



The
University
Of
Sheffield.

Reverse Culture Shock

Supporting students through their final university transition.

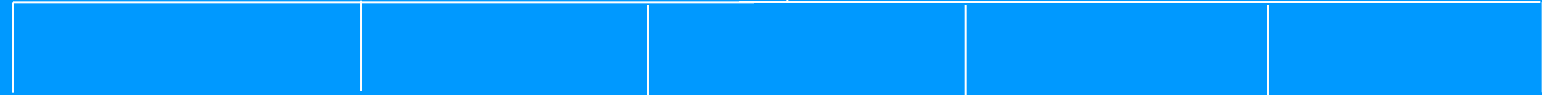
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Student Services Department



Student Support & Guidance



**Student
Transitions
and
Support***

**Financial
Support**

**International
Students**

**Office
Team***

**Multi-faith
Chaplaincy**

**Critical
Support**

- |
* **INCLUDES:**
- Equal Opps,
 - Health Related Issues/Protocols
 - Race Relations
 - Religious Matters
 - Mature Students

 - Critical Support

Session Overview

Like many institutions, we have some information on our webpages about the return home after studies

<http://www.shef.ac.uk/ssid/international/immigration/depart>

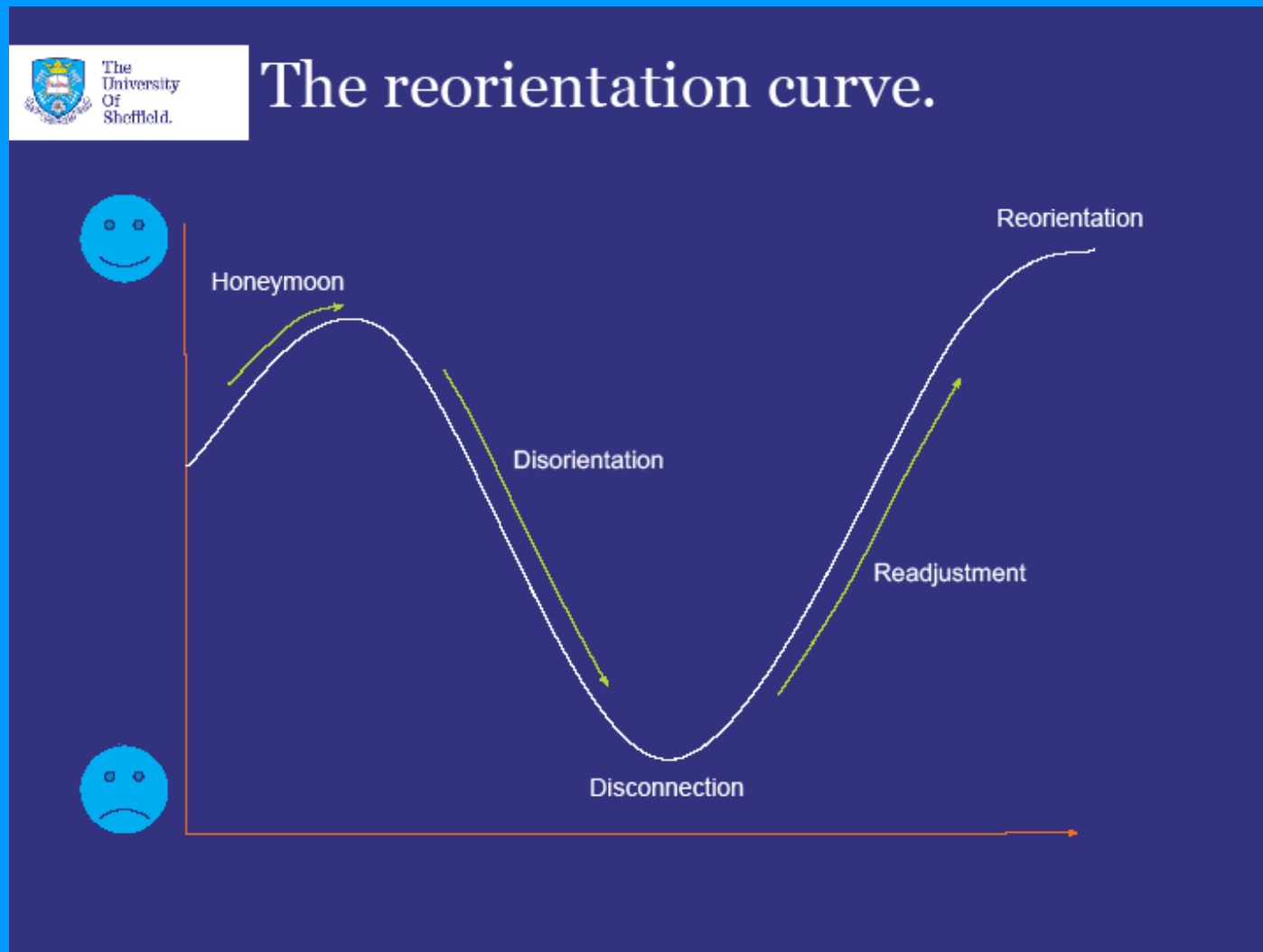
We wanted to get more proactive with our support in this area and this session will cover what we have done and learnt, and will provide an opportunity for us to share our experiences to help to develop work on “re-orientation”

So, what can we expect from this session?

- What is reverse culture shock?
- What our research shows.
- What we did next.
- What we’ve learned.
- Opportunity for discussion and feedback.



What is reverse culture shock?





Our research -

Survey sent to all international graduates from past 5 years.

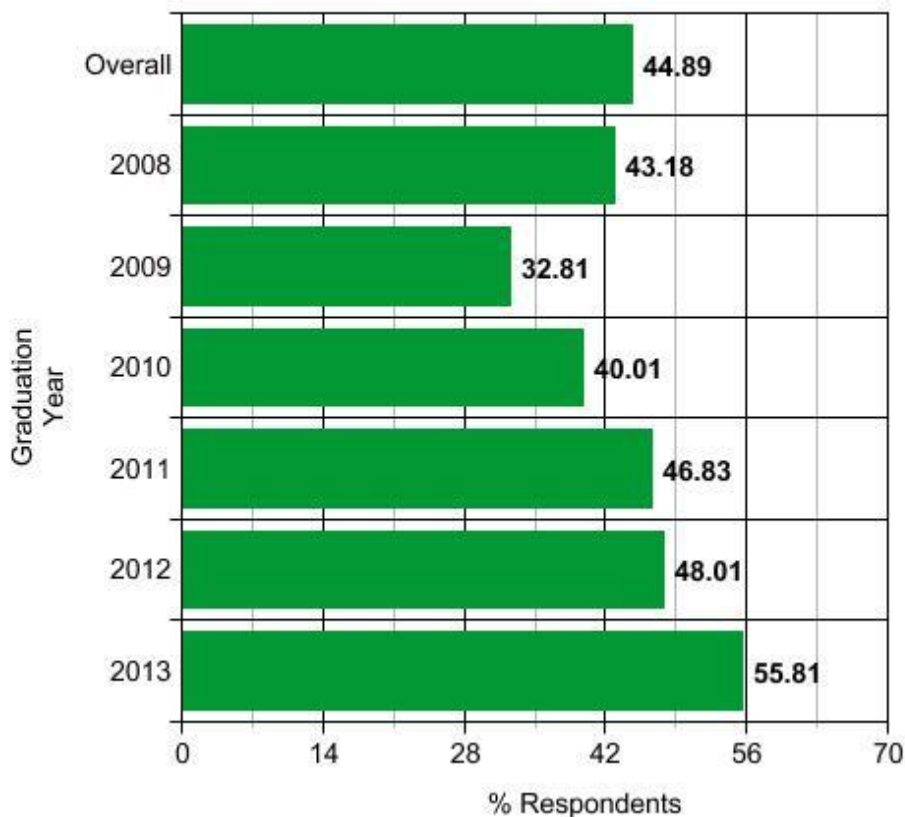
Aimed to establish:

- Extent to which reverse culture shock is experienced.
- Which elements are found to be most challenging.
- Which groups are particularly affected.



Prevalence of Reverse Culture Shock

% Respondents Who Agreed That They Found it Challenging to Readjust to Their Home Culture



For students who had graduated in the past two years, AND had been in Sheffield for more than 2 years, the number went up to 60%



Fading from memory?

% respondents agree (slightly-strongly) that the following were challenging:	Year of Graduation					
	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Packing up and moving your belongings to your next location.	52.00	58.85	65.52	58.97	52.08	48.44
Logistics (eg. closing bank accounts, getting accommodation deposits back)	42.00	46.24	45.93	42.11	39.56	40.98
Staying in touch with your friends from Sheffield.	72.55	55.72	63.89	53.66	52.58	54.84
Adjusting to not living a student lifestyle anymore.	72.92	64.92	64.91	58.26	40.86	48.28
Not having people around who understood the experience of living abroad.	62.50	49.74	56.07	55.26	44.44	55.17
Missing the life you had in Sheffield as a student.	82.35	84.62	83.62	77.97	72.83	80.65



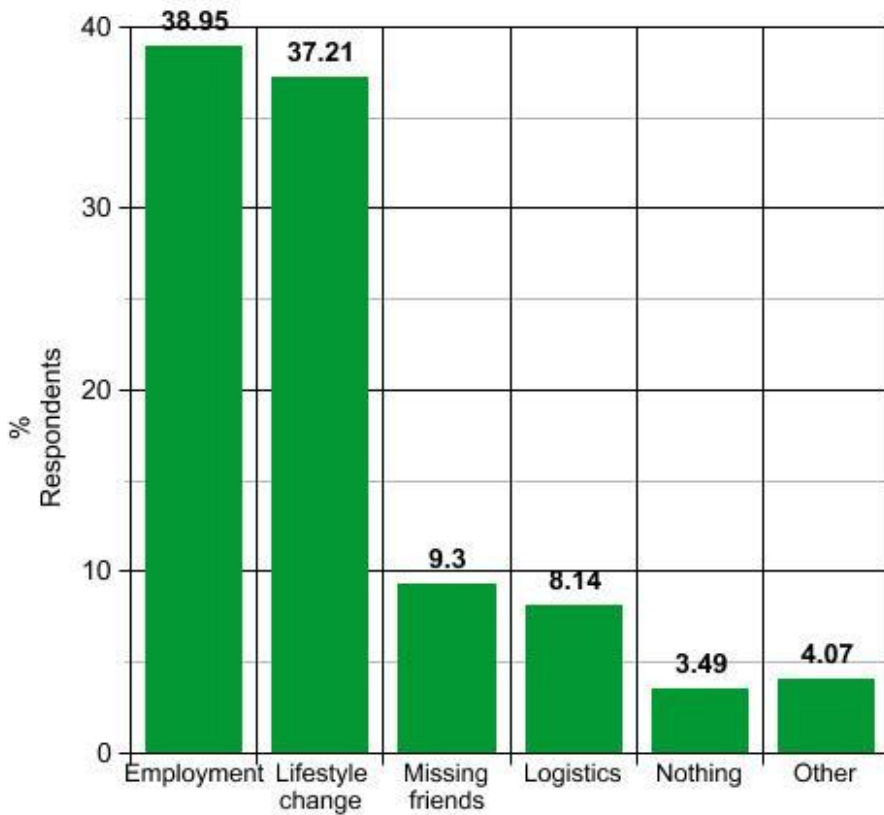
Fading from memory?

% respondents agree (slightly-strongly) that they experienced the following:	Year respondents graduated					
	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Find it challenging to readjust to your home culture.	55.81	48.00	46.83	40.00	32.81	43.18
Find it difficult to reconnect with your friends at home.	37.21	31.33	25.40	30.59	28.13	22.73
Feel that 'home' had changed while you had been away in Sheffield.	48.84	44.00	42.86	45.88	48.44	40.91
Feel lonely.	32.56	34.00	27.78	24.71	29.69	25.00



Biggest Challenges:

Most Challenging Aspect of Moving Back Home (recent graduates)



Lifestyle Change:

- 'Not longer with people who are sharing similar ideas and understanding'
- 'Missing out on things and different time arrangement and pace of life. Adapting to working.'
- 'Entry to a world that I don't understand or not able to relate to my experiences.'



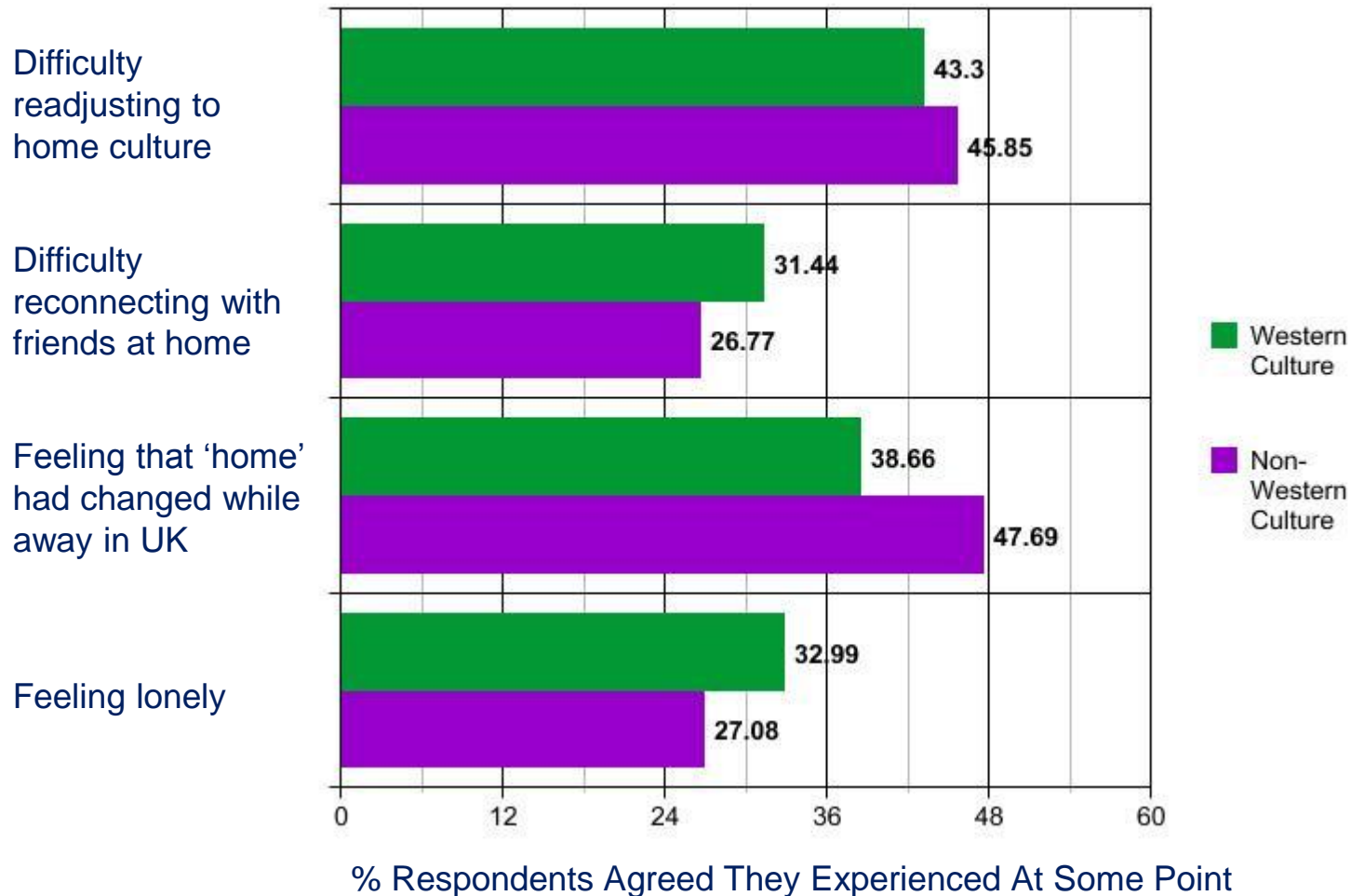
The longer spent abroad, the harder to return?

% respondents agree (slightly-strongly) that they experienced the following:	Number of years respondents lived in Sheffield					
	<1 year	1 year	2 years	3 years	4 years	5+ years
Find it challenging to readjust to your home culture.	32.74	51.38	37.50	50.00	53.49	47.83
Find it difficult to reconnect with your friends at home.	23.01	29.36	27.08	22.73	44.19	52.17
Feel that 'home' had changed while you had been away in Sheffield.	34.51	44.50	45.83	43.18	55.81	69.57
Feel lonely.	23.89	32.57	25.00	25.00	41.86	34.78



Easier for students from Western culture countries?

Experience of Moving Back Home Depending on Home Culture



Prevalence by region

% respondents agree (slightly-strongly) that the following were challenging:	Nationality (by region)							
	Europe	SouthEast Asia	South Asia	Africa	Middle East	Central/South America	East Asia	Chinese
Packing up and moving your belongings to your next location.	49.21	63.33	57.65	73.68	69.86	70.00	54.67	53.03
Logistics (eg. closing bank accounts, getting accommodation deposits back)	30.65	46.55	48.24	48.48	58.90	55.17	45.95	43.85
Staying in touch with your friends from Sheffield.	55.90	62.30	49.43	52.38	63.51	43.75	77.33	78.79
Adjusting to not living a student lifestyle anymore.	55.93	60.71	59.30	46.34	61.11	70.00	71.43	73.85
Not having people around who understood the experience of living abroad.	55.91	32.73	53.57	42.86	61.11	58.06	55.03	58.02
Missing the life you had in Sheffield as a student.	80.95	82.46	82.95	71.79	81.94	84.38	89.19	90.08



Our Workshop

Logistics:

- Communications
- Venue
- Sign-up

Our Workshop

- Introduction to the concept.
 - Definition
 - Stages
 - Comparison with initial culture shock experiences
- What to expect:
 - Possible symptoms
 - Other students' experiences
 - Relevant statistics

Looking Back...

- Encourages students to think about their original adjustment to UK life
- Helps them remember previous coping strategies
- Makes them consider the changes they have undergone while living abroad

Looking Forward...

- Encourages students to think about what being home again will actually be like – the positives and the negatives
- Helps them to focus on how the changes they have gone through might alter their relationships and behaviour back home



Worksheet

Looking Forward

1. The one experience I want to share with my friends/family at home is:
.....
2. When I return home, my friends/family will think I have changed because:
.....
3. The thing I will miss most about Sheffield is:
.....
4. The thing I will not miss about Sheffield is:
.....
5. When I return home I intend to stay in touch with:
.....
6. When I return home the one thing I really want to do is:
.....
7. One of the things I used to do at home but I don't want to do any more is:
.....
8. One of the things I am determined to do when I go home is:
.....
9. Something I have learned to do in Sheffield which I would like to carry on doing is:
.....
.....
10. I know that I will feel at home when:

Coping Strategies...

- Reiterate: knowing about culture shock is the best way to counter it
- Revisit the coping strategies students discussed previously, and how they can be used again
- General (practical) tips

Practical Tips:

- Stay active and healthy
- Stay in touch with friends from UK (but not too much!)
- Contact other alumni in their home country
- Look for ways to get involved in international activities back home
- Talk/write about how they're feeling



Planning a reverse culture shock event? Things to consider:

- Target audience
- Timing of events
- Possibility of causing distress
- Combined with other events/services?



What more can we be doing

In small groups discuss this for a few minutes:

- 1. What are students saying to you before they leave**
- 2. What feedback have you had from your graduates**
- 3. What you are already doing to help**



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Feedback



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Questions