

## **International students and the contemporary globalising world – coming to terms**

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The current contemporary global context presents a fundamentally different sort of challenge, one that is multiple, dislocated, provisional and ever-changing with shifting reference points of identification. There is also a growing understanding that the neoliberal version of the contemporary world, particularly as reflected in educational agendas, privileges if not imposes, particular strategies for curriculum, instruction, evaluation and services, and in particular international student services.

This paper is a reflection of the work by three practitioners engaged in the area of international students' services. The construction and analysis of this reflection is located within the frameworks of globalisation and culture, suggesting that this process of situating can also help to shed new light on how we might approach questions of international student support and engagement in this contemporary world. This article also suggests that when individuals from particularly Third-World backgrounds enter the discursive spaces of mainstream Western academic contexts; they enter a 'field of preoccupations' where a variety of concerns about identity, representation and diversity are already in place and being played out. These concerns work to shape these individuals' entrance and influence what is expected of them.

This article is presented as the first of a series of three working papers. This first paper reflects upon the current contemporary world we now occupy as university service providers, and asks whether international student services incorporates, particularly frameworks of globalisation, culture and preoccupations within its operating processes. The second paper will discuss the range of support services we deliver; the changing demographics of international students and the relevance of these support services. The third and final paper will argue for a framework of services and international student engagement that is able to live awkwardly but also constructively, facilitating an enduring and reciprocal relationship of mutual learning.