



'Cultures of learning' and international student success in professional programmes

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Aims for Sessions



- Explore the 'culture of the learning' in our programmes
- Explore the research at the University of Otago
- Brainstorm strategies that foster international student success

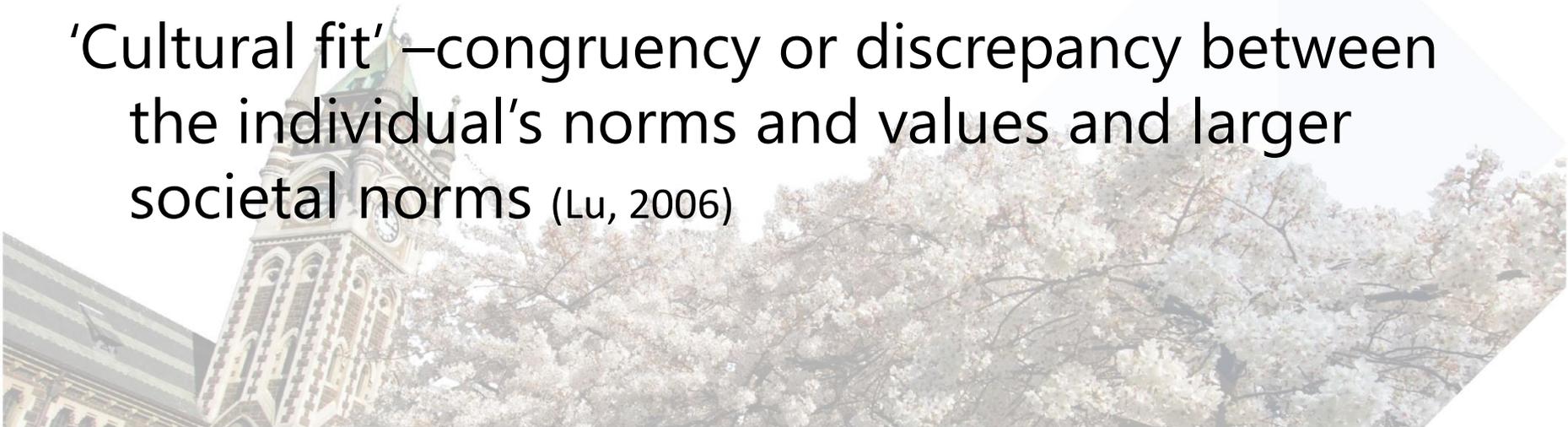


'Cultures of learning'



"culture is a situated resource—a fund of knowledge and a repertoire of practice—that learners draw upon to make sense of their social and material world and to participate in it" (Kumpulainen & Renshaw, 2007, p. 110)

'Cultural fit' –congruency or discrepancy between the individual's norms and values and larger societal norms (Lu, 2006)



What is your programme's 'culture of learning' ?



- What are the 'messages'? (attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviours)
- How do students come to know this?
- What are the most challenging aspects for international students?



What values dominate your culture of learning?

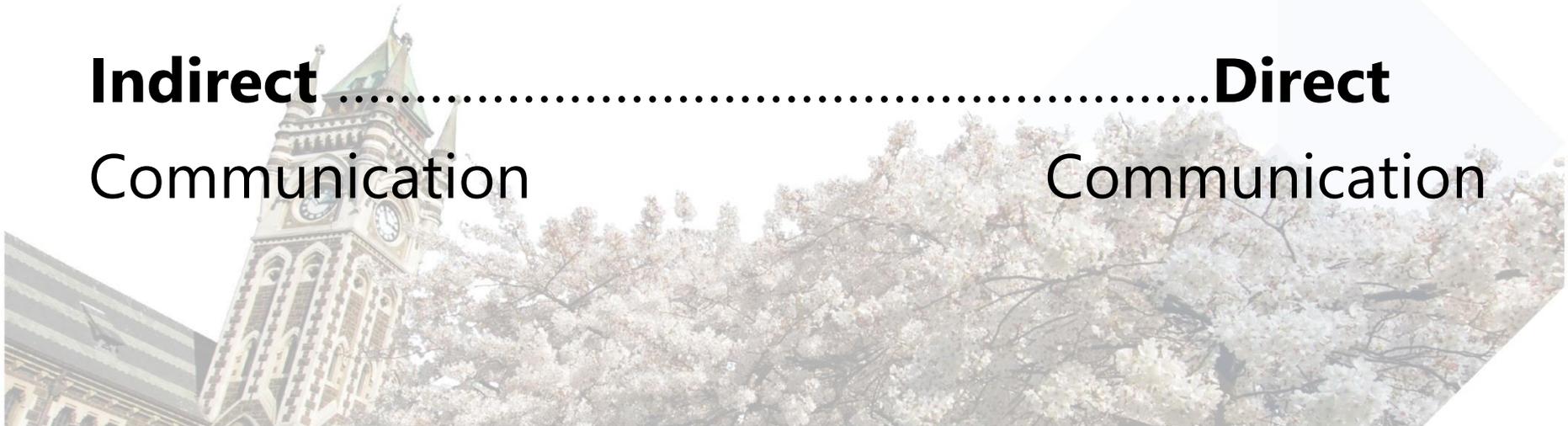


Group **Individual**
oriented oriented

Hierarchy..... **Equality**

Masculine higher..... **Feminine**
higher

Indirect **Direct**
Communication Communication

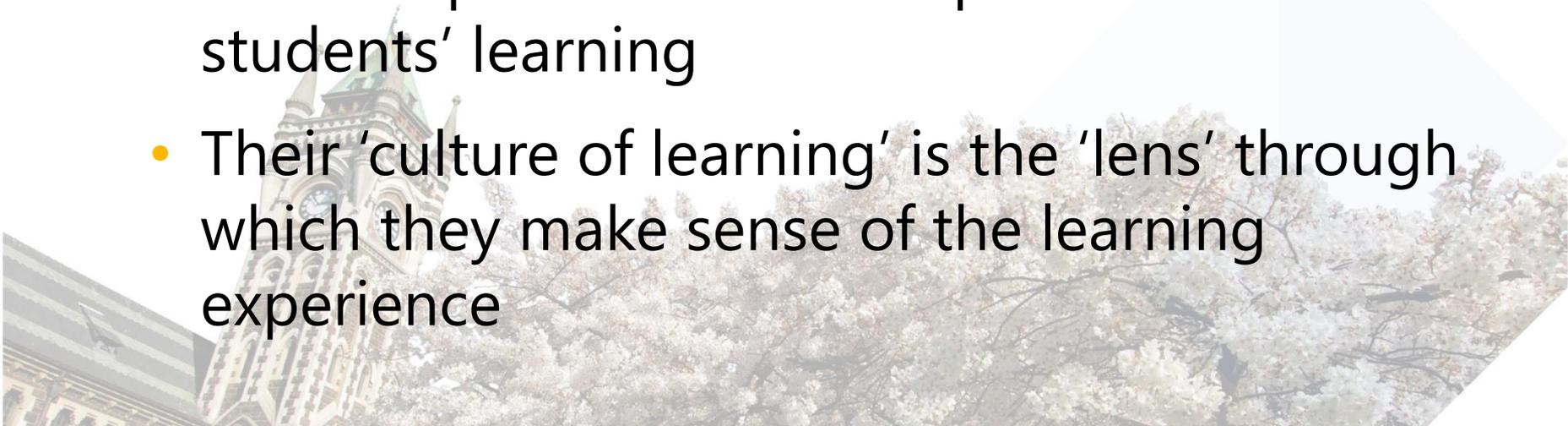


'Cultures of learning'



■ So what?

- Students all have a 'culture of learning'
- Therefore, they come to the learning environment with certain expectations
- Those expectations can help or hinder students' learning
- Their 'culture of learning' is the 'lens' through which they make sense of the learning experience



International medical students:

Factors that enhance & inhibit learning



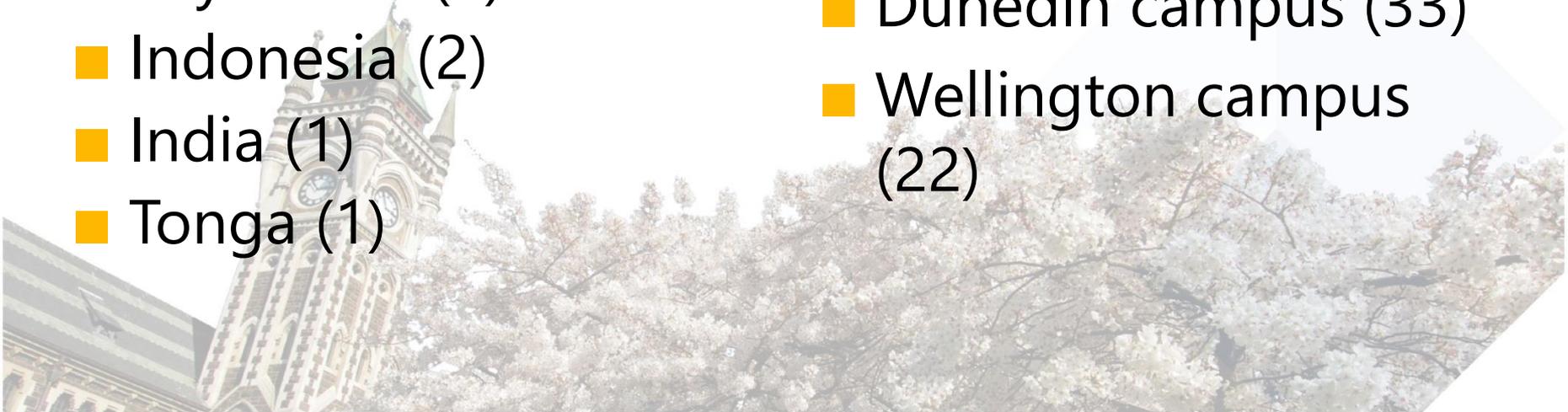
- Master's thesis by Dr Emma Storr (2012)
- Phenomenological ,qualitative study conducted in 2009
- Purposive sample of 55 students
- 31 group and individual interviews
- ELM: Dunedin & ALM: Wellington & Dunedin
- Thematic, narrative analysis



Demographic data



- Malaysian (30)
- Brunei (9)
- Oman (5)
- Saudi Arabia (3)
- Singapore (2)
- Seychelles (2)
- Indonesia (2)
- India (1)
- Tonga (1)
- Males (18)
- Females (15)
- Government funded (50)
- Privately funded (5)
- Dunedin campus (33)
- Wellington campus (22)



Factors that influence learning (Storr, 2012)

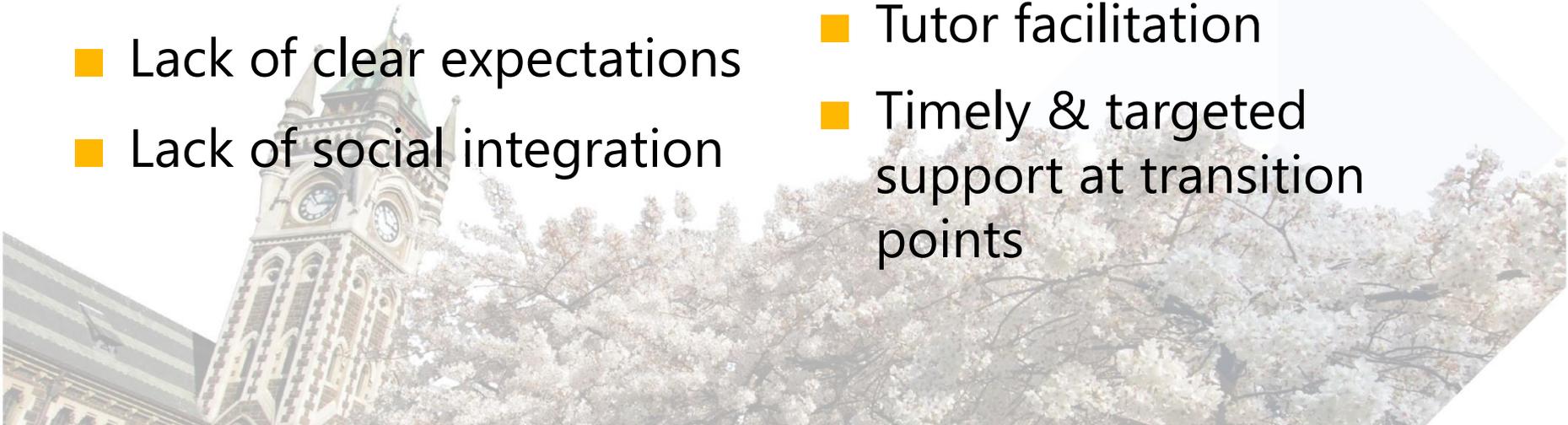


Inhibiting factors

- Learning environment
- Communication issues
- Unhelpful attitudes
- Lack of clear expectations
- Lack of social integration

Enhancing Factors

- Orientation
- Group size & composition
- Tutor facilitation
- Timely & targeted support at transition points



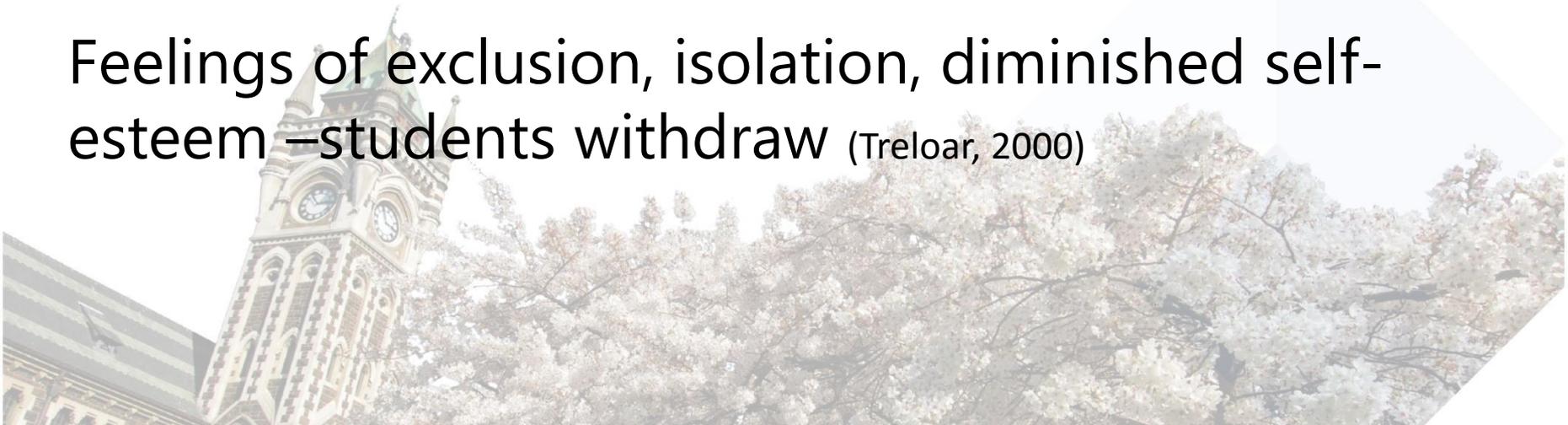
Learning environment



'Cultural distance' caused cognitive dissonance or 'academic shock'

Learners who are unfamiliar with the social and cultural environment may struggle to assimilate knowledge because it does not fit with their previous experiences/ schemas (Ryan & Hellmundt, 2005)

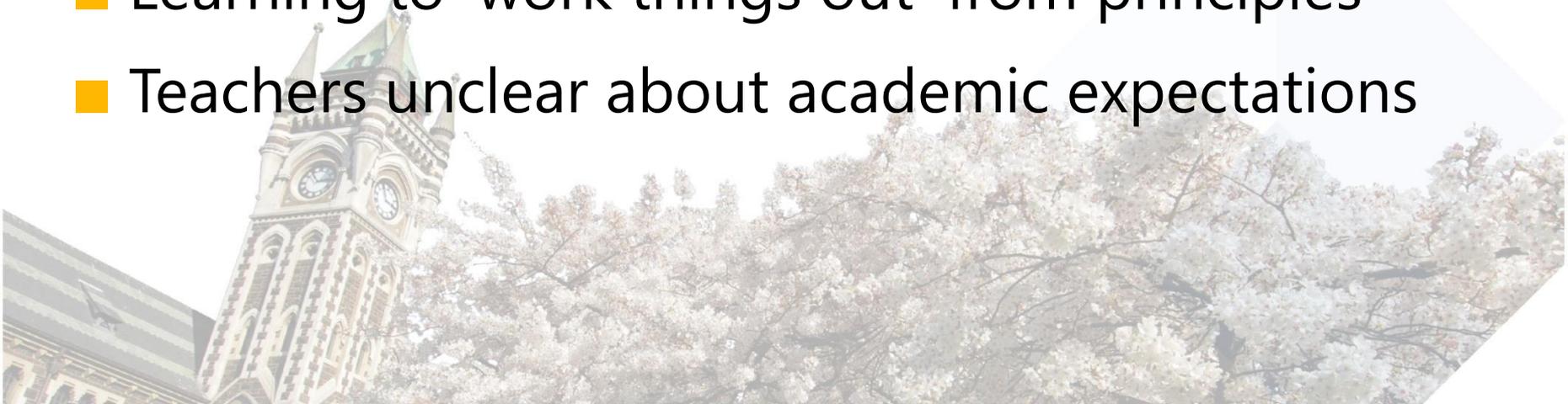
Feelings of exclusion, isolation, diminished self-esteem –students withdraw (Treloar, 2000)



Learning environment: Sources of academic shock



- Lack of prior knowledge (Brunton & Jeffrey, 2014; Storr, 2012)
 - Language differences
 - Differences in educational, medical and cultural systems
- Teacher-student & doctor-patient interactions
- Interactive learning environment
- Learning to 'work things out' from principles
- Teachers unclear about academic expectations



Teacher-student interactions



“...In Malaysia, when a consultant comes in everyone sort of bows—it’s top down ...I wouldn’t know what to say to a consultant [in New Zealand] ... it did create ...problems...First, in terms of impression—like we were unmotivated, uninterested...because I would be quiet and everyone else is chatting away. After that...we lost opportunities to do things... you could be standing there and they wouldn’t even notice you are there...”

Malaysian male, TI

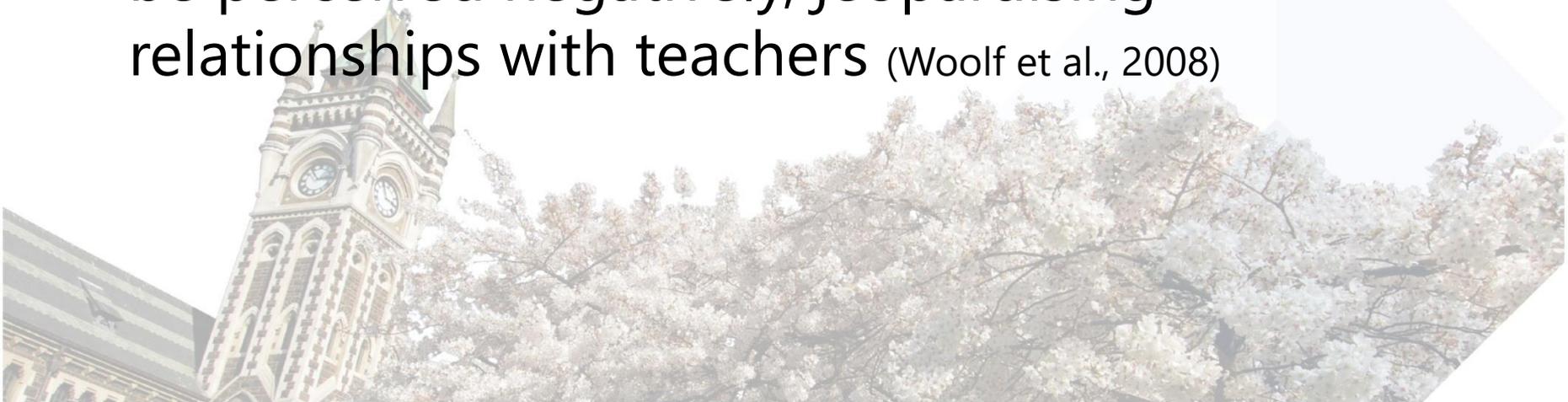
Teacher-student relationship vital to student success

(Woolf, et al. 2008)

Impact of teacher's perceptions & attitudes



- Teachers enjoy/put effort into students who interact, ask questions and perceive quiet students as unresponsive, unappreciative, unenthusiastic (Hawthorn et al., 2004)
- Asian clinical students more likely than whites to be perceived negatively, jeopardising relationships with teachers (Woolf et al., 2008)



Some students feel liberated in New Zealand



- *It's seen as being disrespectful ... to go against the teacher, ... I used to do that a lot back in Malaysia—because of the way I was brought up... so [New Zealand] was like heaven for me...*

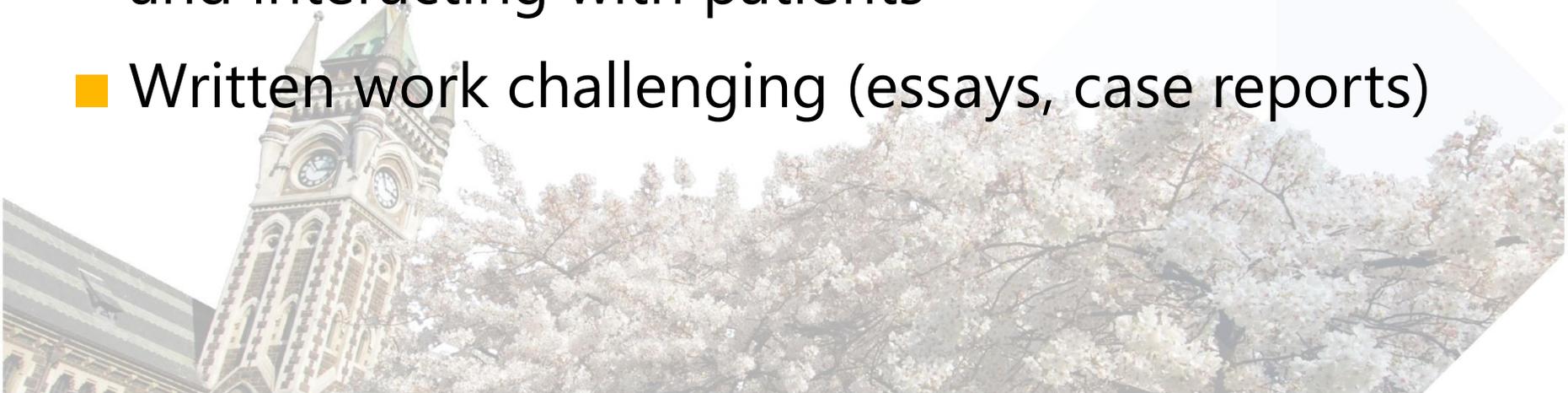
Malaysian female, 3rd year



Communication issues



- Difficulty being understood and understanding others
- Unsure how and when to intervene in dialogue – *'Language & culture wired together'* (Roberts et al., 2005)
- Medical culture differences- phrasing questions and interacting with patients
- Written work challenging (essays, case reports)



Slang

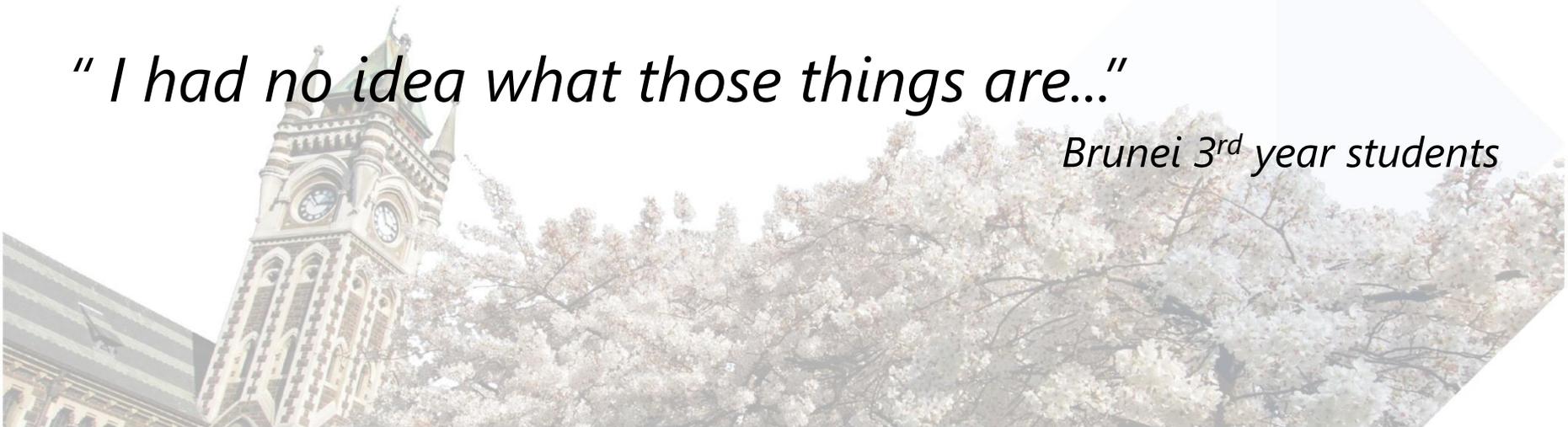


"I didn't know there were so many [ways] you could describe death... Like we had that tutorial last year... 'kicking over the bucket' I had no idea what that means"

"pop your clogs or something"

" I had no idea what those things are..."

Brunei 3rd year students

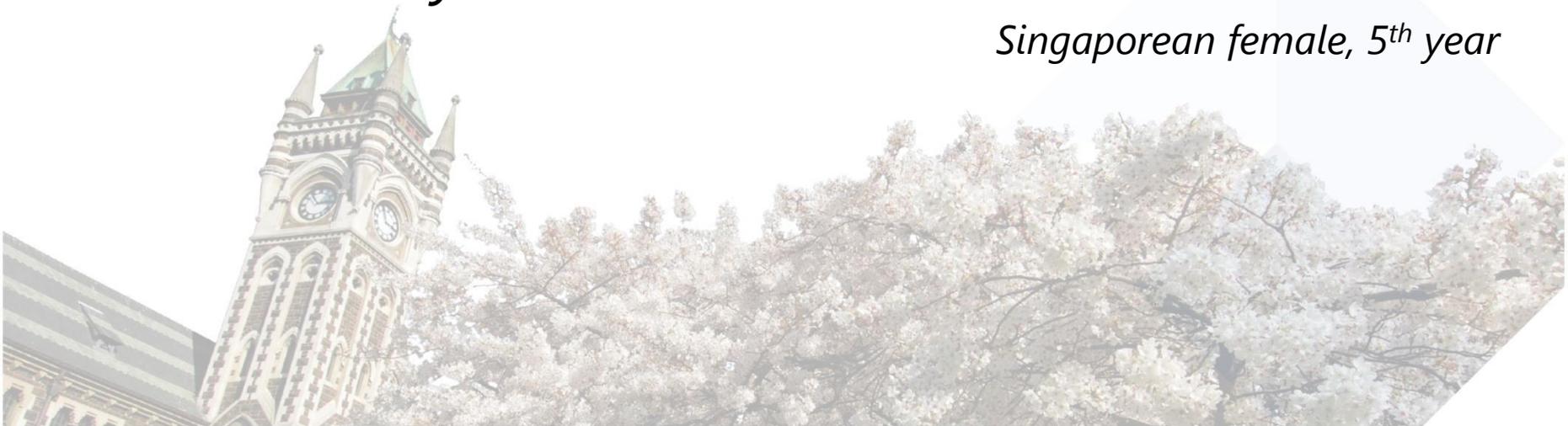


Use of student's name



- *"my Mandarin name comes first...Mandarin names have two syllables, two words but it's separated—so I always get like half of my name or ...just weird combinations of my name coming up—so every time someone calls me I don't even know it's my name"*

Singaporean female, 5th year



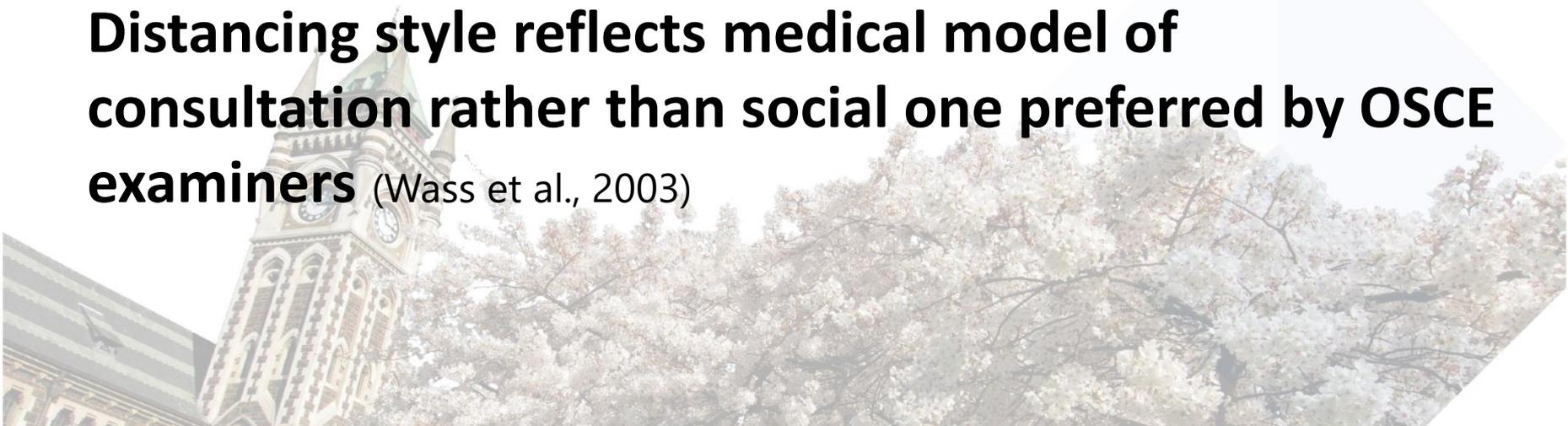
Medical communication differences



- *Back [home] there is none of [the patient-centred approach] at all – ‘ok, what’s your problem? ok, prescribe this... There’s no ‘oh, how do you feel about it? ‘...Back home [this] would be [viewed as] prying into [the patient’s] personal lives—it would be nosy.’*

Bruneian female 3rd year

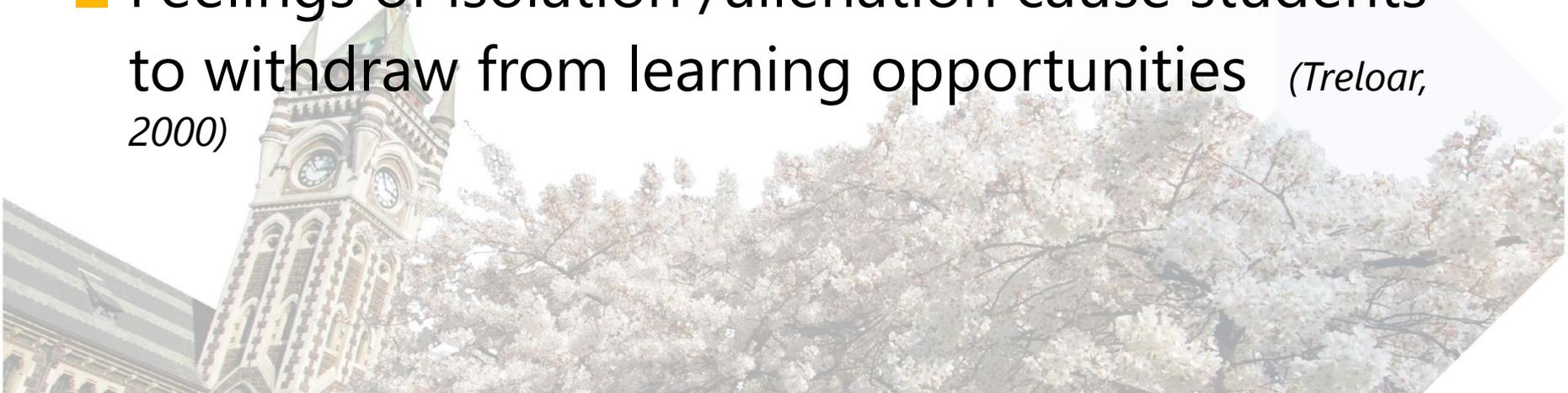
Distancing style reflects medical model of consultation rather than social one preferred by OSCE examiners (Wass et al., 2003)



Lack of social integration



- Alcohol
- Timing of events during Friday prayers
- Dietary differences (Halal foods)
- Lack of opportunity to socialise—negatively impacts group cohesion & identity
- Feelings of isolation /alienation cause students to withdraw from learning opportunities *(Treloar, 2000)*



Socialising & alcohol



- *I reckon [alcohol is] also a very important factor whether you can mingle with the Kiwi students as well. I mean if you don't drink then it's hard to hang out with them...*

Malaysian female, 4th year



Enhancing factors



- Group size and composition
- Culturally responsive tutor facilitation
- Clarity of expectations & encouragement
- Timely and targeted support at transition points
- Social integration



Group size & composition

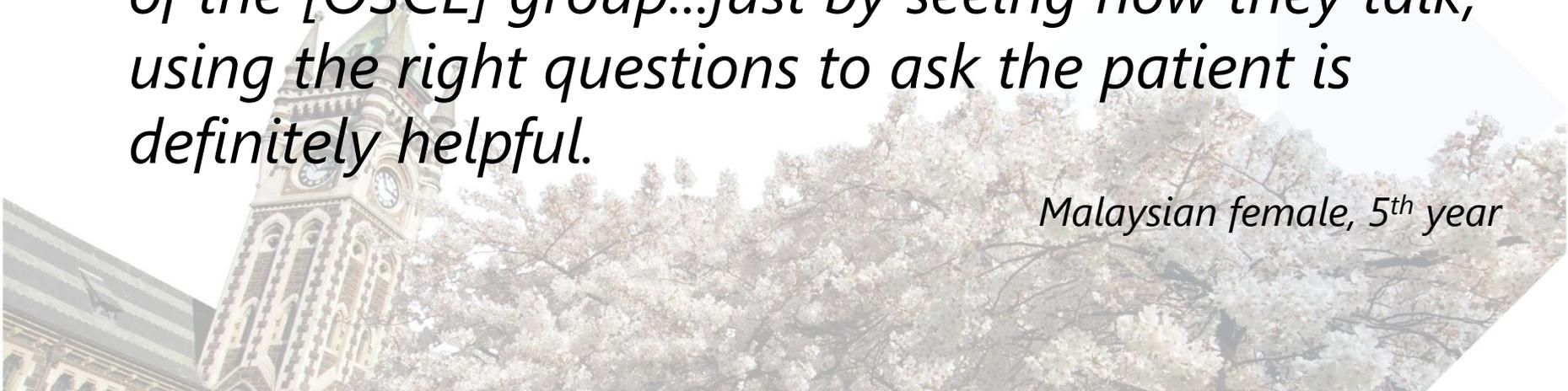


- *For me I like tutorials...small groups like twelve. So that's...good and you can ask a lot of questions if you don't understand...*

Malaysian female, 5th year

- *I found it very helpful if we include Kiwis...as part of the [OSCE] group...just by seeing how they talk, using the right questions to ask the patient is definitely helpful.*

Malaysian female, 5th year



Tutor facilitation



- Orientation
- Clarity about expectations for participation
- Specific feedback & encouragement
- Skill at involving international students makes a difference in students' confidence to contribute in class



Orientation: Targeted & timely support



- *...when we first came here we weren't use to the fact that everyone is so outspoken... The lecturer will say, 'why don't you give us your opinion now?' and we don't really understand what's going on so I guess some kind of orientation on the talking... and interaction [would be good].*

Malaysian male, TI



Clarify expectations



- *I think just...letting students know [your] expectations at the beginning of the sessions... like saying that I [am] expecting you to contribute and give your opinion... that's something I think would be quite useful*

Malaysian male, T1



Specific feedback & encouragement



- *..one consultant—just [said] ‘you need to practice more’—but what specific things I should practice he didn’t say. I [was] quite frustrated...*

Malaysian male, 5th year

- *I think more [specific] feedback on how we can better ourselves... “oh, you did this well’. .. it’s best [to give] more detail or... personalised feedback on how we could do better— “oh, you would to better if you did it like this.”*

Malaysian female, 5th year

Provide opportunities to share



- *"...when we have discussions...[tutors will say] 'so what's it like being from a different culture? And sometimes it's not really much different because the world's getting more...globalised... I think I would rather they just say 'Does anyone have anything to say from their own growing up or their own cultural experience?"*

Singaporean female, 5th year



Social integration: mentoring



- *...there are things we have learnt...that the seniors will show us...they talk to us about the importance of the relationship with the New Zealander. Yeah, like not to mingle with Malaysian guys only... [so] you don't feel awkward when you are placed among the Kiwi.*

Malaysian male, 2nd year

- *...Keep an open mind. Try to adapt as much as you can. If you can't...seriously go for help... Don't keep it to yourself.*

Malaysian male 4th year

Brainstorm strategies



- What can you do to foster student success in professional programmes?



What can we do?



- Foster belongingness—(Brunton & Jeffrey, 2014; Vaughan et al., 2015)
- Encourage teacher-student relationships (Zepke & Leach, 2007)
- Bridging social capital—peer interaction & senior academic in support network linked to achievement (Vaughan et al., 2015)
- Timely & targeted support at transition points (Hawthorn, Minas & Singh, 2004)
- Use measures that affirm bi/multilingual environment (avoid slang, provide contextual cues, pace of speech) (Anderson, 2014)
- Foster opportunities for connectedness to facilitate communicative confidence & shared understanding (Anderson, 2014)

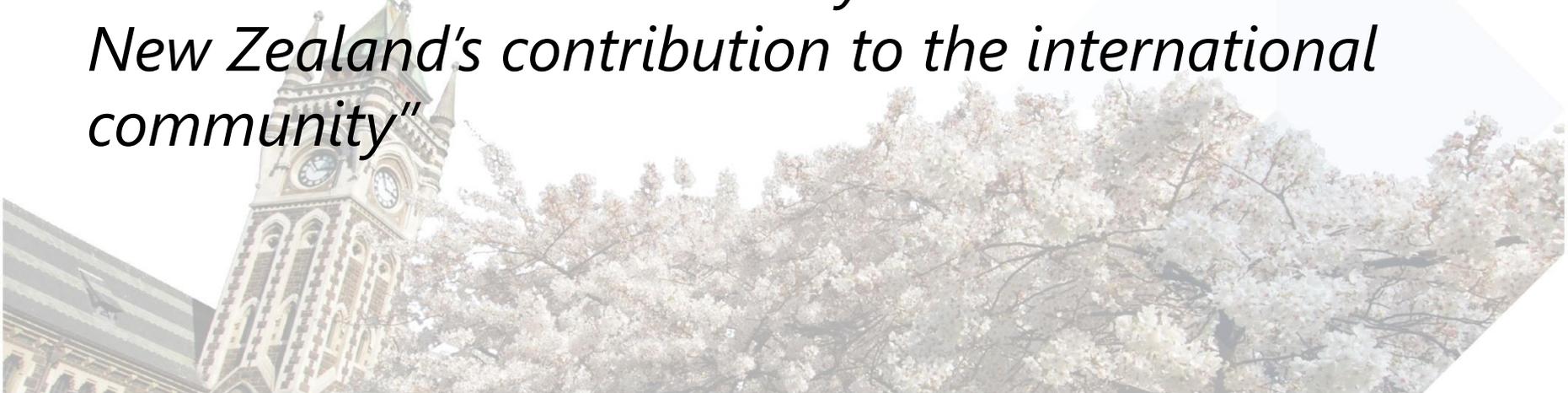
Global perspectives of graduates



■ Medical Graduate Profile: Global perspectives

3.15

"An appreciation of the global perspective of medicine and an informed sense of the impact of the international community on New Zealand and New Zealand's contribution to the international community"





Questions?

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