

A NEW PERSPECTIVE

Stephen Bailey 2015

Students who go to study abroad often experience a type of culture shock when they arrive in the new country. Customs that they took for granted in their own society may not be followed in the host country. Even everyday patterns of life may be different. When these are added to the inevitable differences which occur in every country, students may at first feel confused. They may experience rapid changes of mood, or even want to return home. However, most soon make new friends and, in a relatively short period, are able to adjust to their new environment. They may even find that they prefer some aspects of their new surroundings, and forget that they are not at home for a while!

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AND CULTURE SHOCK

Robert Smith 2007

“Culture shock” describes the impact of moving from a familiar culture to one which is unfamiliar. It is an experience described by people who have travelled abroad to work, live or study; it can be felt to a certain extent even when abroad on holiday. It can affect anyone, including international students. It includes the shock of a new environment, meeting lots of new people and learning the ways of a different country. It also includes the shock of being separated from the important people in your life, maybe family, friends, colleagues, teachers: people you would normally talk to at times of uncertainty, people who give you support and guidance. When familiar sights, sounds, smells or tastes are no longer there, you can miss them very much. If you are tired and jet-lagged when you arrive small things can be upsetting and out of all proportion to their real significance.

Adapted from UKCOSA 2007, *International Students and Culture Shock*, UKCOSA Guidance Notes, London