

# Improving Re-entry Preparation Programmes for International Graduates returning to a diverse range of Countries

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## Improving Re-entry Preparation Programmes for International Graduates returning to a diverse range of Countries.

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The scholarship operating guidelines for New Zealand Foreign Affairs and Trade Aid Programme (NZAID) requires providers to ensure that reintegration briefings be provided for returning graduates. Massey University in providing courses for large numbers of NZAID scholarship students from a wide range of countries encounters unique challenges in providing quality education as well as ensuring a good quality of reintegration preparation for re-entry transition preparation.

At Massey the International Student Support Office in 2013 commenced a programme for providing reintegration preparation for NZAID scholarship students that involved a process of action research. The objectives of this programme were to raise the capacity of staff for researching, designing and implementing programmes as well as evaluating programme performance and self-assessing roles in the process and ultimately providing a very high quality programme for international graduates not just scholarship students but for the whole international student body. This is an ambitious project and keeping in mind the limitations of resources and staff availability it was decided that a progressive roll out using an action research paradigm starting with a pilot in establishing the first cycle of development, running a first cycle and then progressing to successive cycles as the programme is refined was the best way to proceed. In its initial form it was to be restricted to NZAID scholarship students for which funds and resources were available as part of the scholarship programme. The pilot and first cycle phases of this project and what was learned from it have been reported on previously. Hooker S, McGrath T (2014). *Preparing International Students for Post Academic Transition with particular attention to re-entry to a diverse range of Countries*. ISANA

This paper reports on findings from the next phase of this project. Findings in this paper include further learning in the action research particularly staff self-assessment and learning as well as the effect of changes and improvements to the programme for the graduates involved. Some additional facets implemented such as in country focus groups amongst returned graduates are reported on. Additionally the implications of rolling out a programme for the non NZAID international student body was considered through examining the perceptions of the non NZAID international students as to the value of being prepared for Post academic transition and the perceptions of teaching departments as to collaborative cooperation with the International Student Support Office and Careers to embed preparation in the learning context and to provide awareness and we report on what we learned and how the NZAID reintegration programme could be adapted and .

### **Key Words**

Internationalisation, higher education, post academic transition, re-entry, student experience, career services, job finding strategies, reverse culture shock.