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Intercultural Communication: The Key to Success at University and Beyond.

Emma Sweeney

Sue O'Hara

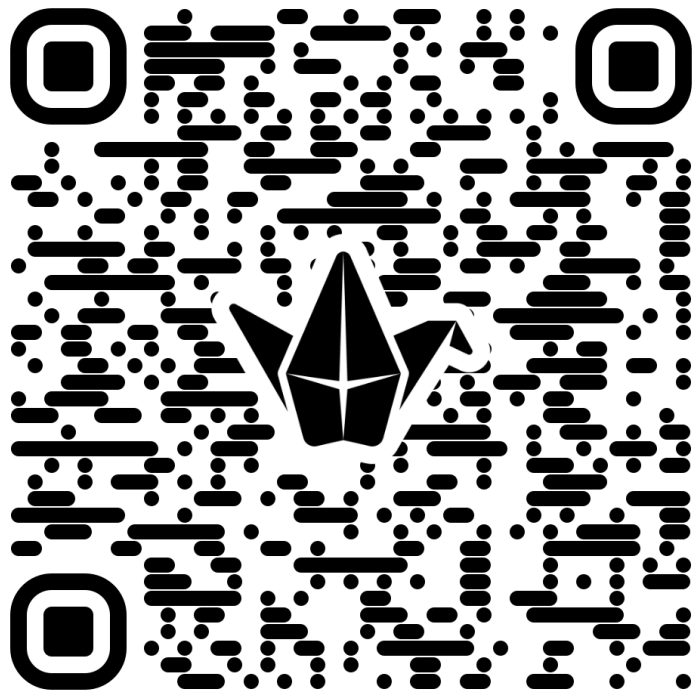
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Aims for today

- University of Exeter is a highly diverse community of staff and students.
- We aim to explore this diversity and begin to understand how cultural competence and intercultural communication skills can help you to:
 1. Make the most of our experiences here.
 2. Build transferable skills for the future.

You and your culture



- Activity 1:
 1. Scan the QR code with your camera.
 2. Choose your home city/region on the map.
 3. Post where you are from and something that is important about your culture



What is culture?

- Culture as a group of people.
- Culture as things people do, behaviours, artifacts and social systems.
- Culture as a system of meanings – values, norms and beliefs.
- Hidden and sub-conscious culture
- Active culture – variable and always changing

Culture



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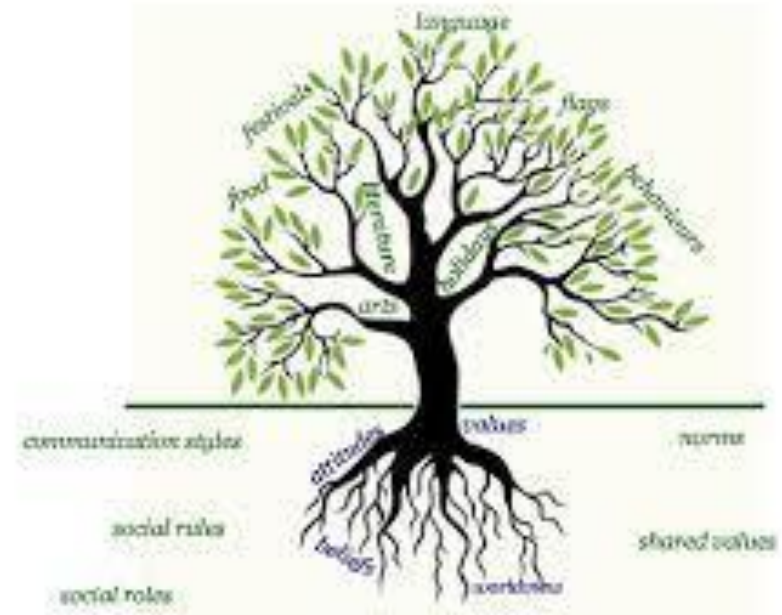
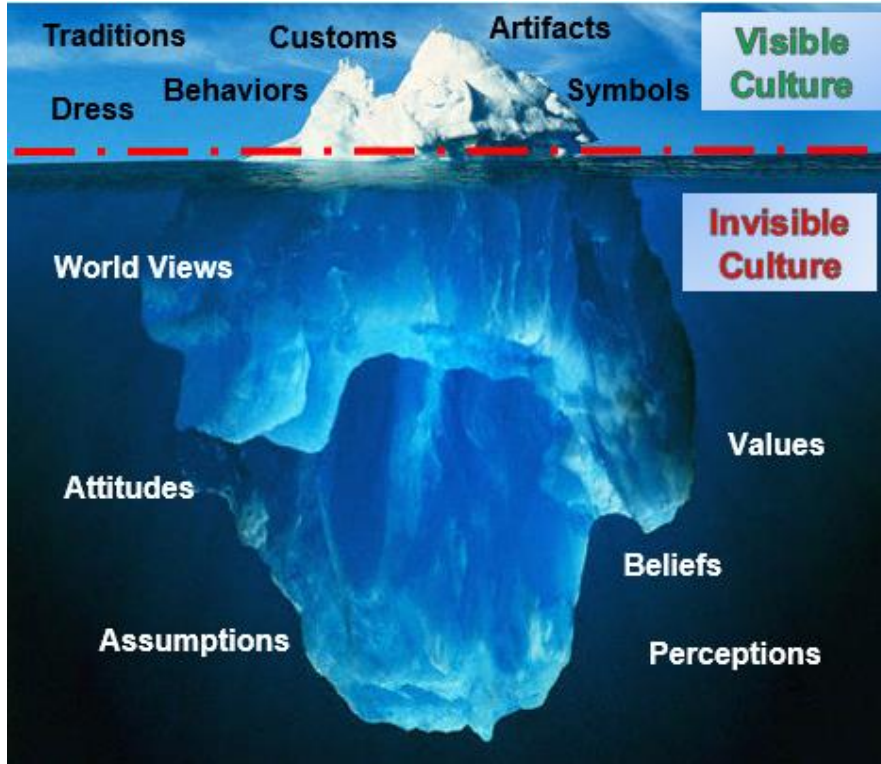
*“We define culture ... as the way of life of a **group** of people, including symbols, values, behaviours, artifacts and other shared aspects, that continually evolves as people share messages ...” (Baldwin et al., 2014: 55)*

How does our culture influence us

- We expect certain behaviour in certain situations.
- If the behaviour differs from our expectations and/or we place a different interpretation on that behaviour, a breakdown in communication occurs



What is culture?



How can we reduce the chances of misunderstanding?



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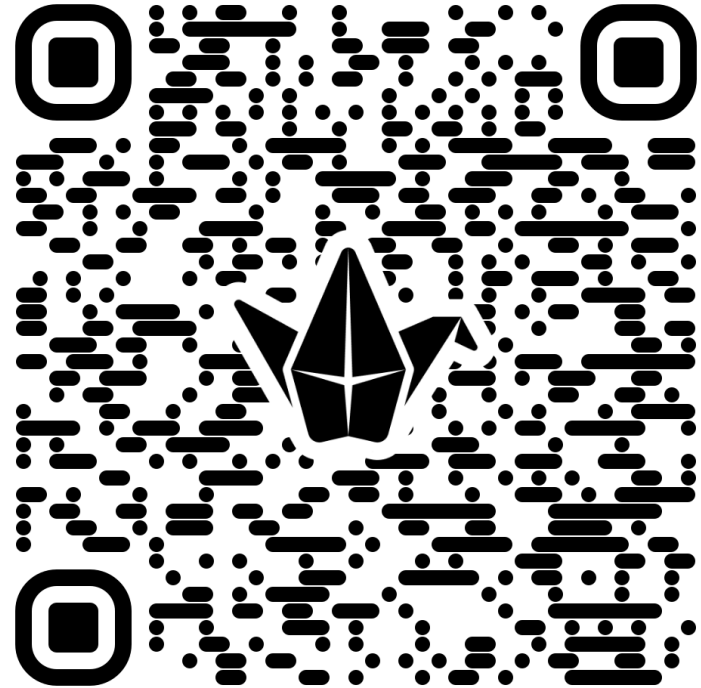
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Exploring different perspectives

Activity 2:

- 1. Scan the QR code.
- 2. Read the proverbs -
 - What do you think they mean?
 - Which one do you like best?
 - Do you have a similar proverb in your culture?
 - Share your favourite proverb on the padlet?



Reflect



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- What have you learnt from this activity?
- What skills did you use to understand the proverbs?
- What skills did you use to explain your proverbs?



Being open-minded

- Taking a moment to consider behaviour before we react negatively to it.
- What alternative perspective can I use to understand this behaviour?
- How can I respond appropriately?





Strategies for Problem-solving

- Activity 3:
 1. I'm going to pass around some envelopes.
 2. Read the problem/scenario on the envelope.
 3. Using one of the slips of paper, write down your response.
 4. Put it in the envelope and pass it on (don't share it with others yet!)





Communication Skills



Working with others on your table,
compare the responses:



What do you notice?



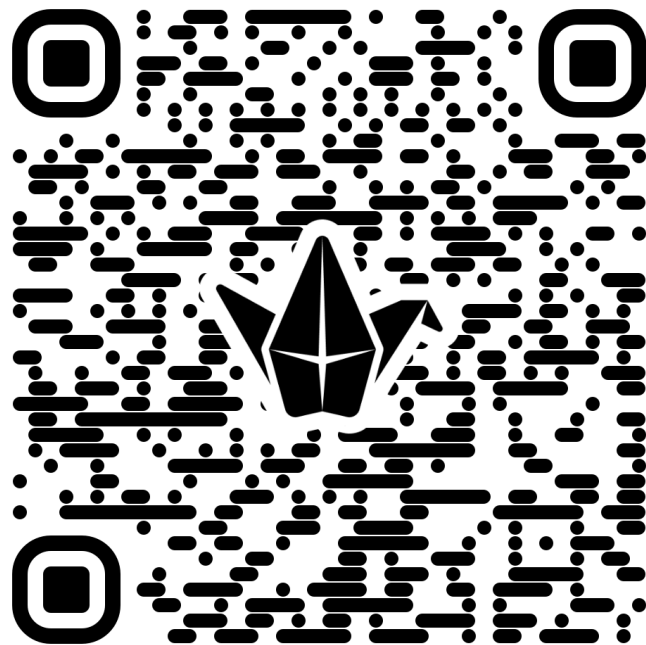
Can you rank the solutions from most
effective to least effective?



Reflect: what was challenging about
this task? What was easy?



Put your reflections on the final padlet



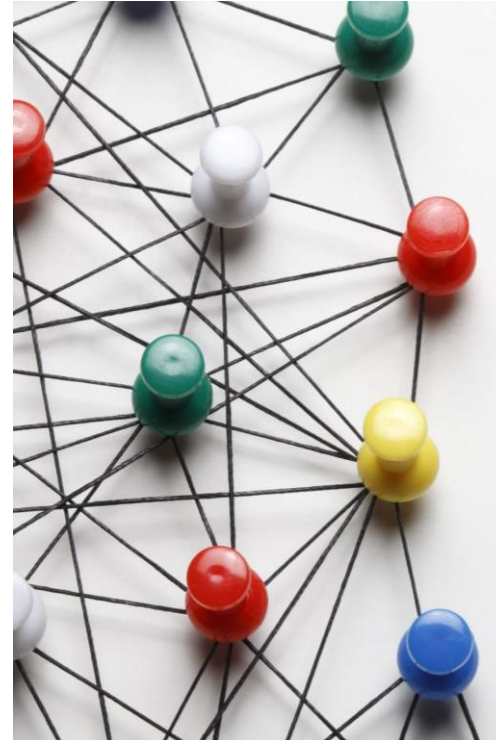


Scenarios

1. Your flat mate never cleans the kitchen after making themselves a meal. What do you do?
2. You are engaged in a group discussion, and one student is not contributing. What do you do?
3. You would like to clarify something with a module lecturer. When do you approach them and how do you address them?
4. You've just received your first assignment and you're not sure that you understand the question. What do you do?
5. You are working on a group assignment, and one member of the group is very dominant and won't listen to other ideas. You disagree with them – what do you do?

Summary

- Appreciate the diversity that is Exeter.
- Be open to alternative thinking, behaviour and practices – more empathetic and more flexible to respond.
- Have a greater repertoire of strategies for problem-solving.
- Have a wider range of communication strategies.
- Make friends, build connections, have more fun, get better marks





Other resources and opportunities

- [Academic Literacy and English](#) – an extensive range of courses, workshops, one-to-one learning (including intercultural communication workshops)
- [Intercultural café](#) - meet new people, have a coffee and a pastry, celebrate our different cultures and approaches (meets weekly on Friday mornings)
- Hear from other students via these online resources: [Intercultural Experiences](#)



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