

# Developing Cross-Cultural and International Outlook

## What are graduate attributes?

Graduate attributes are the characteristics, qualities, skills and capabilities that we seek to develop in our students by the time they graduate. These attributes give ECU graduates a competitive advantage in the workplace and are desired 'Employability' skills. ECU's graduate attributes are developed within the context of units in a course.

## ECU's Graduate Attributes:

ECU graduates will be valued for their	Exemplified by
Ability to communicate	clarity of written and spoken expression, including in public fora, and through appropriate use of technology
Ability to work in teams	collaborating and contributing effectively in diverse settings
Critical appraisal skills	planning, organising, problem solving and decision making
Ability to generate ideas	having the courage and confidence to be creative and innovative
Cross-cultural and international outlook	engaging productively and harmoniously with diverse cultures

## What does it mean to have a cross-cultural and international outlook?

A cross cultural and international outlook equips us to contribute effectively to our multi-cultural, interdependent and global society. Students who have a cross-cultural and international outlook demonstrate respect for different cultures and are able to interpret issues of international consequence. They can communicate sensitively and effectively in cross-cultural and international contexts. A well developed cross-cultural and international outlook will also enable our graduates to be competitive in the increasingly global employment market.

## How do I develop this attribute in my students?

The focus of this priority is on students' understanding of cross-cultural and international issues in the particular context of a discipline. Students build conceptual frameworks that include foundational, professional, and socially responsive knowledge that can be used to validate the experiences of members of different social and cultural groups.

Below are a few suggestions for how we can explicitly develop a cross-cultural and international outlook in our students.

- Encourage students to specifically reflect on situations requiring them to: communicate

respect, be non-judgemental, accept the relativity of their own knowledge and perceptions, display empathy, be flexible, take turns and tolerate ambiguity (Hofstede, 1980).

- Develop resources that contain content and ideas from multiple cultures and perspectives.
- Use case studies and examples drawn from international settings.
- Study multinational organisations and activities.
- Explore the differences between professional standards in your discipline in Australia and other countries.
- Set tasks for students to explore alternative perspectives when working in multi-cultural teams.
- Set tasks requiring students to access research conducted in different countries and discuss the different international perspectives or biases in class.
- Establish links or collaborative tasks between off-shore students and campus-based students using technology like Wikis, chat, e- mail or Skype.
- Develop activities that directly contrast different value systems and ethical contexts.
- Enable students to understand cultural impact: our lives are culturally coded from when we were very young, so we all think differently about things. Our meanings for things are deeply buried in our subconscious mind.
- Enable students to understand themselves: know their own heritage and their cultural bias. First listen and observe, then communicate... in that order.
- Enable students to appreciate others: research and appreciate the richness of other cultures.
- Enable students to appreciate history: appreciate historical backgrounds. Honour experiences that might contradict your way of looking at life.
- Enable students to understand cultural baggage: cultural baggage can lead to wrong assumptions. These assumptions relate to what we find polite, kind, respectful or friendly. Interact with different cultures with the knowledge that things you take for granted as true, are not universal.
- Enable students to be curious: if you're curious, you're observing, listening, questioning, reflecting and learning.
- Provide clear criteria or rubrics for assessing cross-cultural and international outlook, e.g. identification of cultural biases, awareness of international perspectives and appreciation of divergent cultural norms or views.

## Where can I learn more about ECU Graduate Attributes?

If you'd like to learn more about including ECU's graduate attributes in your teaching, or any of the points outlined in this fact sheet, you can:

- Look out for Professional Development opportunities (all teaching staff are introduced to the Graduate Attributes in PDC 111)
- Read the examples included in the CLD Curriculum 2012 example booklet
- Contact the Centre for Learning and Development for advice.

## Recommended reading

Centre for [Learning and Teaching Publications](#): ECU Curriculum Framework – Examples for Teachers

Harper, S. R., & Quaye, S. J. (Eds.). (2009). *Student engagement in higher education: Theoretical perspectives and practical approaches for diverse populations*. New York: Routledge.

Hofstede, G. (1980). *Culture's Consequences: International differences in work-related values*. Beverley Hills, CA: Sage Publications.

Carroll, J. & Ryan, J. (Eds.) (2005) *Teaching International Students: Improving Learning for All* Abingdon, UK: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group