

‘Quiz Time!’: Engaging and interacting with international students at orientation.

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Welcoming a diverse group of international students who have just arrived in an unfamiliar environment can present a challenge not only in meeting students’ expectations about living in Australia but in delivering relevant and engaging material. This workshop offers an innovative model for engaging students in their first few days and weeks of living in Australia. In 2011, as part of their orientation and welcome to the University of South Australia (UniSA), students attended an ‘Arrival Briefing’ that involved an interactive quiz designed to build upon students’ existing knowledge and encourage participation. Students had the opportunity to work in pairs or small groups to gain information about their orientation program and reflect on helpful topics including: shopping in the CBD, transportation, police and the law, medical and emergency services, Overseas Student Health Cover, personal safety on and off campus, University Security Services and Student Visa requirements. The session was held as part of a ‘Welcome Week’ of social activities at UniSA and was successfully incorporated into a multi-campus approach to engaging new students.

The essential information relating to a student’s transition to life and study in Australia including the obligatory requirements, under the National Code 2007, may be perceived by students as tedious and daunting. This workshop will offer practical advice about welcoming international students to a new educational environment as part of their overall orientation experience. We will present an adaptable model for addressing students that fulfils the ESOS legislative requirements and provides a fun and engaging introduction to University support services and life in Australia. Participants will have an opportunity to discuss and share ideas as well as consider alternative approaches to their own orientation program delivery. The workshop is open to student support services staff, from any sector, organising activities or events involving international students.

Key Words

Orientation; Engagement; Interactive; Quiz; Welcome; International Students, Student Support Services