

What do ethical practices with international students look like?

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What is currently *unethical* about our practices with international students?

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Common ethical practices

- Binary classification of home / international students and available support (e.g. Jones, 2017)
- Homogenisation of international students as a collective group (e.g. Lomer & Mittelmeier, 2020)
- Failure to see intersectional experiences (e.g. Madriaga & McCaig, 2019; Song, 2020; Yao et al., 2019)
- Deficit narratives of skills and contributions (e.g. Heng, 2018; Moosavi, 2020)
- Assumptions that international presence = meaningful intercultural experiences (e.g. Madge et al., 2014; Stein, 2017)



Journal of International Students Research in Context submissions

Research in Context

Research in Context submissions (2,000 words maximum) focus on critical issues and current trends of timely interest to the field. They are intended to catalyze discussion and debate by problematizing existing discourses, practices, or situations with an eye towards change. Submissions in this category should provide readers with opportunities for critical reflection or considerations for re-imagining practices and/or research with international students.

Research in Context submissions may include, but are not limited to:

- Critical (re-)conceptualizations of key concepts in focus in the field, including re-imaginings or critiques of their underlying assumptions in research or practice
- Critical discussions of (neo-)colonial assumptions about key concepts in focus in the field, for example by reflecting on them through different cultural or linguistic lenses
- Reflections on underused theorists or conceptual frameworks and their applicability to research with international students or international higher education (particularly theories conceptualized by women, people of colour, and from communities in the Global South)
- Conceptual or theoretical syntheses of under-researched issues of critical importance which intend to act as a springboard for ongoing research on the topic
- Scholarly reflections on timely issues and debates in public discourses or current events which may impact upon international higher education or groups of international students

The implicit coloniality of UK higher education pedagogy

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Coloniality in UK teaching and learning

- T&L practices are socio-culturally-historically mediated but often not subject to critical reflection
 - Lecturers in our recent study often implied that they did not ‘need’ to change their practices in response to international student presence since they were already ‘the best practice’
- Common teaching practices include:
 - ‘Discuss the reading’ – open-ended seminars
 - ‘Write an essay’ – assigning a ‘typical’ academic essay
 - ‘Complete a project in a group with other students from different countries’ – Intercultural groupwork
 - ‘I can’t proofread your essay – go to the language centre’: Delegating language and generic skills support to central services



Coloniality in UK teaching and learning

- Ethical challenges
 - Deficit narratives around international student vocal engagement, academic writing, avoiding plagiarism, hindering groupwork
 - International students not always seen as epistemic equals in the classroom – both by staff and students
 - ‘Intercultural’ models can ascribe national static cultural knowledge to individuals
 - Delegating language and skills support avoids reflecting on how language constructs meaning within disciplines, and how skills (e.g. referencing and citation practices) are situated practices, with histories and power dynamics of their own



Coloniality in UK teaching and learning

- More ethical alternatives?
 - Teaching the skills required to fully access and engage with the curriculum – in curriculum context
 - Intentionally designed seminars – structured engagement opportunities, transparent pedagogy,
 - Incorporating a range of alternative assessments – employability skills, requiring engagement with a broader decolonised ‘canon’, accepting a wider range of expression
 - Standards and criteria can be developed that move beyond the means of communication
 - Groupwork low-stakes not based on demographics



Click to download!

How to internationalise your teaching: an AdvanceHE Resource Pack

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International students and local communities – Building contacts and partnerships

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International students and local communities – Building contacts and partnerships

Common practices

- Student ‘outreach’ and volunteer activities are mostly attended by ‘home’/local students
 - Mostly one-off activities
- Limited opportunities for international students to engage with local labour markets



International students and local communities – Building contacts and partnerships

Ethical challenges

- Understanding students' contributions to local communities only in economic terms
- When 'cultural' contributions to local communities are acknowledged, there is an implicit assumption that their presence is 'enough' to internationalise the local community
 - Leads to a lack of planning and structure for international students to make contributions
- International students not seen as having sufficient local knowledge to contribute to local needs



International students and local communities

– Building contacts and partnerships

More ethical alternatives

- Intentional and structural inclusion of international students in ‘civic university agreements’ and knowledge transfer policies in relation to local communities
- Targeted support to match international students with local businesses and organisation leading to potential career opportunities
- Careful consideration of institutional resources to provide meaningful opportunities for local engagement when recruiting international students

n.b. Avoid making international students solely responsible for internationalising and bettering their local communities!



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STELLIFY
DO MORE BE MORE

STELLIFY

It's about students doing stuff that's good for them and their community. To help them organise the vast array of activities, we have grouped them under 4 themes

<p>1</p> <p>Understand the issues that matter</p> <p>Ethical Grand Challenges</p> <p>Tackle problems relating to equality and diversity, the environment and sustainability, ethics and social justice</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Make a difference</p> <p>Volunteer</p> <p>Make use of the huge range of volunteering opportunities for students. The Volunteer Hub is a great way for students to find volunteering opportunities that could develop skills and confidence</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Step up and lead</p> <p>Peer Mentoring, Course Reps, Residents' Associations</p> <p>Student representation, peer mentoring, entrepreneurship, public speaking etc. for example great ways to develop leadership skills</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Create your future</p> <p>Get the most out of the Careers Service</p> <p>Get help with interviews, applications, CV</p>
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STELLIFY AWARD
To be awarded the Stellify Award students must...

<p>Complete all 3 Ethical Grand Challenges</p> <p>Sustainability - Yr 1 Social Justice Workplace Ethics</p>	<p>Complete 40 hours of volunteering</p> <p>This might be part of the Manchester Leadership Awards</p>	<p>Complete 2 leadership activities</p> <p>For example, students could take on a peer support role or become a student rep</p>
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Civic University Agreement launched

DOWNLOAD OUR CIVIC UNIVERSITY AGREEMENT



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Resources

- University of Manchester / UPP project to promote international students employability with local small and medium enterprises (SMEs)
<https://upp-foundation.org/upp-foundation-announces-2020-grants/>
- ESRC Festival of Social Science / International Student led Knowledge Transfer Event
<http://www.esrcmanchesterfest.ac.uk/events/lets-try-the-chinese-wellbeing-practices/>
- Understanding international mobility in terms of improving students' regional employability (EU SHARE ASEAN project)
<https://www.share-asean.eu/news/call-applications-research-team-design-and-drafting-%E2%80%9Cgraduate-employability-asean-%E2%80%93>
- Civic University Network and Greater Manchester Agreement
<https://civicuniversitynetwork.co.uk/civic-agreements/>
<https://www.manchester.ac.uk/discover/social-responsibility/civic/civic-agreement/>

Meaning making – Evidence from international students

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Teaching practices

- “education is a new major for me and time is limited but we have got a lot of reading lists and we are struggling so sometimes I feel very lonely and that no one can help”
- “most of them (staff) mentioned maybe you should improve your academic English”
- “I still can’t compete with some native speakers”
- “It is often that I cannot understand my tutors sometimes I have to take a little while to think about what he or she is talking about and when I understand it they have already moved to the next topic, so it is hard for me to understand them immediately”



Ethical challenges

Stereotypes exist and can result in international students being labelled, for example as 'rich' (Mittelmeier and Cockayne, forthcoming) and this can be upsetting for those whose families have saved hard for their studies;

- “Here [in the UK] they see the Chinese students just like money bags”
- “All family members [father, grandparents an aunt] gave me some life experience because they know it is expensive so they all help me”

Employability skills

- “I learnt something here but I'm not sure that I can really use the knowledge learned from the UK in the context on China”



Meaning-making

the process of how the students themselves make sense of knowledge, experience, relationships, and the self - Ignelzi 2000

- “this year is a little bit like a gap year for me, I can have my degree and at the same time I can do some work and travel or you can work with the locals so this is a good time for me to see many things in this year”
- “I just wanted to go outside and see if there is any difference between outside and my own country so that’s the reason and I don’t want to start working so early and consider about the marriage or even boyfriend or anything else like that”
- “After doing all the things [abroad] I can maybe have my own idea on myself. My plans and my future and what lifestyle I want to have. So it is good to have experience before I go seriously to have a career”

Ethics or etiquette? International students and academic hospitality

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The ethics of being *welcoming* to international students

- **Hospitality** = the friendly and generous treatment of guests or strangers
- Not simply ‘one ethic amongst others’, but an **ethos (culture)** itself (Derrida, 2001)
- **Academic hospitality (AH)** (Phipps & Barnett, 2007) - a metaphor and a performative principle for action/practice, characterised by different forms and modalities
- Academic hospitality (in its epistemological form) involves **openness and reciprocity** towards others by ways of *sharing* and *receiving*, and by developing a meaningful conversation particularly with ‘other’ knowledge, beliefs, ethics and values that “...*could easily change one’s own work or even transform one’s self-understanding.*” (Bennett, 2000, p.1)
- **Modalities of AH** (...in times of crisis):
 - celebratory: Who is welcome, where and how?
 - communicative: How to be welcoming (in the ‘Zoom University’)?
 - critical: What are the limits, possibilities or taboos in AH?



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