



# Curriculum Design Pattern

Global Learning by Design

## Name of Pattern

**Preparing Students for Intercultural Experience**

## Date

December, 2015

## Abstract

The global intensives are available only to students studying in Melbourne. However, there is an opportunity for our students based in Vietnam, Singapore, China and Spain to participate in these tours. In the past these students have been denied this opportunity because of difficulties associated with pre-departure and post-tour workshops, conducted face-to-face in Melbourne.

This pattern identifies the use of a variety of technologies that can be introduced to what is currently a series of face-to-face workshops for global intensive programs. By utilising these technologies, international students can participate in pre-departure and post-tour workshops focusing on preparing students for their intercultural experience abroad.

## Rationale

Global Intensives would benefit greatly if inclusive and accessible for all students, in particular students that are situated outside of Melbourne. This would assist students from other RMIT campuses to network with each other and staff prior to the tour. Perestotas aut molorum ne nimirum.

## Learners/Context

Students participating in global intensives are typically undergraduate and/or postgraduate. Students need to check their eligibility to partake in the Global Intensive program via the application form found at <http://www1.rmit.edu.au/bus/studytours>. Current global intensives can vary between 15 and 65 students.

All students complete a preparation component prior to the intensive tour which includes at least two full weekend workshops. Students study a variety of topics including globalisation, cross-cultural aspects and international business. They are also provided with support and advice on the logistical and financial aspects of an overseas intensive study tour. Students then have a two-week tour at their respective location.

## Related patterns

None.

## Category

#global #intensive #intercultural #transnational #mindset

## Outcome/Impact

The nature of the workshops provide students a global perspective prior to leaving on the Global Intensive Tour. This provides an expectation to what they will experience and what are the key things they need to consider. This means students are not overwhelmed when they arrive at their destination and can focus on their studies and the tasks at hand.

## Instructions/Process

The student's experience will be enhanced through:

- Their development of a global mindset and competence
- An awareness of cross cultural issues especially in business.

As Global Intensives can occur outside of the Academic calendar, the use of a Blackboard environment is unavailable. To compensate for this, the use of other online communication methods such as social media can be an alternative collaborative solution pre- departure. Students would continue to submit their assessment to a designated Blackboard Shell during and post the two week Intensive tour.

## Advertise and Engage

1. Advertising commences in October/November of the preceding year. Students are invited to attend information sessions, which emphasises the University's focus on International Engagement as well as having the opportunity to enhance their global mindset. (See: Study Tour of Canada Video)

**NOTE:** By commencing the advertising early allows many students to plan their finances and with the postgraduates who are working full time they can apply for leave from work almost 12 months in advance.

2. Applications are received via paper-based forms and assessed before an offer is made.
3. A Facebook group is then set up as a 'Closed Group' to offer student an online solution to introduce themselves to the group, and build friendships.
4. Students are then sent an email welcoming them to the study-tour, as well as details about the first weekend workshop and how to access the Facebook group. (See: Canada Study Tour - First Weekend Workshop - 11th and 12th of April example).

## Workshop One

5. The first workshop is conducted, students participate in group-based question activities on the following topics:
  - Globalisation and Business
  - Globalisation and Culture
  - Globalisation and Ethics
  - A topic on the specific country being visited.

These questions challenge their view of globalisation, culture and ethics (See: Workshop One Questions resource).

## Visa Workshop

6. A Google Site is created and will host all of the information available regarding the Global Intensive, as the Blackboard Shell may not be available during this time (See: <https://sites.google.com/a/rmit.edu.au/2015-canada-study-tour/> example). The Google site includes the weekend workshop content; examples of assessment tasks from previous semesters; useful links; Twitter and Facebook links - all of which have been built up over the previous study tours.

7. At the conclusion of the first weekend workshop, another email is sent to the students (See: Canada Study Tour - First Weekend Wrap-up example).
8. A Google form, set up by the Academic Services Coordinator to gather information in regards to the students arrival, departure, dietary requirements and any other travel companions.
9. Students need to update their Emergency contact/s via MyRMIT>My Details> Update My details via Enrollment Online.
10. Two weeks later, an email is sent to all students asking them to come in for a Visa workshop. As part of this email, a requirements checklist is included (See: Canada visa requirements example).
11. The Visa workshop is held for any student who requires a visa to visit that particular country. The students are stepped through the visa application.
12. At the end of the Visa workshop, a follow-up email is sent to those that attended (See: Canada Visa Workshop Follow-up).

### **Workshop Two**

13. Four weeks after Workshop One, an email is sent out to students reminding them of the upcoming Workshop Two (See: Workshop Two Questions resource).
14. The second workshop is conducted, students participate in group-based question activities on the following topics:
  - a. Globalisation and Challenges
  - b. Global Mindset.

These questions challenge their view of globalisation and a way to develop a global minds (See: Workshop Two Questions resource).

15. A guide is also distributed to students that outlines travel information such as: hotel check-in, costs of different transport options, immigration and customs, electronic devices, the first field trip, when and where to meet etc. (See: Canada bound students example).

## The Overseas Experience

16. Students participate in a two-week tour, which usually consists of classes in the morning and a corresponding field trip in the afternoon. It is important that any lecture material from the Canada component are added to Blackboard and the Google Site (See: <https://sites.google.com/a/rmit.edu.au/2015-canada-study-tour/>).

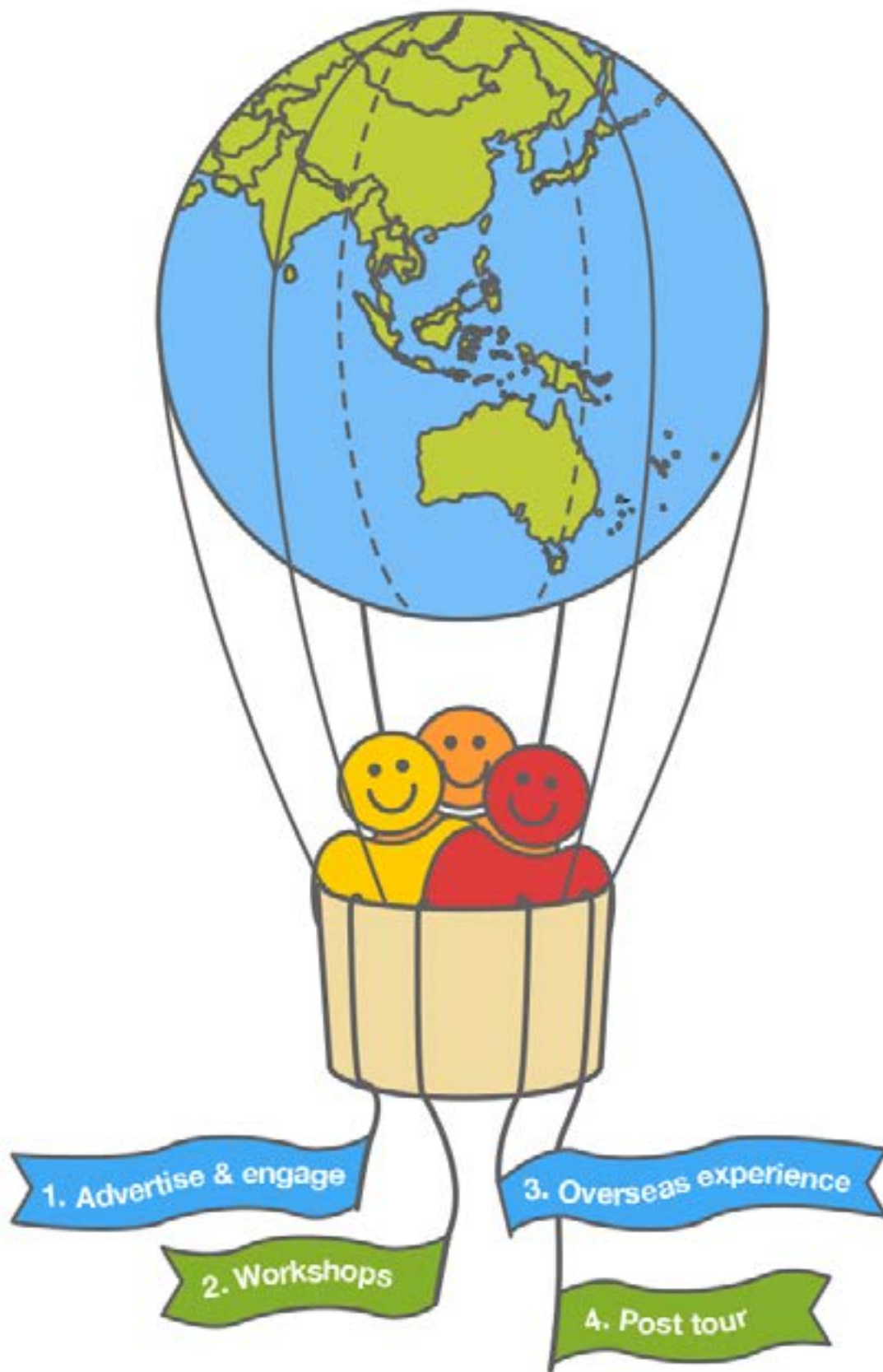
### Post Tour

17. Academics/teachers are required to ensure that all resources and lecture material is uploaded to the Course Blackboard.
18. An email is then sent to students once everyone is back in Melbourne, welcoming students back and summarising some of the key aspects of the tour. In addition the Google site and Blackboard is referenced again for access to the resources used on the tour. Some photos of the tour are also included in the email (Optional) (See: Canada Study Tour - weblink and photos resource).
19. Assessment tasks that assess the Global Mindset are then due in after the tour.

**NOTE:** It is recommended to consider the following:

The challenges experienced relate to the lack of IT infrastructure available for the tours. As the tours run in different stages throughout the year, the usual RMIT infrastructure, such as Blackboard, is unavailable until towards the end of the tour when the assessment tasks are due. The choice to use alternative online presence for collaboration between students was made and consists of Google Sites, Google Community and Facebook.

It is also important to encourage students to make use of different technology to talk and engage with one another, as well as identify ways to enhance group work and interaction.



Preparing students for an intercultural experience

## Conditions

- Ongoing commitment in time and knowledge to maintain an online presence.
- Having an online repository for students to access and upload material throughout the tour.
- Identifying learning activities that will be easily supported transnationally.

## Resources

### Library Resources:

- Industry information guide  
<http://rmit.libguides.com/industryinfo>
- Company Information Guide  
<http://rmit.libguides.com/companyinfo>
- Country Information  
<http://rmit.libguides.com/content.php?pid=21164&sid=156210>
- Tips on Cross cultural awareness and communication.  
[http://www.utas.edu.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0018/11538/Cross-Cultural-Awareness.pdf](http://www.utas.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0018/11538/Cross-Cultural-Awareness.pdf)

### Education Resources:

- Student Group Questions for Workshop One - Globalisation and Business (PDF)
- Student Group Questions for Workshop Two - Globalisation and Challenges (PDF)
- Study Tour of Canada (Video)

### Technology resources:

- How-to: Setup and use Google + and Communities (QRG)
- Getting Started with Google Sites (Video)
- How to create and manage a Facebook Group (Link)
- How to set-up a Facebook group for your class (YouTube)