Learning, Language and Research Skills
Language and Cultural Exchange
Intersections of the academic and the personal

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Language and Cultural Exchange L.A.C.E.

What we did & why
What we didn’t do & why

What we thought we’d find & didn’t
What we found that surprised us

Which way forward
Why not you?

L.A.C.E. – what we did & why
✓ Set up international friendship program
✓ Ran events focused on fun, food & fellowship
✓ Invited postgraduate students & staff
✓ Included ‘locals’ & ‘internationals’
✓ Social isolation, silence & solitude
✓ Excessive work ethic & focus on achievement
✓ Lack of mentoring & social programs
✓ Lack of integration & intercultural mixing

L.A.C.E. – what we didn’t do & why
✓ Target ‘non English speaking types’
✓ Focus exclusively on Aussie culture
✓ Try to do it without making other changes
✓ Try to do it without support
✓ Aim to make it huge
✓ Everyone has a language
✓ Everyone has culture
✓ New initiatives take time to get established
✓ Friends in high places help things happen
✓ Start small; think big
**L.A.C.E. – what we thought we’d find & didn’t**

- Most participants would be international
- ‘Locals’ might not see the value of joining
- Staff might be reluctant to join
- ‘Internationals’ would benefit most
- Participants might take time to warm up

**L.A.C.E. – what we found that surprised us**

- Benefits were more than we’d thought
- Costs were less than we’d anticipated
- Time invested was saved elsewhere
- Links were strengthened with other areas
- The more others helped, the happier they were

**L.A.C.E. – Which way forward?**

- Enable groups to take more ownership
- Maintain ‘non institutional’ appeal
- Have L.A.C.E. recognised as PD & Community Service
- Use L.A.C.E. to promote diversity

**L.A.C.E. – why not you?**

- Keep it simple
- Start small; think big
- Get support from above
- Seek funding
- Sell it to the uni
- Make it fun
- Involve others