

**International PhD experience
in sport research at Auckland University of
Technology (AUT)**

Kylie Ngaamo
Auckland University of Technology



AUT Millennium Campus



Overview

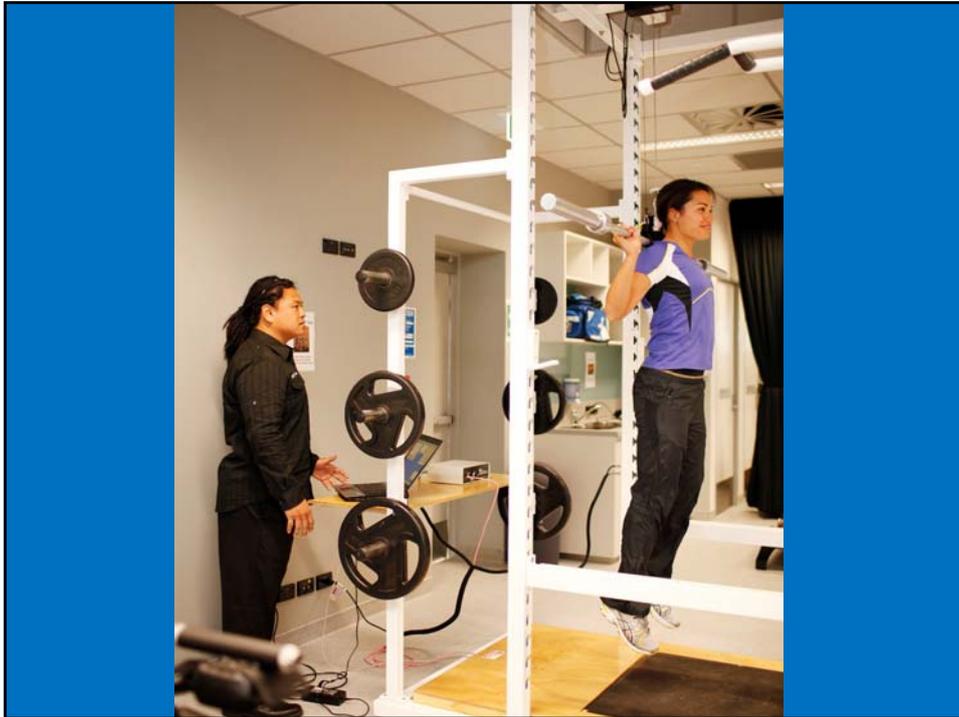
- In the beginning
- First Impressions
- Entry and Arrival
- Experience with non-academic staff
- Positive and Negative
- Recommendations
- Where we are now



The survey

- 7 PhD students 4 male and 3 female
- 21 international students
- American, Canadian, German, Malaysian, Mexican and United Kingdom
- Field of research in Sport and Exercise
- Arrival at AUT between Oct 2011 – July 2014





First Impressions

- Student 1- Impressed by the facilities and people I met was very friendly.
- Student 2 - A lot of paper work and having to email various different people in different departments for assistance



First Impressions

- Student 3- State-of-the-art facilities, world-class professors, and extremely bright students.
- Student 4- New and large facility with everything a PhD research student would need



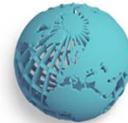
First Impressions

- Student 5- The separation of campuses caused transport issues. Fragmented community between the two campuses.
- Student 6- An awesome experience at a beautiful campus.



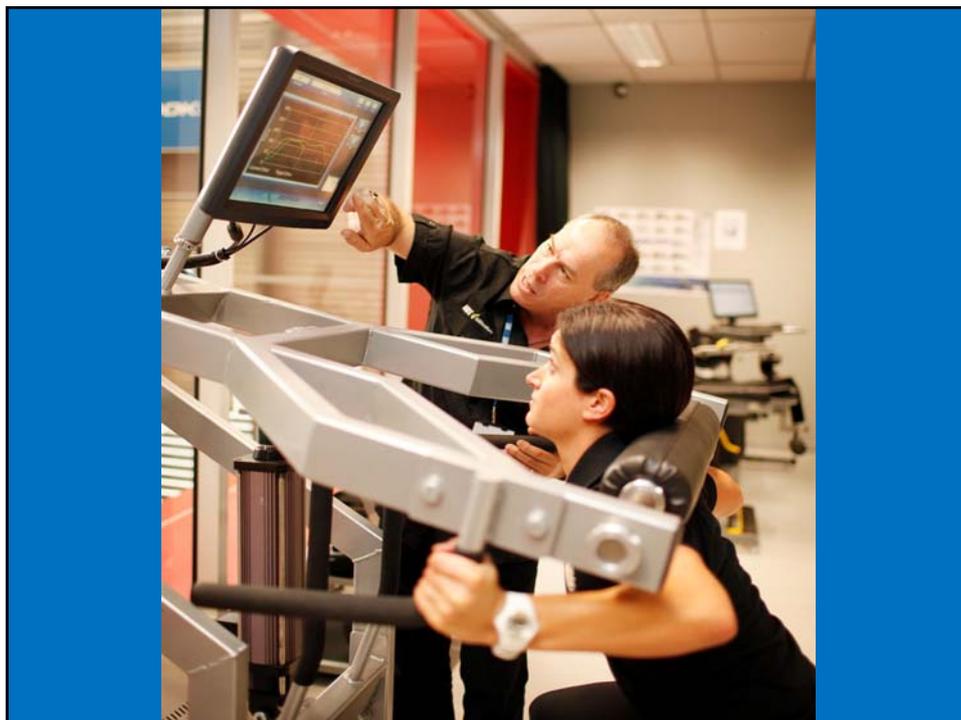
First Impressions

- Student 7- No induction, and poor communication. Scholarship fees payment took over a month to get sorted.



AUT Millennium Campus





Entry and Arrival

Engaging with non-academic staff

- 4 students did out of 7
- Identification
- Contacting



Entry and Arrival

- Admissions
- Scholarships
- Post Graduate Office
- International Student Support
- Student Centre
- Faculty Administration
- Other



Entry and Arrival

Easy to identify and contact

- Admissions
- Scholarships
- Faculty Admissions



Entry and Arrival

- Difficult to identify and contact
- Post Graduate Office
- International Student Support
- Student Centre
- Faculty Administration

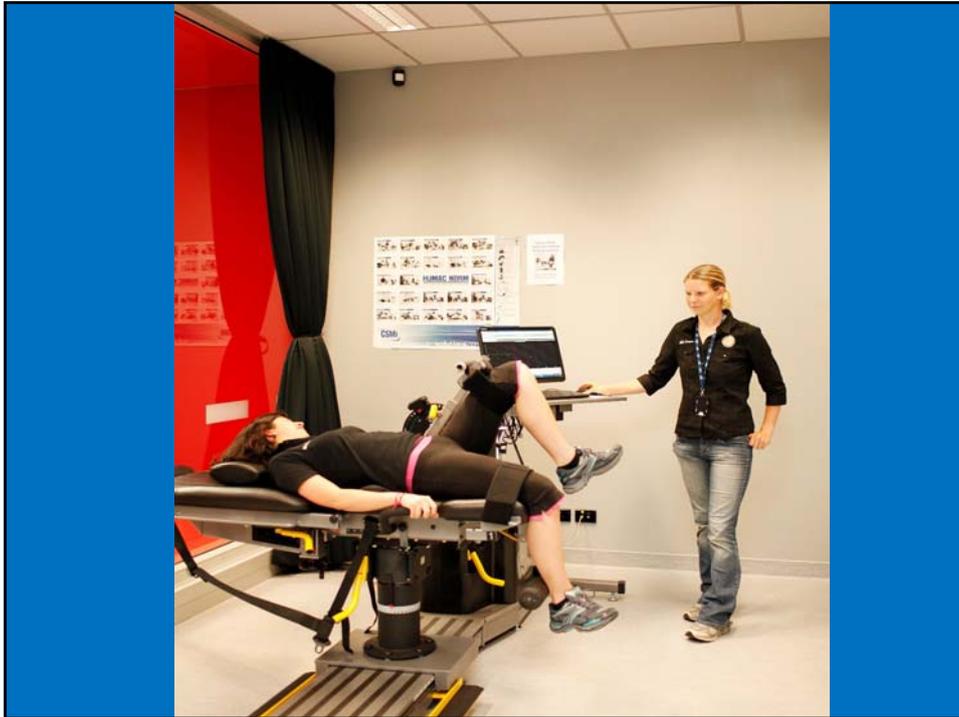


Entry and Arrival

Samples of experiences

- Student 2 – Multiple contacts with the hope someone could answer
- Student 6 – Staff not friendly, difficulties of language and cultural differences- didn't know who to ask
- Student 7 – Very hard to know who to contact. Different people responsible for variety of things. Staff turnover. Admin staff service was slow.





Positive Experience

- Student 1- Faculty Administrator helpful with setting up desk workstation- orientation of campus. ISS with student visas. Student centre ID cards. All interactions have been effective.
- Student 2- Getting back in touch with information Polite and helpful. Some individuals have been very efficient. Feel non-academic staff supportive



Positive Experience

- Student 3- Opened up their homes, valuable information on accommodation and shopping. Invited to student planned events. Made me feel welcomed
- Student 4- Helping with Canadian loan, bus pass. Availability of support, not requiring appointments



Positive Experience

- Student 5- Tour of campus- personal introductions of Post Graduate office. Respond fairly quickly to emails. Very happy with events available. Orientation covered basics
- Student 6- Invitation to ISS activities. Finalising paperwork for admission. International group lunches. Personal relationships; cares about you as a person



Positive Experience

- Student 7- Help from my supervisor. Social sport set-up within SPRINZ. ISS visits to Millennium.
- *Sport Performance Research Institute of New Zealand



Negative Experiences

- Student 1- Not on the staff, did feel there wasn't a good induction plan. Disconnect with the broader AUT culture, processes and resources
- Student 2- Being sent to too many administrative individuals to answer my queries. Fees issues, been sent to three campuses to get set up



Negative Experiences

- Student 4- Did not have answer to health coverage
- Student 5- Limited interaction with non-academic staff. Primarily been short emails. Did not know answers to my questions
- Student 7- Scholarship not received on time. No induction process. No clear lines of contact with key staff responsible for post-graduate students



Pastoral Care Incidents

- Student 3- Difficulty getting loan, ISS helped me
- Student 6- Student visa issues and faced the possibility of losing my scholarship and having to return home



Cultural Difficulties

- Student 1- No
- Student 2- No
- Student 3- Yes – feel no one is similar to me; being the only who looks like me or from my region
- Student 4- No
- Student 5- New Zealanders are shy and reserved



Cultural Difficulties

- Student 6- Language barrier, accents made it hard to understand. Different paperwork and procedures added to the confusion
- Student 7 - No



Recommendations

- Checklist for entry and arrival
- Transport between campuses
- Administration services consolidated
- AUT Staff visit Millennium
- ISS supply individual orientation sessions
- Simple induction of AUT processes
- Easy identification/ roles of key contacts
- Troubleshooting guide



Where we are now

- ISS monthly visits
- Individual orientation and induction
- Student lunches
- Administration communication improved between departments
- Happy students





- Since Kylie began visiting Millennium the support for international students has been fantastic, and she has been able to help with all the queries that I have had. I wish she was here (or may she was and I wasn't aware of it!) when I first arrived, as I feel I would have had a much better experience.



