

# **Developing students' intercultural communication competence: a workshop approach**

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## **Abstract**

Group projects or group assignments are a fairly common feature in Australian tertiary contexts. Because of the increasingly diverse nature of our student populations, this often means that students work in multinational/multicultural teams. It is assumed that students either have or will develop the skills needed to operate successfully in such teams; however, research undertaken in Australia and elsewhere indicates that students do not necessarily possess intercultural communication skills and they need to be taught the skills needed to work in such teams successfully.

This workshop deals with a set of structured activities developed to prepare undergraduate students for working in multinational teams. Workshop participants will take part in the workshop by actually trying out some of the activities but also reflecting on the approach used and the effectiveness of different strategies: that is, participants will be both participant and reflective observer. The workshop will explore the importance of discussion and how the facilitator needs to guide students gradually, carefully and sensitively to explore cultural and linguistic issues and their impact on intercultural communication. Participants will be given copies of materials developed for students the evaluation tool used to obtains student feedback.