professional experience offices, the coordinator international, the school coordinator of initial teacher education and relevant programme directors and course convenors
Additional support from both academic and workplace supervisors through more rigorous mentoring and feedback processes and buddy schemes	All WIL experiences are supported by a member of the university liaison team. The addition of a buddy scheme is not formally adopted; however, this is a consideration for the future

[a]*Note Source*: Jackson, D. and Greenwood, K. (2015). Enhancing work integrated learning outcomes for international students in Australia. Perth: Edith Cowan University

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Chapter 17
Transforming Challenges into Opportunities: A Work Placement Model to Help International Students Become Employable

Ann Kelly

17.1 Introduction

As the world becomes increasingly globalised, and higher education is perceived as an avenue to improve their employability, students are moving to different countries in greater numbers to take up these opportunities. In the past Australia has benefitted from this phenomenon but will need to address a number of challenges in the future if it is to continue to be a major destination for this cohort.

Across Australia in 2013, more than four million students were enrolled in tertiary education outside their country of citizenship, with Asian students representing just over 50% of this number. The country with the largest numbers of citizens enrolled abroad was China, followed by India and Germany. While the United States and the United Kingdom occupy the first and second preferred countries of choice for international students wishing to study in a tertiary institution in a foreign country (19% and 10%, respectively), Australia, along with France, enjoys the third position at 6% (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD] 2015).

Specifically in March 2016, there were slightly fewer than 460,000 such students, an increase of 12.7% on the 2015 figure. Most of these students were of Chinese nationality (26.5%), with Indians following quite a way behind at just over 10% and Malaysians and Vietnamese comprising just 4% of this total figure. South Koreans and Thai fell in behind with 3.6% and 3.1%, respectively. Just over 50% of the entire international student body attends higher education institutions (Monthly summary of international student data 2016).

On the one hand, there are a number of perceived benefits accruing to students as a result of studying abroad. First, because of the closer integration of economies, it

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is assumed that their employability will be improved if they have attained higher education qualifications as international students; second, they may be eligible to remain, either temporarily or permanently, in their country of study on the completion of their degrees if their credentials are highly valued and there is a shortage of residents with skills in that occupation available for work there (Department of Immigration and Border Protection, n.d.); and, third, their cultural and linguistic knowledge is likely to have been developed in this process (OECD 2015). There are also perceived benefits for the host country as well. Using Australian Bureau of Statistics data, Deloitte Access Economics (2015) has estimated that the economic return of international education to the Australian economy is about $18.8 billion, which represents the country's third most valuable commodity. When attendant revenue is added, this figure was closer to almost $20 million (p. 1). Other economic benefits include the subsequent employment of international graduates and the revenue that accrues from international students and their families engaging in tourist activities (Universities Australia 2009). A further benefit noted by Deloitte Access Economics is access to workers whose linguistic and cultural knowledge can enhance Australia's human and social wealth and improve international trade and relations.

Despite these positive benefits, however, at the local institutional level, there are individual international students who face challenges, many of which are rendered more acute within their work placements than in their academic contexts. The section immediately below focuses on those challenges that have been identified in the literature. This is followed by an overview of the topic of work placements within tertiary education in Australia and the specific challenges faced by those students who were interviewed as part of the Work Placement for International Students Program (WISP), Griffith University, during their workplace practicum. Next, using the concepts of reflective practices, personal epistemology and socio-materialism, the chapter addresses in more detail the ways that participant students in the project converted some of these challenges into opportunities. The chapter concludes with a series of suggestions about how tertiary providers, who include work placements in their programmes of study, might enhance the work placement experiences of international students in a productive way.

17.2 Challenges Experienced by International Students

A key theme in the literature relating to work placements with respect to international students is the challenges they face. Mori (2000) identified these as linguistic, academic, financial, interpersonal and intrapersonal problems and asserted that language challenges affect most international students. In the case of those students whose primary language is not English, Mori noted that the acquisition of fluency in a language as an adult takes considerable time and effort and requires both particular predispositions in the learner and a sound knowledge of the culture in which they are linguistically apprenticed. Mori further suggested that even in the case of

those whose first language is English, their accents and those expressions they use that are alternative to the language forms of the host country may impact on how they are heard in their new settings and how they understand oral texts. More recently, in a study of ten Asian international teacher education students enrolled in an Australian university programme, Lee (2013) stated that a concern of nine of the ten participants was the barrier that their lack of linguistic proficiency erected between themselves and competence as a trainee teacher. Indeed, one of the students bemoaned her situation as "not speaking like a native" (p. 170). Across the relevant literature, then, language difficulties have been found to pose as a key challenge for international students studying abroad.

In examining the challenges of international students in coping with academic demands, Burns (1991) built on previous studies that showed that overseas students experienced *study shock* when enrolled in Australian university programmes because their personal epistemologies did not match those of the key stakeholders. On a questionnaire that included 21 academic tasks, the 133 Singaporean, Malaysian and Hong Kong students in her sample, most of whom were studying in a Bachelor of Business degree, considered themselves highly competent on those tasks requiring relatively low level skills such as referencing, but considerably less than competent on more demanding tasks such as taking notes in lectures, critiquing literature and participating in class discussions. Eaves (2011) has also noted that the social distance between teachers and students in Asian higher education settings is generally very high in contrast to that fostered in Australia with the latter posing as a further difficulty for overseas students to understand and overcome.

Mori's final three categories of challenges, namely, financial, interpersonal and intrapersonal, were also identified by Kwon (2009) as *main fears* in a study of 165 randomly selected international students enrolled in a Midwestern university in the United States. Responses to the questionnaire that was used as an instrument for collecting data on factors affecting international students' transition to higher education institutions revealed that 60% of respondents reported financial pressures as their primary concern, followed by the fear of failing courses (22%), fear of developing good relationships with others (7%) and homesickness caused by isolation (6%).

A study that addressed most of the challenges identified by Mori was that conducted by Sherry et al. (2010) which investigated the experiences of international students at the University of Toledo, where this group comprised approximately 10% of the student population. Employing an online survey method, the views of 121 such students, who were citizens of 30 different countries, were canvassed. The findings were generally consistent with those in the literature, that is, that linguistic ability, understanding of the host country's cultural mores and norms, financial security, friendships and a range of social supports are critical to the wellbeing of international students. For those international students who participate in work placements within tertiary education programmes, and this may be most of them within a particular discipline, the challenges are similar but they are likely to bring another layer to the level of anxieties that some students may already be experiencing.

17.3 Work Placement

In the *National Strategy for International Education* that was adopted by the Australian Government in April 2016, the need to strengthen the nexus between tertiary education and industry through the medium of work experience was recognised and advocated. The rationale for this commitment was to ensure that international graduates would demonstrate those skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary to participate effectively as workers in a global world.

Gribble et al. (2015) cite a work placement coordinator in a business school at Bellwood University who was interviewed in a study examining the challenges of providing work integrated learning to international students who claimed three benefits to students engaging in this activity that are additional to those identified in the introduction above. First, there is an opportunity for students to participate in authentic work activities. That is, there is scope for them to apply, compare and even contrast the understandings they have gained through their formal studies with actual practices. Second, they can be exposed to professional issues; and third, they can list and elaborate on this experience when applying for employment in the future.

As well as being assigned alternative names, such as work experience, work integrated learning practicums and internships, work placement can take a plethora of different forms. In the WISP that is a focus of this chapter, student participants engaged in 1-day, 1-week, several weeks' and several months' work placements over 1 or more years. Further, it was compulsory in some discipline areas (e.g., school teaching and psychology) but voluntary in others. It also could be undertaken in paid workplace or volunteer sites. To make sense of this diversity, Coll and Zegwaard (2012) suggest that, rather than being concerned about the range of provision, it is preferable to focus generally on features of exemplary practice. Edwards et al. (2015) have taken this advice and proffer five features that should characterise work placement programmes:

1. The work experience should be clearly linked to key theories in university coursework.
2. The relationship between the university and the work placement industry and particular sites must be strong.
3. The expectations of the students and industry partners (and presumably the university supervisors) must be clearly articulated.
4. Quality processes for enactment and support for both the student and the workplace are necessary.
5. A commitment to the placement by the workplace organisation as well as the university is required.

Even where universities have developed programmes that reflect similar principles to those recommended by Edwards et al., international students experience barriers to their learning when they engage in work placements.

At the time of writing this chapter, there were 37 student participants in the WISP project who had undertaken at least one work placement and whose interview

data were available. These students were mostly aged in their 20s, with their countries of residence ranging across Asia, through South America, up to Canada and over to Southern Europe. They were predominantly studying programmes at the postgraduate level in the three disciplines of teacher education, educational psychology and occupational therapy.

In the following section, the perspectives of these students on the linguistic and cultural challenges they were facing in their work placements are reported and discussed. In addition, the ways these challenges were perceived to provide *affordances* (Billett 2001) for them to develop their knowledge, skills and attitudes are presented.

17.4 WISP Work Placement Challenges and Responses

Parallel with the key findings from the literature that have been cited and discussed above, linguistic challenges were a key concern of students participating in the WISP project. To illustrate this claim, a number of quotations from the transcripts of the international students' (S) interviews are shown below. Each of these is then followed by a response to this challenge by the student. In some examples, the interviewer's (I) questions are included.

Excerpt 1

S I was given the opportunity to teach in front of the class. I found problems with classroom language…, classroom instruction because English is not my first language. So there were some terms which are commonly used in Australian school which I am not familiar. (Teacher Trainee)

In this example the student has noted that he/she was not familiar with relevant terminology when teaching a class and attributes this problem to the fact that English is not their first language. In the light of this information, in the next turns in the interaction, they are encouraged by the interviewer to evaluate, in an overall way, the success of the teaching event.

I And did you feel that your lessons went well?

S Yeah…despite some errors I made in my spoken language.

I Alright, …but that aside, you were happy with what you were able to teach them and they were happy, and your mentor reported positively?

S Yeah I got some feedback from my mentor…but she told me, I still need to work on my classroom management because…when you are having 18 students, it's very much different from my work in Malaysia. I've been teaching one-on-one and now need to teach the whole class with very different levels of ability and different characters. And also l need to be more firm. She said, "Use stronger tone and be more assertive".

In this example and in other transcripts, the conventions of "Yes…despite" and "yes…but" are used by the students to signal to the interviewer that they had reflected on their practice (Pomerantz 1984), compared it to their previous experience, concluded that it was personally satisfactory and "heard" the advice given by their mentor on how to develop their teaching competence. However, there is no evidence at this point that the student will accept this advice.

In Excerpt 2, while the particular form that the communication challenge is taking for the student is unclear, again there is evidence of the recognition of a "difficult" problem and a commitment to address it successfully ("I still try"), this time through a strategy of showing "respect".

Excerpt 2

I If I was probing you for anxieties what would you say?

S Sometimes, communication would be a difficult thing for me. I'm trying to handle it but sometimes it's difficult. But I still try. Yeah, if some people…maybe mostly older generation, they kind of get agitated a lot quite easily. So it's something that I have to kind of look closely and just to show them the respect so they don't get angry at me.

17.5 Occupational Therapist Trainee

The third excerpt relating to linguistic challenges involved a student whose written skills were perceived by two mentors as needing attention.

Excerpt 3

S Now I can see that, I'm well aware of, I have to improve my English written skill and everything. But my first supervisor and my last supervisor approached work so differently… So my first supervisor …just like furious and call me, … "X, this is distracting from the content. This is not my job to correct your grammar". But my other supervisor just tell me like, "X, your written skill is really good and with this service it's sufficient; however, if you have to do like a proper formal letter of report, let's say for a coronial in quest or something like that, for something that's really formal, maybe this is something that you have to pay attention. Or maybe what you can do is meet someone to actually read over beforehand". So he actually gave me some constructive feedback. (Educational Psychologist trainee)

In this excerpt, a commitment is made to address a written language challenge that has been highlighted by two mentors. However, in evaluating the very contrastive responses, only one is perceived by the student as providing *constructive feedback* and, by implication, likely to be acted upon.

The next fragment of interview interaction makes visible the means by which a trainee teacher understands the process of learning a language, in this case, Chinese. The mentor had earlier told them that the class had already completed the syllabus requirements and recommended that they be given the task of colouring in pictures of a Chinese cultural artefact, a dragon. The trainee appreciates that, if there is a point to the task, such as the students entering a competition and winning, then such a success is likely to bring pride to the staff and the school generally. However, without such a purpose, it is concluded that this teaching activity does not reflect effective pedagogical practice.

Excerpt 4

S …if you want to learn a language you need to speak, you need to write, you need to read and listen. What's the point of just colouring the dragon? We all know what is dragon in Chinese and students cannot colour in dragon all the time …I thought that was a competition. It's a competition raised by the, ah, Thailand Centre. So if you got prizes, students will

get prizes and teacher, you know, they can feel proud in a school…But it does nothing to help students learn. (Trainee teacher)

Excerpt 5 provides an example of how an international student perceived the English language to be a useful medium for growth in cultural knowledge, also noting that this affordance arose because the first languages of other students were not a factor in the setting because of the limited number of international students on this work placement.

Excerpt 5

S In OT [Occupational therapy], PT [Physiotherapy] and social work department there is not that many international students. I think that is pretty good for me because I can use English frequently and get familiar with the cultural background of Australia. That totally maybe pure English environment would be pretty good. (Occupational therapist trainee)

It was found that other students interviewed in the WISP project had the cultural expectation that they would learn knowledge, skills and attitudes in particular ways during their work placement. These expectations were not necessarily consonant with those of their mentor.

Excerpt 6

S My supervising teacher, she didn't refer to the handbook given out by the… University and she was actually not willing to teach me things. Like she doesn't want me to observe other teachers' lessons, didn't want me to talk to other teachers, and didn't give me feedback. And she didn't give me any, teaching materials that would be helpful for placement or future career. I also took the placement to be full load teaching. The second day when I arrive at school I think it's quite unreasonable because I need to observe her. I need to study firstly, so I can do the teaching. But her opinion is that you are a teacher and you want to be the teacher in the future. So now you should treat yourself like a real teacher. So you need to do the full load teaching but I think it… doesn't make any sense. I think she needs to give me more chances to study and to observe and…collect experience or else it is not so effective because I am repeating the teacher all the time and… I cannot learn from her, from her teaching. (Trainee teacher)

In this example the teacher trainee appears to believe that, ultimately, their mentor was not prepared to fulfil her designated role and, as a result, their learning was stymied. Specifically, the features of this role were understood to comprise (a) allowing the trainee to make observations of the teacher's pedagogical behaviour and that of other teaching staff at the school and (b) the provision of feedback on their performance and teaching materials. The quantum of teaching, although expressed in an unconventional form of English in the sample ("I also took the placement to be full load teaching"), appears to be a point of difference between the two parties. Two warrants for these stances are provided. For their part, the trainee cites the availability of the handbook on work placement provided by their university that presumably outlines the responsibilities of the mentor and which the trainee asserts was not used by the mentor to guide their understandings of their separate roles. The second warrant is attributed to the teacher in that it is believed that experience is essential and that translates into teaching a class in a full-time capacity. Finally, there is a measure of tentativeness in the position of the trainee as evidenced by the recurrent use of the expression, "I think".

In the first part of the next example, also featuring a trainee teacher, the level of confidence in their own pedagogical knowledge and skill capacity is made explicit, to the point of framing the lack of reflection that is demonstrated in their mentor's and colleagues' teaching behaviours as a "problem" which needed to be changed. The upshot of this guidance by the trainee is rejection by the mentor and a refusal to consider the proposed "suggestions". This response appears to violate a good practice principle—the criticality of reflection as a basis for improved practice—accepted by the trainee. The final sentence indicates that a similar strategy of providing advice was employed during a previous work placement by the trainee and led to a different outcome. Here we see an attempt made by the trainee to assume a somewhat equal relationship with mentors, in one case, perceived to be totally unsuccessful but successful in the other.

Excerpt 7

S The problem is, she always thinks everything she does is right, and she's not working reflectively. Like some things, a lot of things I see that she does and the team does, wasn't quite right from my perspective. They don't reflect and think, "Oh when we do this, we should do it this way. We should improve". And when I was talking about this with her, or give her some suggestions, she always say, "Mmm, no". Always say "No". First, she listen. She listen to you and she say, "Mmm, no". Like that's the first reaction. And I was like, "Oh no!" And this kinder in Z, sometimes I have suggestion and they say, "Oh that's a good idea".

I Were you able to talk about it with anyone?

S I didn't…because I was too busy. I work three jobs and I had three assignments to do and I had planning, observation. All the things. But I did talk to one of the co-educators in our room. Yeah, because she's quite young, roughly my age, and we had lunch together sometimes. (Trainee teacher)

In Excerpt 7, when the interviewer asked if the trainee had discussed this difficulty with anyone, they initially replied that they hadn't, giving the excuse of being too busy with other demands inherent in their multiple roles as part-time worker and full-time student. However, as indicated by their use of the connector *but*, the trainee shows they have heard the interviewer's question and its implication and changes their response, admitting that they had shared the details of this incident with the co-educator in the room. This choice of alliance is justified by virtue of their similar age and an assumption that the other party is sympathetic to the intention of the trainee.

As noted in the literature review above, a sense of isolation can be inherent in the life of international students if they fail to establish social networks. In Excerpt 8, a perception of inadequacy results from the placement trainee's failure to perform well at work, and in response they have sought an alliance with a teacher other than their mentor who proved to be valuable in lessening their anxiety. It is surmised that this role was performed by a teacher "from another country originally" and there appears to be comfort in seeing him as another person outside of the Australian cultural milieu.

Excerpt 8

S I was very, very anxious and so things went wrong on my first day of teaching. I just talked to another teacher. His name is Iman, and I think he's from another country origi-

nally. And that makes me feel relaxed. I don't know how to describe that feeling but it's just that I'm not the only non-Australian there. (Teacher trainee)

Throughout this section, which features quotations from work placement students and, in some cases, WISP interviewers, specific challenges faced by the students are highlighted, and their responses to these are discussed. In the following section, explanations for how these responses might be theorised are presented.

17.6 Theorising Opportunistic Action by Work Placement Trainees

A recurring feature of the transcript excerpts above, but not necessarily of all the transcripts in the WISP corpus, is the way that students undertaking work placements reflected on their experiences and then acted in considered ways. Early educational writers on the concept of reflection, for example, Wallace (1990), interpreted reflection as largely an analytical process where new and established forms of knowledge are matched. In some cases, the former were understood to be incorporated into a person's existing schema or, alternatively, rejected. More recently, Ryan and Ryan (2013) undertook a review of the literature on approaches to reflection and concluded that to be effective it should be characterised by the following two features. First, it should be considered to be a hierarchical concept that that has a dimension of depth as a measure; and second, the particular level of depth that is appropriate will depend on the nature of the problem or challenge faced and the situation where it is encountered. These authors cite the model proposed by Bain et al. (2002) as fitting the first criterion of a continuum of depth. It has five levels, namely, reporting, responding, relating, reasoning and reconstructing. A further point that it should be a continuing activity during a professional's career is proposed by Bagay (2012). Ultimately, there is agreement to support Dewey's (1933) view that the main purpose of reflection should be self-development.

When the excerpts shown and discussed above are examined using this model, it is evident that they generally show a varying level of depth of reflective practice. For example, in the first text fragment, the student initially *reports* on a problem they have encountered. When the interviewer probes further and requests they evaluate the effectiveness of this lesson, they are able to proffer a judgement on this, while making explicit the point that their opinion is contingent on a consideration of their spoken language problems. In the final turn of the exchange, the trainee makes visible their understanding that *feedback* from the mentor serves as evidence of evaluation of the lesson and, further, that the feedback content can be seen as reasonable when compared to the trainee's previous experience of teaching.

Of the other excerpts presented above, Excerpt 7 might be chosen as indicating the focal student has the most developed reflective knowledge and skill. In the first part of the text, they are complaining of a "problem" that has been encountered. This is then explained as the mentor not showing openness to different perspectives

("she always thinks everything she does is right"). This behaviour is then glossed as a failure to engage in reflective practices, seemingly based on the assumption that this is what all competent teachers do. In the next part of the sequence, it is evident that the perspective that is being presented is the student's own. That is, they see themselves in a sufficiently powerful position to critique the pedagogical practice of a teacher who is not only more experienced but, indeed, someone who has the power to write an unsatisfactory report on the students' work placement. In addition, the student's confidence in the importance of being open to learning can be seen in their decision to make their critique verbally explicit through the offering of suggestions for change. In doing this, however, from another perspective, it might be contended that the student is exhibiting a measure of hubris that is not conventional within the normal trainee-mentor relationship. The point that such suggestions were perceived as acceptable in a similar dyadic setting does not mean that this behaviour will be accepted universally.

The importance of understanding the implications of such wider factors in the learning process has become a feature of current research. For example, Ryan and Ryan (2013) assert that when considering the concept of reflection, it is important to also include the ideologies of the various interest groups. Though these are important, they are not enough. After leading a large project that focused on the integration of practice-based experiences into higher education, Billett (2015) has advocated the criticality of ensuring that students' personal epistemologies are sufficiently advanced for them to benefit from their work placements. He asserts that these personal attributes comprise not only beliefs but also procedural, conceptual and dispositional skills and knowledge that are relevant to both academic and occupational activity. Further, he claims that these attributes should be seen to be "derived in person-particular ways across individuals' life histories" and must be "positioned" to be "active" and "intentional" (p. 228).The following extract from the WISP data shows how a student provided evidence of his *readiness* to engage in work placement.

Excerpt 9

> S …like I said, it's a very international country so I will be in contact with many others, different types of employees you know. It will be great for me because I will learn not only just my role, at the work placement … but I will learn many other things because I will be in contact with many other different people, just like I learned lots of things in the laboratory. (Engineer trainee)

Here a student is imagining how they will use both the conceptual and procedural knowledge that they have already gained, particularly through previous laboratory work, to become successful in a number of different roles during their work placement.

In the next excerpt, which is a recount of a work placement experience, a student explains how their conceptual knowledge of the content of a particular geography unit and their implicit pedagogical procedural abilities were used successfully to plan a programme of work. In contrast to the engineer trainee in the previous

excerpt, what was missing from the student's knowledge and skill repertoire in this example, however, was dispositional readiness. That is, the student lacked initial confidence of success in this task, which is attributed to a lack of previous experience. Despite this, there is evidence of pleasure in having been given this opportunity to learn in an authentic setting.

Excerpt 10

> S I was fortunate enough to be able to plan an entire geography unit, which was a blessing and a curse. It's something we've never learned at university so I had no idea how to do it, but I was lucky enough to be able to do it and to progress through the unit. (Teacher trainee)

However, students need more than appropriate personal epistemological attributes to be successful in the workplace. They also need to appreciate that the social practices and material arrangements that exist in any environment and such personal attributes are related, idiosyncratic and in a constant state of flux. Schatzki (2010) includes in his concept of material arrangements human beings, artefacts, organisms and other material objects. In explaining Schatzki's concept of "site ontology" (p. 4), Hopwood (2014) claims that the material world serves to "prefigures practices" (p. 5) by making visible a selection of available factors for consideration when people are making decisions about how they will act in any given circumstance.

In relation to theorising practice-based learning from socio-materialist perspectives, Fenwick et al. (2012) posit that:

> …disparate elements–human and non-human–emerge in webs of activity, and become linked into assemblages that collectively exert power and generate knowledge. The question of kinds of practice, and of distinctions between "practice" and "practising", are tied up with different processes of materialisation and material assembly. The question of participation in practice is broadened far beyond a focus on personal and social engagements to trace how things themselves participate to produce and sustain practices, often in ways either overlooked by humans, or assumed to be controlled by humans.
>
> …Encouraging human participation, then, becomes far more a matter of attunement to things seen and unseen, a sensibility to what may be far-reaching consequences of inadvertent human interactions, or a sense of building relations and understanding delicate responsibilities, than a brute assertion of human intention and control. Finally, the question of how a practice becomes reconfigured or transformed is addressed at the nexus of socio-material connections. (p. 6)

In considering the challenges faced by international students, their various personal epistemologies and the socio-material factors that interact to provide opportunities for practice, the question arises: What implications are there for educators to assist these students to be *workplace ready*? The next section addresses this question.

17.7 A Model for University Staff to Help International Students to Become Employable

From the discussion above, then, the central foci for preparing international students to be occupationally employable should be, first, to make them cognisant of their personal epistemologies in relation to work placements; second, to highlight the socio-materialist features of work generally, of their occupational workplaces and of the specific workplaces where the students will engage in practicums more particularly; and, third, to show how these two phenomena interrelate to provide challenges but, more importantly, opportunities for students to learn. With respect to personal epistemologies, Billett (2015) has proposed that prior to their placements, students should be (a) oriented to the requirements of participating effectively at work, including the identification of capacities that are likely to be called upon; (b) assisted to be clear about expectations around the features of the practicum, such as how they may be inducted into their placement, the roles they, and other stakeholders, may be required to assume and how they must report on their experiences; (c) given the opportunity to develop appropriate procedural knowledge; and (d) encouraged and trained to become "agentic" (p. 243) and evaluative of relevant workplace practices. He recommends that, during their placements, mentors and others in key workplace positions take an active role in guiding student to learn in well-sequenced, collaborative, rich and integrated activities. In the case of the students, they should be encouraged to be active and engaged learners in these settings. Post-placement, Billett suggests that the students be afforded opportunities to (a) critically reflect on and share their understandings of their work placement experiences and (b) link these to the occupational content and procedures that have been presented throughout their on-campus coursework.

With respect to the issue of socio-materialist features at work, Fenwick and Dahlgren (2015) suggest that questions such as "How might we encourage students to notice how materials influence situations in which they practise?" and then "How might students become more actively aware of these relations and their effects?" (p. 361) are salient.

Determining the *what* in relation to assisting international students to optimise their opportunities to develop their employability capacities while on work placement is one thing, but operationalising this content is perhaps more challenging. Because work placement numbers, arrangements, sites, student characteristics, reporting requirements and course modes of delivery are so varied, university staff will need to be particularly creative in developing viable and truly educative learning experiences. We now live in a globalised world that increasingly is digitally dependent and interconnected. It will be within these new and constantly changing conditions that educators will need to plan and present opportunities that speak to the differing requirements for helping international students become employable.

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Chapter 18
What Does Internationalisation or Interculturalisation Look Like in the Future in the Higher Education Sector?

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18.1 Introduction

Internationalisation in tertiary education is "the process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of postsecondary education" (Knight 2003). The main components of internationalisation of higher education are global competition for talents, recruitment of international students, development of international branch campuses, exchange programs for students, staff and scholars, internationalisation of the curriculum, and research and education partnerships between institutions regionally and internationally (Khorsandi Taskoh 2014; Knight 2004; Sanderson 2008). Beck (2012) asserts that internationalisation is a product of and response to globalisation. Such comments have logically led internationalisation to be critiqued as having an economic

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orientation: indeed the internationalisation of higher education has been criticised as an international competition for the recruitment of students from privileged countries in order to generate revenue, secure national profile, and build international reputation (Khorsandi Taskoh 2014).

Enhanced employability is acknowledged as the primary motivation for many internationally mobile students. For example, Griffith University, through its Graduate Attribute statement, explicitly recognises the need for all graduates to be competent for work in culturally and linguistically diverse environments, as well as having a well-developed sense of social awareness, and the opportunity to be part of a diverse student body, as well as undertake an international experience during their study program (Griffith University 2014). This is similar to the Deakin University's Graduate Learning Outcomes that ensures all courses (programs) are highly personal, engaging and relevant where learners are educated for jobs and skills of the future (Deakin University 2016a). In addition, local students are given the opportunity to undertake global placements and study abroad experiences, and international students are given all the necessary advice, support and encouragement on a range of matters whilst studying in Australia (Deakin University 2016b).

The Queensland University of Technology's Graduate Capabilities echoes these values with a focus on social and ethical responsibility and an understanding of indigenous and international perspectives (QUT 2011) and the explicit priorities to "broaden the composition of the student population" (QUT 2016, p. 3). QUT also aims to have 20% of students engage in an international experience during their studies by 2019 (QUT 2016, p. 9). The university has a strong focus on developing a systematic and quality assured approach to facilitate new models of collaboration that will contribute to make the university a global innovation hub, provide effective and appropriate work experience placements for international students, increase the proportion of high-quality international higher degree research students and promote a whole of curriculum framework which emphasises intercultural competency and international perspectives at course level. At Curtin University, internationalisation is a core element of employability development, which is defined as developing the ability to find, create and sustain meaningful work across lengthening working lives and multiple work settings (Bennett 2016). In operational terms, the university's employability strategy emphasises student satisfaction, retention and the quality and distinctiveness of the student experience. This includes student mobility and courses designed with direct input from global industry, so that students graduate "with the skills and knowledge they need in the ever-changing global marketplace" (Curtin University n.d.).

Monash University aims to empower its staff, students and alumni to make a positive impact globally. The university claims to be *international* in its research, community relationships, as well as international visitor and study opportunities. Moreover, Monash boasts a large multicultural community of staff and students and multiple overseas teaching locations. Monash University believes that "a global perspective and internationally recognised skills are essential to thrive in a globalised economy" (Monash University 2016). Although international students are offered a range of support services before and after international students' arrival in Australia,

their experiences vary. This is especially the case for students who undertake placements in various Australian workplace settings, thus undergoing multi-socialisation and internationalisation processes outside the university. As discussed in this volume, true interculturalisation is desirable, but it becomes possible only when all stakeholders are aware of its complex nature and are willing to engage in effective practice. The model described in Chap. 2 of this volume proposes an approach that encompasses several crucial dimensions of successful work placement experiences. It is hoped that application of the model to multiple discipline and institutional contexts promotes development of stakeholders' skills and competencies in terms of interculturalisation, reflective thinking and practices, cultural development and positive multi-socialisation experiences.

Cross-cultural awareness and interaction are also key aspects of becoming globally competent. According to Curran (2003), global competence is the ability to become familiar with an environment, negotiate the norms and reflect on tasks completed within a new culture. Curran writes that familiarity with a new environment meant being aware of one's own personal characteristics, strengths and weaknesses, cultural biases and norms, motivations and concerns, all of which are essential to the facilitations of intercultural interaction and which provide sources of continual learning. Moreover, these traits enable mindful consideration of a culture "on its own merit, without judgmental comparison to what one may already believe" (Curran 2003). Surely then, an open mind, respect for all and knowledge of all cultures and world issues will bring about global competence.

Another interpretation of internationalisation is interculturalisation (as explored in Chap. 1). Hunter et al. (2015), p. i) see interculturalisation as an approach that "understands others first, yourself second, and in a truly reflective nature, the introspective analysis of teaching and learning". In this sense, interculturalisation exercises tolerance and openness; it leads individuals to consider critical events from perspectives that differ from their own.

Successful intercultural exchanges demand positive engagement between all stakeholders. They also require difference to be acknowledged as a component of accepting the beliefs and cultural backgrounds of others. In the project that forms the basis of this volume, internationalisation and interculturalisation were experienced differently according to the environment, context and participants involved. We turn next to the reflections of these experiences.

18.2 Reflections

18.2.1 Dawn Bennett and Sonia Ferns (Curtin University)

> The Australia-wide collegiality and collaboration afforded through the WISP project was pivotal to successful outcomes and personal benefits for the researchers at Curtin University. The robust discussions among the project team and sharing of expertise enhanced our personal capacity and scholarly capital, enabling greater awareness of the complexity of workplace learning for international students. While the significant challenges international

students encounter in work integrated learning (WIL) placements became more apparent to us, so did the drive for these students to optimise the benefits of these authentic learning experiences. Our research findings exposed the value of workplace mentors for international students and the motivation with which they seek input and feedback on performance from supervisors. Students demonstrated eagerness to build on strengths and adjust to the cultural context of an Australian workplace with the ultimate aim of gaining proficiency to enhance global competitiveness in a dynamic job market. The importance of experiential learning, a scaffolded curriculum, and support for students in workplace learning emerged as integral to the development of the functional and cognitive aspects of employability. Specifically, analysis of students' reflective comments across their WIL experience using Krathwohl's (2002) revision of Bloom's taxonomy illustrated the progression of our students from foundational skills to the more complex skills of analysis and critical thinking. The uniqueness of each participant highlighted the influence of cultural capital and personal strengths on outcomes from a WIL placement. Furthermore, our own professional collaboration and shared expertise within the institutional framework affirmed our intellectual and personal connection, resulting in a quality outcome from the WISP project and laying the foundation for future collaboration. The influence of WIL and its potential to transform students' perceptions of self-efficacy and workplace proficiency was realised through the evidence we collected, analysed and validated as a team.

18.2.2 Dawn Joseph (Deakin University)

As an international academic, I identify with some of the changes, challenges and dilemmas international students encounter. They come from different and diverse cultural, ethnic and linguistic backgrounds where the teaching methods, styles and expectations are tested (Andrade 2006). They have to make financial, social and emotional adjustments abroad. Interestingly, they to do not exercise their voices often enough if marginalised or excluded. Their prior knowledge or skills is not well received, and at times a lack of interest is shown towards them. Deakin University fosters an inclusive and vibrant teaching and learning environment in terms of policy (Deakin University 2016c). While promoting respect and valuing students and staff, racism is not tolerated. This is not always upheld! I agree with Leask (2013) that it is essential to embed and integrate intercultural learning into the culture of the university. International students, as do I, contribute to the economic wealth and cultural enrichment of the university, providing an international perspective to teaching and research. Through this project I have also learnt more about the understanding, or lack thereof, by academics and professional staff about international students and their diverse learning needs. I do applaud them for the immense hours and duty of care they offer to international students. Though this university offers support to acclimatise student's academic, sociocultural and linguistic experience through social interaction, international student presence is not enough to promote intercultural relations that foster international understandings. As a tertiary music educator, it was exciting to see how "play workshops" helped international students make connections with early childhood education and care settings. From this project I realise just how import it is to build strong and trusting relationships (student and academic) where internationalising the curriculum is beneficial for international student retention and satisfaction (Ackerman and Schibrowsky 2007).

18.2.3 Anna Podorova (Monash University)

For me, this study was a journey full of discovery and meaningful, at times confrontational, encounters. The findings confirmed to me that international students bring useful work and life experiences which could benefit universities and workplaces. Unfortunately, these skills and knowledge are not always utilised by the stakeholders. I have also become more familiar with practical challenges facing mentors and coordinators in workplaces; unfortunately, overcoming such challenges as lack of time and insufficient physical space is often beyond their control, which has a negative impact of staff and student interaction. Despite these issues, effective approaches to the placement preparation and support to staff and students during practicum were evident. Seeing such approaches in practice was a highlight of the project. Prompting academics, workplace staff and students to reflect on what lay behind those successes allowed them and myself to evaluate our current practices and explore ways to improve placement experiences for all involved. Another important observation for me was that there were significant overlaps in effective workplace practice approaches for different disciplines and, more importantly, for both domestic and international student cohorts. I hope that the project findings inform a holistic approach to student workplace experiences in Australian educational settings.

18.2.4 Liz Jones (Griffith University)

The WISP project has been an opportunity for me to learn about the experiences of international students undertaking psychology work placements. I understand so much more the challenges and opportunities they experience on placement and the skills and resources they use to manage these. Moreover, I have learnt about the crucial and multifaceted role of supervision in either assisting students or creating another challenge for them. I've also had the opportunity to learn more about how other disciplines manage work placements for students, including the different cultures of different disciplines, thus also making us aware of the cultural practice of psychology. And through all of this, not only has my own cultural competence been enhanced, but we have been able to implement a range of changes to our work placements in psychology, that are benefitting both international and domestic students. Supervisors who have participated in workshops on our findings have similarly reported making changes to their practice, as they seek to balance treating each student as an individual, while also integrating the students' cultural background into supervision. In particular, a core competency in psychology training is cross-cultural competence. The voices of our international students have provided a more extended and nuanced understanding for us of what it means to be cross-culturally competent in psychological practice and how this benefits other students, organisations and clients. We thank our international students for "shining a light on the things we take for granted".

18.2.5 Erin O'Connor (Queensland University of Technology)

An unintended outcome from this project has also been the discovery that much of what enriches, enhances or degrades and limits international student learning in workplaces is also relevant to domestic students, in some form or another. Without minimising the particular context, strengths and needs of international students, it has been very useful to note that the improvements needed to support international students often also enhance the

experience of all students. International students are also critically important members in the broad learning networks proposed by some authors (e.g., Bridgstock 2016) as a move towards more sophisticated, distributed and networked models of universities within their communities. In the current research, it was clear that host organisations and universities who engaged with international students as valued partners in learning were able to benefit from the international students' contributions as well as support the students. The full benefits of these networks (perhaps digital and global) among international students, other students, host organisations and universities, based on mutual respect, have powerful potential.

18.2.6 Marleen Westerveld (Griffith University)

Being involved in the WISP project has prompted us to evaluate our current practices related to international students in the Master of Speech Pathology program at Griffith University. Up until this point, few specific accommodations have been made, partly due to the reasonably small numbers of international students in the program and also because entry into the program for students whose first language is not English requires a reasonably high score on the International Language Testing System (IELTS, 2016) This means that generally speaking, linguistic competence is not an issue, and cultural diversity may have been overlooked. However, listening to some of our past and present international students' voices (in Chap. 10) has illuminated the unique strengths these students bring to the program as well as highlighting some of the challenges they may experience in both the university and work placement contexts. As a result, micro-level initiatives have been planned for future cohorts. These include creating better peer-support systems for international students immediately upon acceptance into the program (e.g. mentoring program) as well as organising whole-class tutorial sessions in which cultural and linguistic diversity are explicitly discussed to raise cultural awareness in all our students.

18.2.7 Donna Tangen and Marilyn Campbell (Queensland University of Technology)

In the past few years, teacher education has had increasingly fewer international students enrolled than in the past. However, many students who migrate to Australia to study teacher education often display similar characteristics to those traditionally attributed to international students, particularly in areas of English language proficiency and lack of understanding of the culture of Australian schooling (Geer 2008; Han and Singh 2007; Spooner-Lane et al. 2009). These pre-service teachers may have to come to Australia to complete their high school in order to gain a permanent residency status or have been given permanent residency in other ways so are classified as *domestic* students rather than international students. Little research has followed this so-called group of domestic pre-service teachers to understand how they may be positioned best to become teachers in Australia. Woodward (2010) suggests that the support for international pre-service teachers tends to be piecemeal and under-researched; however, support is necessary for improving their progress through to a successful completion of their degree as teachers.

18.2.8 Georgina Barton and Kay Hartwig (Griffith University)

Positive and rewarding experiences for international students in higher education are critical for success for all universities. Globalisation has indeed impacted on the ways in which we work across the world, but it is essential we continue to reflect on this work to ensure improvement and quality. For some time, we have both worked within and across culturally diverse contexts as teachers, educators and program directors. We have a strong commitment to provide quality and culturally appropriate learning experiences for students regardless of their background. A key reward as co-leaders on the WISP project was working with colleagues across a number of universities and disciplines. Being able to learn from the successes at other university sites and the strategies employed by different disciplines was a highlight. Being able to view situations from another's point of view is not always an easy task, but one that is critical if mutual benefits are to be gained. It is undoubtedly a daunting exercise to move to another country to undertake study and even more so when entering an unfamiliar workplace environment. Each university has an obligation to make international students feel at home, welcomed and supported; however, sometimes this can be overlooked. We both feel passionate about continuing research in this area and promoting the successful stories from international students who undertake work placements as part of their study programs in Australia. The project has highlighted issues that can be improved for our international students, and we will continue to strive for this; as well, our own cultural competence has been enhanced. We believe that we are fortunate to be able to work with and learn from our international students as they embark on their studies and work placements.

18.2.9 Anne Kelly (Independent Evaluator)

As the evaluator of the WISP project, my first key task was to monitor how the study was meeting the project outcomes and deliverables, some of which were designed to contribute to the continuing improvement of work placements for international students. My second key task was to determine how effectively these specifications were met. Throughout the 2-year research process, it was evident that both the aims and objectives of the project assumed an ever-present focus by the key participants and, ultimately, were all achieved. This was a very satisfying position from which to report to the funding body. In addition to these nominated outcomes and deliverables, however, new conceptual and practical learning as well as additional products and actions ensued from the project. Examples of the increased types of knowledge gained, the tangible materials produced and the initiatives that are being planned are made explicit in the authors' reflections in this section. For my part, as well as the satisfaction resulting from engaging in a well-managed, successful project, I acquired a deeper understanding of salient concepts such as *internationalisation* and *cross-cultural awareness* which I then employed in framing up my analysis and interpretation of selected project data and subsequently in writing a chapter in this publication. I also acquired a more developed understanding of the range and diversity of work placement programs operating within Australian universities and, indeed, of the work placement stakeholders and their views on this increasingly important aspect of university life.

18.3 Conclusion

The reflections have revealed some key themes. These include *challenges for international students*, important role of the *supervisor/mentor*, *overlap between disciplines* and *domestic and international students* and the important *role for universities*.

Generally, *international students* will face *challenges* during their studies and work placements. They will need support both at the university and the workplace. At times, staff and supervisors/mentors do not fully understand the diverse needs of the international student cohort. It is important that adjustments are made to ensure successful experiences for the international students.

Whilst all disciplines have their own discrete differences, there was certainly an *overlap between the disciplines* in the challenges for the international students, the university and its staff and the workplace and its staff. Also evident and mentioned by the team members is the overlap between *international student issues and domestic student issues* when faced with work placements. It was noted that the improvements made initially for the international students also benefitted the domestic student cohort. The *supervisor/mentor* plays a very key role in successful placements. The supervisor/mentor needs to respect what the international students bring to the workplace. When respect is valued by both the supervisor/mentor and the student, students will be motivated to seek feedback and input into strategies for improvement.

For the team involved in the WISP project, they valued the opportunity for the collaborations across university sites and discipline areas. They believed quality outcomes were achieved and they had the opportunity to witness and learn from seeing successful outcomes. This then improved their own practices and ideas. The team members are keen to develop future collaborations and valued the time to enhance their own competencies in internationalisation and interculturalisation areas.

All the contexts of education and workplaces should be open to diverse peoples and cultures, and there should be no barriers. International students should be welcomed and treated with respect. Can this be a reality? Can in the future we celebrate difference and always learn from one another? Can education be the key? Gribble (2014, p.2), writing within an Australian context, argues: "international students require tailored programs and support services in order to create a level playing field with local students". If universities want to follow a path to internationalisation, they need to use international networks to promote issues of global interest. They need to have a dynamic body of staff and students who can learn from each other to create lasting networks and also study an internationalised curriculum. Mutual respect and valuing each other's strengths will provide an important foundation for successful internationalisation and interculturalisation. Universities, as detailed earlier in the chapter, all foster inclusiveness, promoting respect for all students. Intercultural learning is embedded in their policies, strategies and statements. The *challenge for all universities* is to ensure that the culture of the university and workplaces involved in work integrated learning for students enacts these policies and statements.

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