Culture Shock and Homesickness
Acknowledgment of Country

The University of Queensland (UQ) acknowledges the Traditional Owners and their custodianship of the lands on which we meet.

We pay our respects to their Ancestors and their descendants, who continue cultural and spiritual connections to Country.

We recognise their valuable contributions to Australian and global society.
Mental Health

Arriving in a new country is both exciting and anxiety inducing. You will be challenged both positively and negatively, so it is important to look after your mental health. While everyone is different, here are some simple ways to look after your mental health while abroad:

• Talk about your feelings and experiences
• Keep active
• Eat well
• Drink sensibly
• Stay connected with friends and family back home
• Take a break if you need it
• Do something you enjoy, or are good at
• Ask for help
Cultural Adjustment Process

01
At Home: Anticipation

02
Honeymoon Phase: Exhilaration

03
Cultural Shock Phase: Discouragement/Irritability

04
Adjustment Phase: Gradual Recovery

05
Adaptation Phase: Integration
Honeymoon phase/Initial euphoria

This stage can last a week or a few months.

Use this energy and excitement to explore and make friends. These memories and connections can be helpful to get you through when you are feeling homesick.

Keep a written or visual diary of the things you have enjoyed to reflect on when you are feeling homesick.
The slump/Irritability and hostility

After a while you may start to feel home sick. You might become frustrated with the different ways the new culture works, little things may start to annoy you.

Try to not compare the new culture with your home culture. Keep connecting with the new friends you made in the first stage, and don't isolate yourself.
Symptoms of Culture Shock

- Changes to health, illness
- Changes in sleep
- Changes in diet
- Frustration, irritability, sadness, depression, self-doubt
- Persistent negativity
- Homesickness
- Withdrawing from friends and activities

Ways to adapt and overcome

- Recognising feelings are temporary
- Getting outside and explore
- Join activities/clubs at university
- Reflect, write in a diary, or talk to friends and family
- Remember mistakes are okay
- Eat healthy food, get regular exercise and sleep
- Learn the language
Realisation/Gradual adjustment

Once you develop a routine and become more familiar with your new surroundings the feeling of culture shock will wear off.

Things will start to feel easier. You will still experience difficulties, but they won't worry you as much.

You might still feel culture shock and homesickness at times, and that is ok!
Adaptation

Your new country has started to feel like home.

- The staff at your favorite café might know your name.
- You know how to find everything in the supermarket.
You will probably experience culture shock again once you return to Australia.

Be kind to yourself, your family and friends on your return. It will take some time to settle back into your old life.
Questions to ask yourself

What are some major cultural differences between my home country and Australia?

What are some ways I can build my cultural awareness?

Are my expectations of Australia realistic?

What are some personal warning signs that I am becoming stressed, depressed or anxious?

Who can I reach out to talk to if I am feeling culture shock or homesickness?

What healthy habits can I develop and continue in Australia?
Brisbane’s Cultural Hubs

- Sunnybank, Sunnybank Hills, Robertson, Macgregor, Calamvale and Runcorn: Asia
- Moorooka: Africa, in particular Ethiopia, Eritrea and Southern Sudan.
- Inala and Durack: Vietnam
- Brisbane CBD: South Korea, Japan and China
- Eight Mile Plains: China, South Korea and Taiwan
- West End: Greece and Italy
- Kuraby: Population of Arabic, Hindi and Urdu speakers
- Heathwood: India, Sri Lanka and South Africa
- Doolandella: Vietnam, Samoa and India
- Banyo, Chermside, Lutwyche and Bracken Ridge: African, Middle Eastern and Burmese refugees
- Logan Central: Afghanistan, The Congo, Sudan, Iraq, Iran and Laos (large number of settled refugees)
- Ipswich: Samoa, The Philippines, Vietnam and India
We collaborate with 17 Welcome Hubs in local communities across Brisbane—local community organisations that want to welcome their newest neighbours.

- Find ways for people to connect and participate in the social and economic life of Queensland
- Make new friends and social connections
- Training and employment, understand more about their local community
- Learn about local supports and services

https://www.multiculturalaustralia.org.au/welcome_hubs
Welcome Hub Locations

• Annerley Baptist Church
• Inala Neighbourhood Hub
• Belong (Acacia Ridge and surrounds)
• Mt Gravatt Community Centre
• Sherwood Neighbourhood Centre
• Indooroopilly Uniting Church
• Benarrawa Community Development Association, Graceville
• Nundah Neighbourhood Centre
• Sandbag – Sandgate Community Centre
• Stafford Heights Baptist Church
• Kyabra Community Association, Runcorn
• Community Plus+ Annerley Community Hub
• Community Plus+ Yeronga Community Centre
• North East Community Support Group Inc. – Zillmere Community Centre
• The Community Place, Wooloowin
Multicultural Support Services

August – Multicultural Month QLD

Queensland Multicultural Centre – Kangaroo Point, Newmarket
Multicultural Australia - Woolloongabba
Pasifika Women’s Alliance - 69 Nathan Road, Runcorn, QLD, 4113
Multilink Community Services – 38 Blackwood Road Logan Central

UQ Union – Clubs and Societies
• 220 clubs and societies
Food… glorious food

• Davely’s Asian Supermarket – Charlotte St, City
• Monika Indian Groceries – Fortitude Valley
• Mix and Match Bangladeshi and Indian Grocery – Inala
• Om Spice and Grocery & Fresh Meat – Indian – Carseldine
• All in One Indian Grocery Store- Spring Hill
• Samy Store – Indian & Sri Lanka – Annerley
• Happy Shop Indonesian Groceries – Indooroopilly
• Nepali Shop – Lutwyche
• Coco’s Annerley
• Best Friends Filipino Foods Supermarket- Fortitude Valley
• The Biltong & Jerky – African - Moorooka
UQ Counselling

UQ counselling are available for Zoom appointments. Visit the website to book an appointment.

For welfare support you can book in with a Student Adviser
https://my.uq.edu.au/contact/student-central#support
Please complete this short survey