

# **‘World-travelling’ as a framework for strengths-based support in internationalised education**

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Media representations and institutional discourses in Australia and New Zealand often position international students in contradictory ways: as a desirable source of revenue and as people who need to ‘adapt to how we do things here’. However, research suggests that assumptions of ‘our’ pedagogical superiority are often deeply problematic, as are assumptions of international students’ difference to local students. For example, teaching approaches in massed higher education are often teacher rather than student centred. International and local students are diverse groups of people, and broad enrolment categories (international versus local) mask the complex ways in which students’ identities and life trajectories shape their educational experiences both similarly and differently. It is problematic to position international students (or particular groups of international students) in deficit terms, given the work that is required to live and learn successfully in a new context. Rather, international and other minoritised students can be seen as necessarily skilful, often bi- or multilingual people, who negotiate transitions as part of everyday life.

In this interactive workshop, I begin by inviting participants to interrogate some popular assumptions about international (and local) students, and how these shape both our work with students, and the outcomes of our work. I then introduce ‘world-travelling’ as a strengths-based framework for thinking about students’ everyday transitions, drawing on the work of feminist philosopher María Lugones’ (1987) and others. Specifically, I ask participants to reflect on their own experiences of transitioning between social worlds, and the factors that facilitated their capacity to survive and thrive. Then, I highlight five factors that are likely to foster students’ sense of being ‘at ease’ when living and studying in a new and unfamiliar context, inviting participants to use these as a basis for evaluating their institutional and pedagogical practices and envisaging new ways of working.