

Australia, The 51st State - Student learning and intercultural development

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The IES MAP (Model Assessment Practice) for Study Abroad was created in response to the growing need for more effective program development and assessment in international education. The IES MAP focuses on four key areas: the student learning environment; student learning and the development of intercultural competence; resources for academic and student support; and program administration and development.

Whilst the development of students' intellectual abilities is the foremost concern of an academic program, the development of intercultural understanding is also significant, and desired. Many American students perceive Australia as being almost an extension of the United States. Of course they see Australia as 'different', but those differences are often anticipated as more 'cute', 'token' differences, rather than disparities that will actually have a significant impact on their time in Australia.

This paper explores the development of intercultural competence in American students studying in Australia using qualitative examples.