



Ready for take-off:
Preparing students for
intercultural learning in Asia

Academic Preparation Case Study

Excerpt from the data:

"All the materials are available on the [course web] site. Everything is actually there beforehand so they can print out everything; every lecture is already there, so they can actually go ahead and look at that; all the eReadings are there. We also spend a fair bit of time in the very first workshop talking about the academic requirements and what you have to do... the other way I prepare students is to look at drafts [of assignments] both before we go...and during [the study tour] ...But the biggest thing was making sure there's enough time in the schedule [to complete in-country assessments] ...I think we did that better this time by really putting some structures in place... we have to actually put some boundaries around that and some structure and make sure they really do it...having an academic component, an assessment in- country is a very important ingredient because then students don't ever forget you're on an academic study tour, it's not a holiday, it's not a Contiki Tour, yes we're having some fun and we're doing tourist type activities, [but] it is an academic course and that reminds them and keeps them focused, I think." - Study Tour Leader, Indonesian Study Tour.

Scenario

Students participating in a two-week study tour to China have a full itinerary from 7.30 am to 9 pm every day. They visit Chinese organisations, listen to government presentations, attend local university functions and visit the local tourist attractions in Beijing and Shanghai. In most of the hotels in which they stay, the internet is unreliable or unavailable. The main assessment is a team-based presentation due at the end of the study tour. On Day 10, students start to panic because they have not had time to prepare their presentations. They realise, too late, that they cannot access the online course materials. In the end, the Study Tour Leader has to rearrange the assessment so that it is due when they are back on their home campus in Australia.

Points for discussion

1. What went wrong in the scenario described above?
2. Who is responsible for the fact that the student presentations were not ready on time?
3. Do you agree that an in-country assessment task ensures an academic focus? Why/why not?
4. Consider how you might create an itinerary which emphasises the academic component, but still allows enough time for sightseeing and recreation.



The *Generic Preparation Guide for Staff & Students Going on Short-Term Study Tours to Asia* is brought to you by the *Ready for Take-Off: Preparing students for intercultural learning in Asia* project. To find out more about the project, you can:

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